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Fabricating Unease: Intertextuality, the Nation and Intellectual Leadership Crisis in No Longer at Ease

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FROM THE EDITORS

In our inaugural and several other issues of Africana, we have emphasized the importance of including Africa-based scholarship in the global debates of the social sciences. The marginalization of African scholarship takes many forms and happens for many reasons.¹ The notion, emphasized by Africanist Robert Bates, et al., that “arguments are not privileged by their origins...” is wrongheaded, self-serving, and frankly absurd.² Put simply, the debates of the social sciences and humanities do not take place on a level playing field; differences of material wealth have an enormous impact on the structure of academic debates in the world. Far too often, this is the kind of elitist argument one finds among Western-based Africanists; with blinders on, many Africanists delve into the field with little sense of urgency or purpose. It is our contention that Africanists have a special responsibility to: 1) recognize the vast disparities of material wealth that exist within this particularly challenging field of study and 2) do all in their power to facilitate meaningful dialogue. Put even more bluntly: Bates, et al. think far too highly of the worth of their own scholarly contributions to African studies. As we enter the 21st-century, the dire circumstances of much of Africa require improved dialogue, improved academic engagement, with a clear acknowledgment, by all involved, of the human suffering that now exists on the African continent. Somehow, Western-led scholarship has moved away from its Enlightenment focus that valued humanity, to a profession that rewards scientific analysis above all else. Science may well have some of the answers but we must not lose sight, as some now seem to do, of what is at stake; somehow, it seems that

many are forgetting the subject, which is human life. We remind those who forget that fascism, communism, and other ideological “solutions” to societal woes were similarly based on science; their tragic flaw was to forget the subject – let us not fall into that same trap. The emphasis on humanity is not idealistic, as scholarship seems to suggest today. It is the root of all democratic sentiments in every corner of the earth and at all times in human history. The true idealists are those who pretend to be the authorities today: pushing for a “level playing field” when there is not one and, while pretending to be scientific, ignoring glaringly obvious human suffering in the process.

Instead of being more honest and realistic about their subject, many Africanists prefer to get embroiled in petty squabbles against the few scholars that challenge the “cultural arrogance” of the Western scholars.3 For example, in *Africa and the Disciplines*, the editors critique Afrocentricity citing the works of, notably, Molefi Kete Asante – a favorite target of establishment Africanist scholarship. Defenders of the Western classics have similarly challenged Martin Bernal, author of the *Black Athena* series, who argues the obvious: Ancient Greece did not develop in isolation. Yet instead of understanding the obvious, instead of appreciating that Afrocentric scholarship is a tactical approach aimed at challenging the Eurocentric norms of scholarship, many Western based Africanists choose to defend their own Western turf, pontificating with a veneer of science, as if their own ideas were the only ones with any merit – as if their ability to dominate the dialogue had nothing to do with their own material advantages. We submit that the very notion that we should regret the lack of meritorious ideas coming from the continent is nothing short of foolishness; more than anything, saying so

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demonstrates how deeply entrenched the intellectual block, that systematically marginalizes African scholarship, has become. In actual fact, *Africa and the Disciplines* is of several mindsets: Robert H. Bates, V.Y. Mudimbe, and Jean O’Barr do not write any of the book’s chapters. They seem to have written a very disjointed introduction to the book – presumably to give the book professional credibility – then, structuring the book in two parts: Social Sciences and The Humanities, offer diametrically opposed points of view. Of all, Christopher Miller comes closest to the challenge of “Africa in the social sciences” when he writes of “The Challenge of the Intercultural Literary.” Finally, in the last chapter of the book, Miller states the obvious: “The production of knowledge is related to the structure of power.”4 And that is all that we are saying here: that Gramscian dilemma is what has motivated us to push for an *Africana* project.

By including the voice of African scholarship in African area studies, we are demonstrating our own recognition of the imbalances of power in academic dialogue. We readily admit that this *modus operandi* is at once a humanist impulse, based on our profound respect for our fellow men, and motivated by our belief that scholars can and should strive to be more democratic than the political worlds in which they reside. There is, and will continue to be, a tension that is created by those who challenge, unsettle, and threaten to disrupt the established order of the social sciences and the humanities. We submit, as mentioned in *African and the Disciplines*, that “the contribution of African scholarship [ought to] be valued, recorded, and institutionalized.”5 Moreover, we readily submit that this effort is normative in the same way that striving for democratization is just.

It cannot be over-emphasized: far too often in scholarship the efforts of the humanist and the inclusion of the normative are brushed

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5 Ibid, pp. xx-xxi. These are, again, the views of Christopher Miller, with whom we concur.
aside as impractical or idealist. This is particularly true of the debates of political science, where the links between power and condition are too often considered the most appropriate, practical, and mature answer. Countless social science observers have commented on this link from, on the one hand, Thucydides, Niccolo Machiavelli, and Thomas Hobbes to, on the other hand, Karl Marx, to Antonio Gramsci, and to Paulo Friere. The former group’s ideas are generally oversimplified and used to defend the principle, allegedly established by Athenian General Thucydides, the Father of Political Realism, that “the strong do what they have the power to do; the weak suffer what they must.” The latter group’s ideas are similarly oversimplified yet are said to support the general view that something ought to be done to improve the condition of the weak. In democratic politics these social science voices can be heard as well: conservatives defending the maintenance of the status quo, while progressives argue that the status quo disproportionately benefits the powerful. It is a pattern of social science debate and politicking that literally spans the globe. We are of the view that the marginalization of peoples in much of sub-Saharan African politics has become so extreme that the lack of global attention to the matter is a clear indication of willful ignorance. Today, global communications are such that the words and images of human suffering are clearly heard and visible to the point where retreating to a safe bubble – Ivory Tower or otherwise – is quickly becoming a luxury of numbered days. Violence and terrorism are tactics that, upon reflection, we hope to which few would resort but, with the percentages and sheer numbers of the suffering in today’s world, one wonders what options are left to many of the marginalized.

In the 1950s and 60s Frantz Fanon famously addressed this same issue in his socio-psychological observations of marginalized Algerians in colonial Algeria. Given the persistence of marginalization and trauma experienced by so many, Fanon
ultimately concluded that violence would be the only viable option. How long, one must ask, will 80-90% of entire populations throughout sub-Saharan Africa put up with living on less than $2 per day? Is it any wonder why some, discouraged by the lack of opportunities, engage in civil unrest (at best) or even (at worst) violent or subversive means for altering their material lot in life?

In fact, studies have demonstrated that the inclusion of radicalized groups into the formal processes of politics, while seemingly tragic in the short-term, does eventually lead to the de-radicalization of those same groups. One would expect to find similar conclusions in many social studies areas, including psychology and sociology: inclusion of the socially marginalized can only improve the prospects for peace. But, again, in African area studies there remains an overarching lack of acknowledgment of Africa’s marginalization. Much of this, we suspect, is due to the legacy of the Cold War: acknowledging the materialist nature of African realities was considered Marxist, ergo not worthy of real consideration. This ideological resistance to daily social and political reality needs to be revealed and discussed. The alternative is to wait for science to play itself out – to wait, as a Stalinist regime did, and to “crack a few eggs” while those in power make their omelet. We ask: how many millions of human beings must die as we await the benefits of an ideologically-based science? That wait, we must all recognize, is a privilege and that wait, we contend, is simply unjust.

To understand African realities today, one must acknowledge the dramatic differences of material wealth that exist in this world and critically assess how this can to be. Yes, there may well be elements of

6 Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth (1961).
7 A point recently made at the May 2012 New England Political Science Association Conference by Mohammed Elghoul of the University of Massachusetts in a paper entitled “Moderate Revolutionaries? Hizbullah and the Islamic Revolution.”
this assessment that lead observers to “Marxist-like” sensibilities but we must avoid the Cold War instinct of summarily dismissing all of our critical observations as a result. Today, what is vividly clear is that the historical development of the African state has led to political circumstances that are at once politically centralized and generally structured around the control over a natural resource; many aspiring politicians in Africa get involved in politics for little more than personal enrichment and power. As in history, the African State remains something to latch onto; once there, it becomes virtually impossible to let go of the state’s comparatively abundant resources. This is deftly described in Chinua Achebe’s novel A Man of the People; in his words, once acquired, losing “a share of the national cake” is inconceivable.\(^8\) Again, in an atmosphere of few opportunities, thusly empowered politicians desperately do “what they have the power to do” while, from their perspective, the “weak suffer what they must.” Like it or not, political realities in sub-Saharan Africa therefore retain an air of rapaciousness that is logically based on a fear of falling from the pillars of political power to the depths of where the clear majority of the population now resides. The political survivalist adheres to theories and practices of a super- or hyper-realism that, not unlike the realisms of ancient worlds described by Thucydides, is linked to power and prestige. But in today’s African contexts, these realisms take place, if at all, alongside a cliff’s edge. To the extent that he listens to the debates of the social sciences, the African politician is understandably cynical about the Africanist promoter of ideas or of democratic ideals. Like everyone in that context, he is reminded daily of the vast chasm of material differences between himself and the average citizen; he is required daily to ensure that he does not allow himself to slip into the humiliating and life-threatening experiences of the majority of his fellow citizens.

In African area studies, the result is that we now have the self-congratulating wisdom of today’s mainstream Africanist, who claims to be a realist, “understanding” the language of power and politics in history, yet he is actually out of touch. Expounding the merit of Western ideas to African politicians, and to masses living on less than $2 per day, is an idealistic throwback to yesteryear when the expansion of power was thought to be but a byproduct of academic debate – in fact, nothing could be further from the truth. The notion that civilizational development of all kinds is simply idea-driven, as famously described by Georg Hegel, is the truest form of idealism, as Marx did argue; in practice, as with Stalin, it is also dramatically arrogant and dangerous when one considers what is at stake. This arrogance has historically dominated the halls of power, from within the Athenian temple to today’s development institutions – intellectuals have too often applauded the deeds of the powerful with far too little critical thought. Using intellectual works to justify that status quo has too often been the modus operandi of those in power, while the masses remained in the dark. That darkness has been described by Marxists in everything from materialist to Enlightenment (humanist) terms; both have merit. And, upon reflection, we all know that those terms have formed the basis of a circular argument that has been the basis of ideological rifts for at least a century.

Let us move on! Differences of material do matter – they are political (as today’s political leftists and, yes, even Marxists claim); ideas do matter (as Westerners claim). Both, however, skirt the subject which, again, is human life. Advocates of each have acted as rivals in a Cold War debate but both, it must be acknowledged, looked to science for societal solutions as they sought the same industrial goal. Communists were, of course, ideological and, in doing so, forgot the subject: humanity. But so do today’s proponents of “one size fits all” free-market approaches to developmental woes. As the latter forge ahead, they will inevitably be challenged to think about the human cost
of their scientific plan. If both “sides” can ever acknowledge the logic of the other, we can then move on to engage in real discussions as to what we can do to resolve the world’s increasingly apparent problems of human suffering and to, once and for all, end the lethal cycle of “scientific certainty.” Both capitalists and Marxists have been mesmerized by the “miracle of the market” and both, similarly, have demonstrated a tendency to forget that fundamental lesson: life matters. Let us all celebrate and enjoy the strengths of scientific inquiry but let us all remain cognisant of the shortcomings of scientific method; science, as it informs human behavior, does not act justly or morally. We can only hope that the societal arrangements that we have agreed to, within a social compact, allow for a critical assessment of scientific results and, ultimately, for just and moral expression.

Throughout Africa one hears the ongoing concern for the suffering of people due to the abuse of internal political power, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the seemingly unstoppable allegiance to externally-mandated neoliberal reforms that strike many as ideological – yet “scientifically informed” – pursuits that cause sensless harm. In the first contribution, for example, from Fidelix Akpozike Etinye Paki and Jude Cocodia, we are told that violence that occurred in the wake of the 2011 presidential election was the result of deeply entrenched political norms that systematically favor the whims of the few. They argue that, regrettably, circumstances are getting worse, as both racial and religious divides are manipulated by politicians to mobilize people to be increasingly violent towards others. For hundreds of years, the Muslim and Christian faiths have proven to be an integral part of African life, often in tandem with various compilations of local traditions. Francis Machingura describes these circumstances within the Zimbabwean context and argues that it is a combination of both local traditions and interpretations of the Christian bible that tragically lead to unsafe sex practices, even within marriages. In another piece by Richard S. Maposa we see that the Christian religion can play an important role
at determining how Zimbabweans might interpret key moments in local history. Here, Maposa suggests how Christianity might interpret the oftentimes violent land reform program from 2000 to 2008. Please understand: we do not refute or support Maposa’s views. By including this piece we simply aim to demonstrate how influential religious perspectives can be in many African contexts. Like it or not, African scholarship is not always secular and one readily finds interpretations of the sacred texts and the like within African communities, local and national politics, and even within the halls of academia.

Consider the next piece by Jacinta Chiamaka Nwaka on the Catholic Institute for Development, Justice and Peace (CIDJAP). In great detail, Dr. Nwaka describes how CIDJAP was founded by the Catholic Diocese of Enugu in 1986 to embark on a struggle on two fronts: peace and development. When traditional societal and governmental arrangements do not seem to be working, it should come as no surprise that organized religion should come to the fore – in circumstances where little make sense, “faith” is sometimes the one thing that does. In fact, in his review of the extant literature, Dr. Nwaka argues that “the influence of Christianity as a contributory factor to relative peace in the area... was not taken into consideration.” In other words, there is a concern within African scholarship that the positive role of faith-based organizations is systematically marginalized within mainstream scholarship. To many, the problems of peace and development are very real, as is the visibility of the Christian church and the Muslim mosque. Understandably, the post-Cold War issue for many African scholars seems to be: Why then put faith in a theory of democracy?

Today, when they work at their democratic best, we know that pluralistic societies acknowledge differences of political opinion and strive to find workable political solutions without resorting to violence. We also know that differences of political opinion are based
on a host of factors that are often socially constructed, impacted by simple differences of material welfare, wrought with ideological certainties of one kind or another, and rarely the result of self-critical analyses. Moreover, no one can claim objectivity when the perspectives of most are systematically marginalized in the process, as is the case for African area studies. For certain, the solutions cannot come from only self-congratulating disconnected elites, from mainstream academic scholarship that is too closely allied with temporal power, or from profit-driven corporate societies. Nor, for obvious reasons, can solutions for Africa’s plight really be expected to come from rapacious African politicians. Yet those are the only groups we are hearing from today. Our view is that the promotion of avenues for democratic dialogue is especially incumbent upon the educator. More than most, the educator is able to step beyond the bounds of any traditional or institutionalized constraint to contemplate the possible. This is not only the right thing to do; it is also a crucial step toward finding practicable solutions to many of the world’s most glaring developmental problems.

The Africanist who sides with the view that the best ideas are necessarily aligned with the developmental history of the West is, in our view, wittingly or not, a defender of the global status quo. Saying so does not damn all Western ideas to the proverbial dustbin of history; we are simply of the view that the degradation of circumstances in many sub-Saharan African contexts necessitates listening. In that vein we have included, in this issue of Africana, the local views of dire circumstances in several critically important regions of sub-Saharan Africa: Nigeria, Zimbabwe, the Bakassi Kingdom (from the perspective of the author, neither Nigeria nor Cameroon), and the Sudanese state. These of course are regions where human suffering continues and where a perpetuation of the status quo is not acceptable by any measure. To all of the contributors to this volume, we thank you for your ongoing involvement in the battle to help inform the world of the plight of others. In line with the
aforementioned, we have also included a piece on Achebe and Africa’s “intellectual leadership crisis” by a rising star in Africanist studies, Uzoechi Nwagbara.

On another practical note: *Africana* is now in its sixth year of publication. We encourage you all to inform others of the journal’s mission to include African voices in social science and humanities scholarship. Tragically, many of the challenges that African-American leader W.E.B. DuBois encountered remain with us today. As indicated above, the reasons for ongoing marginalization are many and they require more open discussion and transparency if things are ever expected to change. In his autobiography, DuBois wrote of his lifelong effort to complete an *Encyclopedia Africana* – a goal that was only achieved by like-minded individuals more than 30 years after his death in 1963:

> I had planned an “Encyclopedia Africana” in 1909 but my leaving Atlanta for New York postponed the project and the World War prevented its renewal... I spent years of intermittent effort on this project and secured cooperation from many scholars, white and black, in America, Europe and Africa. But the necessary funds could not be secure. Perhaps again it was too soon to expect large aid for so ambitious a project... built mainly on Negro scholarship.9

Please do cite the works of our publication in your own conference papers and publications, mention us in dialogue with like-interested friends, and help us to spread the word that we are here! For those of you who are social media savvy, we can also be found on Facebook, though this is early in its development. We must also apologize for any delays that some have encountered in publication (usually in weeks not months), delays in any updates to our web-page, or in our

communications with others interested in Africana. Please understand that we are a small group with limited resources. As things continue to improve, as we obtain non-profit 501(3)(c) status and eventual grant-funding, we hope to grow in relevance and impact. With your continued help and support, Africana can and should continue to establish itself as an important and relevant social science journal.

All said, it is with great pleasure that we present to you the June/July 2012 issue of Africana.

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TRAPPED IN DISINTEGRATION: POST-2011 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION VIOLENCE AND NATIONAL SECURITY IN NIGERIA

FIDELIS AKPOZIKE ETINYE PAKI AND JUDE COCODIA


ABSTRACT:
Free and fair elections have been a central force for democratic sustenance and consolidation all over the world. However, the paradox of Nigeria’s 2011 election – adjudged free, fair and credible by many throughout the world – is that it may have spawned a very dangerous web of insecurity in the northern part of Nigeria and left hundreds of southerners’ lives and properties destroyed. While some political pundits attribute the rising tide of violence to state fragility, others insist that it has been motivated by crudely racist notions. This paper attempts to unravel the circumstances that led to post-2011 Presidential election violence, beyond the cosmetic findings of the Nigerian government and argues that the goals, methods, and strategies exhibited by the violent protest indicate an intense elite conspiracy within the state of Nigeria. Circumstances also demonstrate that there continues to be a lack of any fundamental social contract for the 250 or so ethnic and sub-ethnic nationalities of Nigeria that were railroaded into pseudo-amalgamation in 1914. The study concludes that unless a common code of political behaviour is adopted by means of a round-table discussion, this divisive incident will snowball into a full blown disintegration.
INTRODUCTION

The history of Nigeria’s democracy since achieving independence from Britain in 1960 has been particularly painful by any international standard. It has been characterized by military intervention, ethno-religious conflict, corruption, coups d’état, intra- and inter-party squabbles, economic mismanagement, rigged elections, political thuggery, a proliferation of advanced weaponry and the misuse of security forces to intimidate candidates. Accordingly, the tasks of achieving democratic stability, national integration, and sustainable socio-economic development have proven to be very problematic since Nigeria became an independent country. In fact, conflicts generated by these ongoing challenges are such that, inevitably, some writers express highly skeptical views about the continuing existence of Nigeria as corporate entity (Musa, 1985:112).

The first attempt at democratic governance in Nigeria was under the prime ministership of the late Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa between independence on October 1, 1960 and when he was murdered by the military in the coup of January 15, 1966. The second was under the Executive Presidency of Alhaji Shehu Shagari between October 1, 1979 and December 31, 1983 when again, the military toppled a democratic regime in Nigeria. A third attempt had been truncated when after the inauguration, at the state level of executive governors and state legislatures in 1991 and the National Assembly in 1992, the military junta of General Ibrahim Babangida on June 23, 1993 annulled the presidential elections of June 12, 1993. Subsequently, the aforementioned democratic structures of the third republic were dismantled, when General Sani Abacha on November 17, 1993 seized the reins of government from the ill-defined Interim National Government (ING) of Chief Ernest Shonekan who had succeeded president Babangida on August 27, 1993. Between this date (that is November 17, 1993) and the inauguration of the fourth republic (on
May 29, 1999), the forces of change represented in the Nigerian Labour Congress, civil society and pro-democracy groups had persistently engaged the military dictators to reverse the annulment of the June, 12, 1993 presidential election which was won by Chief Moshood K.O. Abiola (Shively, 2005:67; Nwosu, 2008: 306) whom the military had arrested and detained until he died in prison on July 7, 1998.

It is only from May 1999 to date that Nigeria has witnessed democratic rule for 11 unbroken years. President Olusegun Obasanjo led the country from 1999 to April 2007 and handed presidential power over to a democratically-elected president, the late Umaru Musa Yar’Adua. His deputy, Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, was subsequently elected on April 2011, in what the local and international observers (such as the Commonwealth Group, the European Union (EU), African Union (AU) and the National Democratic Institution (NDI) and others) adjudged as free and fair (Akande, 2011; Oloja and Abubakar, 2011; Obayuwana, 2011).

Yet, surprisingly, many Nigerians and the international community were shocked at the orchestrated crises which erupted in some northern parts of the country. An April 2011 editorial in The Guardian described the above scenario as follows:

They killed about 10 people in parts of Gombe State; burnt the family home of Vice President Sambo in Tundun Wada, Zaria in Kaduna State and torched the Emir’s palace in Kano and the residence of the Emir of Zazzau in Kaduna State. The Mobe also destroyed lives, houses, places of worships and vehicles in parts of Niger, Sokoto, Taraba, Bauchi, Adamawa, Yobe States and Plateau State (The Guardian, 2011:21).
In a similar development, Human Rights Watch, in its official report published in Dakar, Senegal on May 16, 2011 on post-election violence in Nigeria, stated:

In spite of the improvements recorded in the conduct of the 2011 general polls compared to the past elections, about 800 Nigerians were killed in post-2011 election-related cases and communal violence in Northern parts of the country. The victims were killed in 12 Northern states.

Also, the official statement by Hafiz Ringim, Nigerian Inspector General of Police on this post-election mayhem, among other things, was shocking:

No fewer than 520 persons including six policemen died in Kaduna and Niger States. Of this figure, 518 died in Kaduna state alone. In the two states, 157 churches, 46 mosques, 1,435 houses, 437 vehicles and 219 motorcycles were burnt during the mayhem that followed the announcement of President Goodluck Jonathan as winner of the April 16 Election (Babalola, 2011:1).

However, these numbers from the police chief are believed to be highly approximate, partly because of government agents who may have an incentive to minimize the numbers fearing retaliatory consequences from the southern part of Nigeria.

Nevertheless, to address the above pre-and post-election violence, the Federal Government of Nigeria set up the 22-member investigation committee headed by Sheikh Ahmed Lemu which was inaugurated on Thursday, May 12, 2011. The committee was charged with investigating the immediate and remote causes of the violence that rocked Akwa-Ibom before the election, the post-election violence
in some other states of the north, and many other charges. The committee submitted its report to the president on October 11, 2011.

In light of the aforementioned, this paper seeks to contribute to the literature on “democracy and national security” and proceeds in seven sections: Section 1 introduction is followed by Sections 2 and 3 which examine the central concepts and related theoretical issues as well as the conceptual nexus needed to explore the relationship between post-election crises and national security; Sections 4 and 5 explore the nature and ramifications of post-election crises on Nigeria’s democracy and national security; Section 6 addresses the fundamental reasons for the 2011 post-election crises and disintegration trap within which Nigeria appears to be; Section 7 draws conclusions.

Theoretical Discourse

Post-election violence

The concept of electoral violence can manifest itself before, during and after elections. Omotala (2008:56) observed that post-electoral violence “may take the form of violent protest against electoral rigging, whether real or imagined and the states deploying its apparatus of force in response to the protest, thereby further fuelling the violence.” In fact, post-electoral violence may denote a violent protest orchestrated by political gladiators against any real or imagined electoral irregularities to attract maximum publicity, most especially, in African countries where there are high influences of the executive branch on the judiciary.
National Security

National security is a multidimensional concept. It is used in relation to security at the level of the individual and the state (Osumah and Ekpenyong, 2006). At the individual level, it refers to security from the point of view of human security, job security, social security and security against natural disaster. It denotes the protection of individual and property from any kind of threat. In a word, it is the absence of the evil of insecurity, which is essentially considered a negative value (Wolfers, 1965). By contrast, at the state level it means defense and survival of the state from external aggression, that is, a more conventional approach toward the subject of security.

For purposes of this paper we are particularly concerned with human security, a non-conventional security approach, which emphasizes freedom or the absence of dangerous threat to the corporate existence of any individual within the state. In fact, national security from a non-conventional perspective has altered the narrow interpretation of national security to include a broader definition that reflects the multi-dimensional nature of society. Variables included in this broader perspective include: the economic, cultural, technological, epidemiological, political, environmental and military (Chikwem and Alonge, 2011:83). This was argued, for example, by Onuoha (2008:35-61), who noted that national security denotes the capacity of a state to promote the pursuit and realization of the fundamental needs and vital interests of its citizens and society.

Theoretical Framework

What accounts for post-presidential election crises? Many are inclined to locate the motivation in a theoretical perspective based on “elite and social contract theory.” Leading scholars of political elite theories
include Michels, (1949); Mosca, (1939); Pareto, (1963); Lasswell and Learner, (1965); Burnham, (1942); and Mills (1959). The gist of their argument is that there may exist, in any society, a minority of the population which takes the major decisions of that society. These elites are very few in number and consist of those successful persons who excel in their various occupations and strata in the society such as lawyers, businessmen, traditional and religious leaders, even drug barons, thieves, and prostitution rings. Ikelegbe (1996) argues that, in African contexts, the elites of society are few but they wield much power and influence in their allocation of values and governance; they are the military elite, business elite, bureaucratic elite, political or governing elite, religious and traditional elite. Many of the elite do not hold formal or legal authoritative power, but are rather behind the scenes, tele-guiding and manipulating overt political and policy action. In other words, the elite make the policies, which are carried out by the administrators, and may go to the inhuman extent of using brutal force to crush every opposition and thereby strive and struggle to perpetuate its undemocratic decisions.

In the classic treatise, *The Leviathan*, Thomas Hobbes argues that social contracts necessitate the foundation of a state and are a crucial step toward government legitimacy. The concept conveys the notion that all legitimate political power must be “representative” and based on the consent of the people; liberal interpretations of law leave people free to do whatever the law does not explicitly forbid, as one might expect according to the laws of human nature. Hobbes explores what kind of fundamental agreement between people might lead to the creation of a state and what principles of justice would make it legitimate. Hobbes goes on to classically state that:

[A] social contract is a contract by which men avoid the state of nature and enter civil society, by conferring all their powers and strength upon one man, or upon an assembly
of men, to bear their person, to reduce all their will into one. It is a real unity of them all, in one and the same person, made by covenant of every man with every man, in such a manner, as if every man should say to every man, I authorize and give up my right of governing myself to this man, or to this assembly of men, on this condition, that thou give up thy right to him and authorized all his actions in like manner. This done, the multitude so united in one person, is called a Commonwealth, in Latin CIVITAS... the generation of that great Leviathan... the mortal god, to which we owe under the immortal God, our peace and defense (Hobbes, 1962:18-19).

Hobbes also outlines the basic features of this social contract to include the following major points:

a. The contract or covenant generates an absolute government;
b. The contract is between the subjects (citizens), the sovereign is not a party to it (except perhaps by derivation);
c. Sovereignty belongs to the government which now represents absolutely the common wealth. Therefore, it is inalienable and the highest power in the state;
d. This contract which establishes the sovereignty cannot be freely abrogated by the citizens. Nor can the absolute power of the sovereignty be easily reverted;
e. The contract subsumes the individual rights of self rule and will into the sovereign’s will;
f. Going against the sovereign power would imply defecting from the contract and ultimately a return to the state of nature, which is a lower state of life; civil disobedience is not justified, although Hobbes somewhere says that natural law limits the absolute power of the sovereign (Nwoko, 1988:73).
The state of nature, according to Hobbes, is a condition where there is no state or indeed no other social arrangement. In a state of nature, trust and cooperation would be difficult to sustain, fear and suspicion would pervade all the interactions between people, and there is unrestricted war and competition. As so many know of Hobbes’ work: “it is a war of every man against every man.” Moreover, in man’s natural state, “life is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.” Therefore, the creation of a strong state with untrammeled authority provides sanction against the abuse of trust and creates a climate for mutually beneficial cooperation.

The post-presidential election mayhem reflects the applicability of these two theories within the Nigerian context. The pre-election environment, created by the political and intellectual elites of Northern and Southern Nigeria over Peoples Democratic Party’s (PDP) zoning formula and the sense of entitlement that it encapsulated, made some of the northern political elites fill marginalized. This toxic environment only fueled the crises after the announcement of presidential result by INEC. Moreover, Northern political elites insisted on maintaining the traditional “North” and “South” divide, while the latter objected on the grounds that the North has held power for 35 years of Nigeria’s 51 years of existence as a country. Consistently marginalized, the South argued that their geopolitical regions of southern Nigeria had to be included in Nigeria’s executive base of power. Ofeimun (2011:78) notes that “zoning has become the unspoken divider even in other political parties; quite a touchy and difficult issue for many people ...” Adekunle (2010:50) similarly attests:

Despite all efforts to tame its negative backlash, the contentious zoning policy of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party, (PDP), is still tormenting the soul of the party. Up till now, the self-acclaimed largest political party in Africa is at
its wits over the contentious zoning policy. Contrary to public expectations, all the various meetings and negotiations by the party to persuade pro-zoning elements within it have reached a dead end, as the rank of forces in favour and against the policy increases by the day.

Kawu (2011:17) similarly notes that “The controversy around zoning deepened the divide in Nigeria.” In fact, many Northern political elites insist that the death of Yar’Adua does not alter the gentleman’s agreement, which reportedly concedes presidential power to the North for eight years. Their argument hinges on the fact that allowing Jonathan to clinch the presidential ticket of the PDP may rob the North of its opportunity to govern Nigeria again for the allotted period. But the South argued in favour of rotational presidency between the six geo-political zones of the country, not the one bequeathed to them, by colonial and northern military leaders which place the faith of the presidency on the old Sokoto Caliphate. Little wonder Ofeimun noted that:

No one has yet managed to explain what it is other than a ‘Veto’ that enables a decades-old hegemony (Sokoto Caliphate) to choose a president either from its own zone (North) or from another zone while calling it a rotation. It brings up the parable of the Wrestler who goes to wrestle with a community but reserves the right to demand who in that community he wishes to get into the ring with. It bears repeating: It is not an issue of rotation but veto power. It allows a few northern leaders who have chosen themselves rather than submit to a northern electorate, to claim that the rest of us have no right to intervene in the affairs of the North. Their reasons? that we are not northerners. And yet, they reserve the right not only to chose a northern leader for the rest of us but dash the presidency to a southern leader-as they deem fit (Ofeimun, 2011:79).
All these political intrigues and clashes between these two regions, over where the presidential pendulum swings, is as a result of lack of a fundamental social contract of about 250 ethnic and sub-ethnic nationalities railroaded into pseudo-amalgamation in 1914 by Britain for its selfish economic interest. Africanist Michael Crowder affirms that

the immediate reason for the British decision... was economic expediency. The northern protectorate was running at a deficit, which was being met by a subsidy from the southern protectorate and an imperial-grant-in-and from Britain of about £300,000 a year. This conflicted with the age-old colonial policy that each territory should be self-subsisting... it was felt that the prosperous southern protectorate could subsides its northern neighbour until such as time it becomes self-supporting. Furthermore, there was the pressing need to coordinate railway policy, which at that time was practically non-existence” (Crowder, 1966).

This explains why the colonial British Secretary General classified the south as “Lady” and the North as “Youth” in a special license to Sir Fredrick Lugard to perform the ceremony of 1914 in Nigeria (quoted from Njoku, 2009:232).

In analyzing this wobbling marriage of the south and the north in Nigeria, Sagay, notes that “in this marriage, the North right from the beginning was to be the ‘man’ and ‘husband’ and the south the ‘woman’ and ‘wife.’ The use of the term youth (man) for the north and ‘lady’ (woman) for the south was not an accident or an exercise in humour. It was a deadly serious matter with the game plan being to bring two parties together in order to give the north political power over southern “resources” (Sagay, 2011: 25).
However, both the Northern and Southern political leaders (Tafawa Balewa 1947; Obafemi Awolowo 1947; Nnamdi Azikiwe 1964:6-19) in Nigeria found fault with the amalgamation. For instance, the Late Ahmadu Bello, former premier of Northern Nigeria, referred to the amalgamation, thus:

The colonial master who ruled Nigeria introduced a system of unitary government not for the present or future unity or wellbeing of all the indigenes of the country but for his own administrative convenience... and Lord Lugard amalgamation were for from popular amongst ‘us’ at the time (Ahmadu Bello, 1966:1135).

All of the above demonstrates, as captured by Idumudia, that Nigeria is a state-nation as opposed to being a nation-state.

The nature of Nigerian politics and democracy

The disarticulated nature of Nigeria’s present politics and democracy is best understood within the historical context. This context unravels the evolution of Nigeria’s politics from the pre-colonial era to the post-independence epoch. It is a holistic approach which shows the interconnection and influences of British political diplomacy and the locally or regionally unguided exploitation.

Before the colonial era, the entity now known as Nigeria was made up of independent nations that included the Hausa-Fulani in the North, the Yoruba in the southwest, and Ibo in the south-east. Other principal ethnic groups are the Edo (Bini), Efiki, Urhobo, Ijaw, Tiv and Kanure. Except in a few cases such as the Itshekiri, which is an ethnic group with one language/dialect, there exist the Ibo of Onitsha, Oguta, etc., the Yoruba of Ekiti, Ijesha, Oyo, Ijebu and so on, the Urhobo of Okpe, Agbon, Ughelli, etc (Ola and Tonwe, 2005). In fact, Nigeria is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the world, with over 250 ethno-linguistic groups, some of which are bigger than many independent states of the contemporary Africa (Suberu, 2000).

These autonomous territories and tribes had established kingdoms and chiefdoms with unique, and in some cases complex systems of government. These include the Oyo Empire, Fulani Empire, the Benin Kingdom, the Ife Kingdom, the Great Kanem Borno, and the politically decentralized Ibo autonomous communities. These respective empires had established political systems, economic organizations and defense systems which operated effectively. The need to rationalize and regulate the economic relationship of these respective empires led to the imposition of colonial administration in the late 19th century (Turner, 1980:202).
The British government’s imposition, attributed to Lord Lugard, was meant to discourage other European competitors from engaging with the new Nigeria. Through its coercive apparatus, the colonial administrator defined Nigeria territorially, and forcefully integrated the various political forms and pre-capitalist modes at different stages of development into the global economic system that would satisfy the demand of British and global capital for the raw materials, primary exports, and a local market for imported finished products. Initially, Lugard pursued different administrative styles towards northern and southern Nigeria which were kept separate until the amalgamation of 1914 (Post and Vickers, 1973). The amalgamation was thought necessary to pool resources so as to enable the relatively rich territories of the south to assist their poorer neighbors the north, under the overall British control (Mamser, 1987:27). However, while the amalgamation brought together in one polity different nationalities at different stages of political and economic development, no efforts were made by the British to give the amalgamated units a common political orientation (Mamser, 1987:27). As such, it exacerbated an atmosphere of disunity, conflict and instability through vertical channels of extraction, accumulation and transfer. In short, it created cleavages, distrust and rivalry.

Following the formal acquisition of political independence in 1960, Akinboye and Anifowose (1999:244) noted that Nigeria “inherited a weak socio-political structure, a defective and unbalanced federation, an intensification of ethnic consciousness and rivalries, a subverted indigenous ethos of government and culture, and above all, an inexperienced leadership.” The British simply conceded power to a moderate faction of indigenous bourgeoisie with a weak economic base who relied on the state for capital accumulation and appropriation.
Nigeria’s first republic (1960-1966) was a Westminster-style parliamentary democracy. Following experiments with parliamentary forms of government, the second republic (1979-1983) and the third republic (1993) were presidential systems of democracy by military fiat. Although a few Nigerians had in 1993 canvassed for a French style presidential parliamentary system for the country, the decision to experiment with the presidential was unilaterally imposed by the Head of State, General Sani Abacha (Namdi, 2009:122). The fourth republic (1999 till date) and subsequent forms of democracy represent elements of liberal democracy, now included in the Nigerian constitution. For instance, section 14 sub-section 1 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria states that “the Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be a state based on the principle of democracy and social justice.” At sub-section 2(a), it defines the type of democracy as one where “sovereignty belongs to the people of Nigeria from whom government through this constitution derives all its powers and authority.” With these declarations, we are not left in any doubt that liberal democracy with representative governance is the central theme in Nigeria’s type of democracy. So how democratic is Nigeria’s democracy?

Actually, with the exception of 1993 and April 2011 elections, observers of political events in Nigeria believe that democracy should go “beyond the conduct of election” (Igbuzor, 2005:3). Accordingly, some argue that Nigeria is at best a “militarized democracy” or a self-defined and managed “meritocracy” – a term used to describe the Nigerian situation where democratic structures exist but the rule of law is ignored. Al-Bashir (2008:17) calls this situation “democracy which knows no rules.” No wonder Nwabueze (2004:4) has cautioned against the tendency of assuming that the fall of authoritarian regimes in Africa was automatically followed with the birth of democratic ones. This could not have been the case because in most of Africa, the regimes that emerged upon the overthrow of the east were
authoritarian ones that moved only a short distance away from authoritarianism” (Auntington 1999:39) and thus, not “truly democratic regimes” (Nwabueze, 2004:6). An analysis of even earlier elections in Nigeria demonstrates that this has long been the case in Nigeria.

For example, according to Ikelegbe (1996:13), the Westminster-style parliamentary democracy practiced in the first republic (1960-1966) did not survive due to the irregularities, violence, thuggery, wrangling and fraud that characterized the 1964 general elections. During the second republic (1979-1983), it was similarly observed that irregularities, fraudulent practices, inter-party, and intra-party squabbles that characterized the 1983 general election contributed to the collapse of the second republic through the military coup of December 31, 1983 (Ikelegbe, 1996: 83; Osaghae, 2002:19; Falola and Ihonvbere, 1985:71). According to Ezeh (2009:537), the third republic (1993) which was established under Moshood Kasimawo Abiola became a source of worry to many, especially because it was adjudged by many as the fairest democratic opportunity the country ever had. Yet it was quickly annulled by the military administration of General Ibrahim Babangida on June 12, 1993 and that, in a recurring pattern, sparked off violence, mostly in the western part of the country where Abiola hailed from. Utulu (2009:22) observes that more than 100 people were killed in riots before Babangida agreed to hand power to an interim government on August 27, 1993.

Alas, the ensuing general elections of 1999, 2003 and 2007 were also fundamentally flawed and marked by gross irregularities. This was attested to by Odion–Akhaine, 2005: 110; Haruna, 2003:7; ACE, 2007:72; Kohnert, 2004:5 and many others, who noted that the elections of these years were generally characterized by the exclusion of aspirants from participation through various acts of violence or by the imposition of candidates who were preferred by political
godfathers but lacked the credibility or integrity to compete with more credible and popular candidates.

Then came the April 2011 election which was won by Goodluck Jonathan of the PDP, which observers across the globe have argued could go down in history as Nigeria’s most orderly and peaceful election. In actual fact, it may not be the best election Nigeria has ever had, but it is certainly commendable when compared with the circumstances surrounding the elections of 1999, 2003 and 2007. And yet the sudden eruption of violence in some northern parts of Nigeria has nevertheless made the 2011 election wear the tag of the bloodiest in Nigerian history. Human Right Watch (HRW) captured this quite vividly, as follows:

The April elections were heralded as among the fairest in Nigeria’s history but they also were among the bloodiest said by Carinne Dufka, senior West Africa researcher at human right watch. The newly elected authorities should quickly build on the democratic gains from the elections by bringing to justice those who orchestrated these horrific crimes and addressing the root causes of the violence (HRW, 2011:1).

2011 general Election and Organization in Nigeria

Scholars have argued that Nigerian leaders are somewhat determined to make democracy work in their country (Akintunde, 1967:78). Despite the flawed nature of 1999, 2003 and 2007 elections, Nigerians still went out to vote for the 2011 general elections. However, the reality of Nigerian’s political life is the arrogance of some elites who think they can determine for every electorate in Nigeria. This is
followed by a history of stiff resistance by some prominent Nigerians with the consequent classification of Nigeria as a violence ridden country. In fact, this has made some scholars to refer to the history of elections in Nigeria as constantly being carried along the baggage of violence (Bamgbose, 2011:52). This raises a fundamental question as whether there is no electoral laws in Nigeria or whether the integrity of INEC has been questionable.

Nevertheless, the shift from military rule to democracy from 1990 till date has witnessed Nigeria’s National Assembly passing three Electoral Acts -2002, 2006 and 2010 to make the elections transparent, commendable and acceptable to the international community. Though, we have no intention here, to go into a detailed analysis of the above mentioned electoral acts, but to point out that the three Electoral Acts contain good policies that will make election in Nigeria suitable for democratic dividend and violent free. However, Nigeria is known to formulate good policies but the problem lies on implementation.

So the 2011 general election in Nigeria in terms of preparations and confidence on electoral body by the oppositions and the ruling party was fairly commendable. For instance, the opposition demanded the removal of former INEC chairman from the south and the president removed him and replaced him with Prof. Jega from the north who was accepted by all parties. To prevent electoral violence during the elections, a meeting of the 36 state governors of the federation which was presided over by the then chairman of the Nigerian Governors Forum (NGF), Bukola Saraki was held on February 8, 2011 at Abuja in which the governors signed an undertaking to:

- commit to free, fair credible and transparent electoral process in the upcoming elections.
remain unflinchingly committed to democracy and the integrity of the electoral process.

refrain from using religion and ethnicity as vehicle from political campaign

commit to promoting peaceful religious and ethnic co-existence,

do our best to ensure the coming elections are devoid of any form of manipulation, thuggery, violence, rigging and any other form of underhand tactics.

consistently educate and remind our supporters, and party members not to do anything or take any action capable of compromising the electoral process

promptly and loudly denounce, and even disown any of our supporters engaged in any act that might diminish credibility of the forthcoming elections

do nothing that will weaken, muzzle or destabilize opposition parties in our various states; and

respect the wishes of electorate as expressed through the ballot box. (Jimoh, 2011:3).

Despite all these measures, Nigeria’s 2011 general election witnessed pre and post electoral violence, confirming the notion that Nigeria has a culture of violence which started since independence of 1960.
Implications of 2011 Electoral Violence on Nigeria’s National Security

The inordinate desire of some Northern political elites, coupled with lack of fundamental social agreement manifested in form of violent post-electoral violence in the 2011 general election, has fierce and cataclysmic consequences on Nigeria’s national security.

The outbreak of violent killings, arson, looting and destruction of properties which later degenerated into ethno-religious conflict following the April 16, 2011 pronouncement of Goodluck Jonathan as president by INEC, has an ominous danger for Nigeria’s National Security and beyond, given the threat to peaceful co-existence, threat to lives and properties, threat to political stability and threat to national security, are similar incidents that threw Nigerians into thirty months civil war. For instance, estimates of killings ranged from 500 to 800, including at least 10 National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members who were on election assignments (Madunagu, 2011:14). In fact, the magnitude and intensity of killing, looting and arson is such that about 5,000 persons were estimated to have been killed, including numerous burnt houses, churches, vehicles and motorcycles belonging mostly to southerners. This monumental destruction inflicted by the protesters, with its consequent negative implications on Nigeria’s National Security, led to a presidential broadcast where President Jonathan remarked that:

If anything at all, these acts of mayhem are sad reminders of the events which plunged our country into thirty months of an unfortunate civil war. As a nation, we are yet to come to terms with the level of human suffering, destruction and displacement, including that of our children to far-away countries, occasioned by those dark days (The Guardian, April 21, 2011:1).
Also, the 2011 post-presidential electoral violence has been ignited and sustained through the proliferation of advanced weaponry from porous and unmanned Nigerian borders with its consequent negative effects on Nigeria’s national security. Nigeria has expansive borders which are poorly policed thereby allowing illegal immigrants which are sometimes used to perpetuate criminality and violence to flood the country (1,497 kilometers long with Niger; 737 kilometers with Republic of Benin, 1,690 kilometers with Cameroon; and 83 kilometers with Chad). The current 19,866 staff strength of the Nigeria Immigration Service is grossly inadequate for border policing (The Punch, September 15, 2011:18). That explains why the security agencies in different occasions have intercepted different weapons at the border and inside Nigeria. For instance, on July 15 2011, the security agencies intercepted a lorry load of 700 cartons of illegal explosives at the Abuja city gate with two armed policemen as escorts (Molly, 2011:1). Also, between 2010 and 2011, there have been reported cases of intercepted caches of illegal weapons in the country including those seized at Kano International Airport in Northern Nigeria, Apapa sea port in Lagos and Onne port in Rivers state. The worrisome part of it is that Nigeria is a signatory to international convention on the proliferation of small and light weapons which come in from diverse sources.

There can be little doubt that the 2011 post-electoral killings in some northern parts of Nigeria continues to threaten existing businesses and is driving away foreign investors from Nigeria with its obvious negative implications on Nigeria’s national security. Foreign investors that might have helped further the development of a crippled Nigerian economy are driven away by the incessant post-electoral mayhem that occurs within Nigeria. Commenting on the socio-economic and security threat to which this post-electoral violence has posed on Nigeria, Ola Barnabas, a Kano-based consultant on small and medium-scale enterprises, told Business Day:
If you observed during the post-election violence that occurred, the primary target of the attackers was the businesses, and residencies, of the non-native. According to recent study conducted, over 2000 small businesses were destroyed in Kano State alone, during the violence, the destroyed businesses are said to be employing over 15,000 workers. The implications of the sad situation which the region now finds itself, is that, people who had their businesses destroyed might no longer be willing to re-build them and potential investors are going to be very cautious to put in their money in any enterprise (Ajakainye, 2011:2).

Similarly, the post electoral violence, which later assumed ethno-religious sentiments, breeds inter-faith distrust and tension in inter-faith relations which further exacerbates the security situation in Nigeria. The adherents of the two major faiths in Nigeria, Islam and Christianity, have diminished trust in one another and have become suspicious and afraid of one another in their neighborhoods. For instance, Nigeria has recorded “more than 50 religious crises in 30 years in the North and they have left political, social, economic and psychological losses and pains in their trail” (Abimbola, 2009:10). In 2000, in the worst of such cases in Kaduna, more than 2,000 people died in street protests which were eventually brought under control by the Nigerian Army. It is estimated that between 1999 and 2003, close to 10,000 people died in clashes between Christians and Muslims (Isaacs, 2009). At present, the rising Boko Haram insurgency on Nigeria and other religions have left hundreds of Nigerians dead, and paralyzed security, with their sponsor recently undergoing trails.

Finally, the electoral violence of 2011 has also resulted in large-scale internal displacement and forced relocation of inhabitants of the violence prone regions, which only furthers the security threat. According to the figures recorded by Nigeria’s National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), at least 75,000 people were forced to
flee their homes as a result of the violence and about 55,000 of them are in camps for the displaced, while the remaining 20,000 have been taken in by family members or friends (Oke, 2011:25). The negative security consequences are very much noted by Chikwem and Alonge (2011:89), who state that the resource-conflicts generated by the arrival of migrants in new areas of settlement pose threats to the stability of the host communities. Bamgbose (2011:50) similarly states that over 4,500 people were displaced at Bauchi alone, following the mayhem unleashed on the residents by supporters of Congress of Progressive Change (CPC).

Understanding the post-2011 election crises and Nigeria’s disintegration trap

Several explanations can be constructed for the extensive post-election violence that led to great national security concerns in Nigeria. Among these are the conspiratorial norms among Northern Nigeria’s political elite and the lack of any fundamental agreement among the many ethnic and sub-ethnic nationalities that make up the entity called Nigeria. Government panel findings have identified many other causes, such as Nigeria’s elite culture of impunity; zoning controversies; ethno-religious sentiments; and provocative utterances, though relevant, are mere scratching at the surface and will not be dealt with here.

One reason for the post-2011 election mayhem, which is perhaps the most important, is the decentralization of Hausa-Fulani hegemony. The shift of political power to the South since 2010, when President Yar’Adua died, with the consequent re-election of Goodluck Jonathan in April 2011, has since spawned much of the violence. Some northern political elites manipulate religious identities to mobilize the masses to fight and struggle for regional political causes.
Before now, in the 35 years of Nigeria’s 51 years existence as a country, odyssey of its political travail and path of its transition have been marked and shaped by ethno-religious considerations whereby the predominantly northern majority dominated by the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group, has as its rallying point, the Sultan of Sokoto who fan the embers of unity with religious sentiments and use other subservient emirates, to coerce other parts of the north especially the Middle Belt, who are predominantly Christians, to submit to his whims and caprices of one monolithic north, and in the process decide who will be the president. But, Jonathan’s election saw the Middle Belt voted for Jonathan and the core 12 northern states (predominantly Hausa-Fulani), voted for their ethnic CPC candidate, Mohammed Buhari, to preserve the unfortunate demise of Hausa-Fulani oligarchy. Through this political manipulation, the north has ruled Nigeria for 39 years, while the south has ruled for 12 years of Nigeria’s 51 years of existence. The incumbent governor of Ekiti State in Nigeria, Kayode Fayemi, captured the above view quite vividly, when he stated thus:

The map of Nigeria that appears at the end of the presidential election, for me as an individual, is not a very palatable one I would forever remember that graphic representation in National Mirror and subsequently, Punch Newspaper, which almost painted the scenario of Gideon Okar Coup of excision of the country. If you recalled the Okar broadcast excorising states that are referred to as the core north; because all the 12 states that make up core North voted for General Muhammadu Buhari, and all the states in the Middle Belt, Christian majority Middle Belt and of course the South, all voted Goodluck Jonathan, including, to my Chagrin, Ekiti where I campaigned vigorously for our presidential candidates, Nuhu Ribadu. And my own party members defied me to vote Jonathan. I think it called for sober reflection in a very serious manner
because I thought we had put this behind us in Nigeria and that we are ready to forge ahead. It still points towards the direction of crises of nationhood in our country. When you see what happened, the post election violence that consumed corps members, including one of my own, it underscored the extent of work, we still had to do in forging and integrating nation state in which all of us will not reduce representation to grounds ethnicity and religions (Fayemi, 2011:1).

He further picked courage to know why his party, Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), defied him to vote Goodluck Jonathan of PDP. He discovered to his astonishment that at the various constituencies in his state where he visited, people came to him and said “Your Excellency don’t worry we were clear, we had to do what we did because we must vote our own. And that was very serious thing. It points to one thing again that what are we, a nation or still a country? A coat of many colours that has refused to form a rainbow coalition. It is a challenge that we have to face. It is a much deeper issue that Nigerians have to confront” (Fayemi, 2011:2). This obnoxious feeling of marginalization from the political sphere by the northern elite is the core driver of post-election mayhem.

Also, since economic power resides in the south, the former northern heads of state through undemocratic decrees and laws have carefully centralized all the fiscal revenue allocation in Nigeria on the presidency and has been reluctant in allowing power shift to the south, especially, the incumbent president Goodluck Jonathan from the oil rich Niger Delta of Southern Nigeria, where those obnoxious decrees and laws have affected drastically. For instance Petroleum Decree 51 of 1969 which abolished the derivation principle applied in the distribution of natural resources revenue from 1946 to 1969 and put them under the sole ownership of the federal government;
offshore oil Revenues Decree No 9 of 1971 which empowered the federal government to appropriate all minerals in the continental shelf of coastal or lithoral states, six of them in the Niger Delta; (Title Vesting, etc) Decree 52 of 1993 empowers the federal government as the sole owner of any lands within 100 meters of the coast or watercourse or river throughout the country. Although all parts of Nigeria are affected by this decree the Niger Delta seems to be the main target of this law because the region hosts over 90% of the rivers and waterways in West Africa. In fact, Niger Delta has about 500 rivers being the highest in the world; and so many others. Actually, these undemocratic Decrees and laws have been responsible for the violence and insecurity that bedevils the Nigerian state for long. So, the emergence of President Goodluck Jonathan from this oil rich Niger Delta is seen as a dangerous move for some of these northern political elites who try to stop him by making the state ungovernable for him through post-election crises exacerbated by the activities of the political wing of Boko Haram. This fact was attested to by the chairman of northern ethno-cultural group-Arewa Consultative Forum, Jeremiah Useni, who blamed selfish northern politicians for the emergence and radicalization of the Boko Haram and Jos crisis (Owuamanam, 2011;13). Collaborating the above is the co-founder of the Boko Haram, Malam Aliyu Tishau, who was interviewed on the African Independent Television (AIT) on the September 20, 2011, who, among other things, distances his members from the indiscriminate killings of the innocent people by the political wing of Boko Haram. Hear him:

I have rejoined my group and some of us have warned our members to stick to the original ideals of our leader, Yusuf. The Late leader did not tell us to kill innocent people or to break into and steal from banks. If there is a conflict between the faithful and the authorities, our opposition
should be against the authorities and not the talakawas (innocent ones) (Chigbo, 2011:15).

In addition, there is high level of illiteracy among the northern youths. A large percentage of northern youths are uneducated and are not grounded in western education and civilization. This, however, makes it difficult for them to question order from political and religious leaders who manipulate religious identity to mobilize them for selfish interest. According to the 2011 Nigerian official Data Survey from the Ministry of Education and National Population Commission (NPC), presented by the NPC chairman, Chief Samuel D. Makama, will serve as an eye opener. Educational enrolment between the ages of 6-16 of different geo-political zones in Nigeria, “North-West and North-East Zone 72 percent, southern zones 3 percent and Imo State has zero percent”. On literacy levels according to geo-political zones, he states:

Table 1: Geo-Political Zones and Literacy levels in Nigeria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geo-Political Zones</th>
<th>Literacy Levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South –West</td>
<td>73.6 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South – South</td>
<td>71.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South – East</td>
<td>74.1 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North – West</td>
<td>33.8 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North – East</td>
<td>33.8 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North – Central</td>
<td>54.9 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above table, it is apparent that the three northern geopolitical zones most especially the north-east that remains volatile, are rated low above every other zone in terms of literacy level.

Akowa Tony further presents astonishing statistics of school attendance across Nigeria.

**Table 2: School Attendance across states**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest Number in school</th>
<th>Lowest number in school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ondo -10 out of every 120</td>
<td>Zamfara - 28 out of every 120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anambra -117 out of every 120</td>
<td>Borno – 29 out of every 120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross River -114 out of every 120</td>
<td>Kebbi -34 out of every 120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delta -113 out of every 120</td>
<td>Sokoto –42 out of every 120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abia -113 out of every 120</td>
<td>Yobe -42 out of every 120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Also, following the above table, it is quite clear that states in the North (Borno, Zamfara, Kebbi, Sokoto and Yobe) have the lowest levels of school attendance across the states of Nigeria.

These indices remain appalling despite the huge sums from the federation account that accrued to the Northern states. Worst still, the senior government officials and privileged northern elites send their children to good schools at home and abroad, while the poor children’s education ends in Koranic indoctrination without any formal education. According to recent USAID report, approximately “six million pupils including an overwhelmed figure of girls are enrolled in Koranic schools” which only offer religious instruction to local Imams and mosque leaders (The Punch Editorial July 26, 2011:18). This is dangerous according to a prominent Muslim leader and educationist, Alhaji Mohammed Sadecq Abubakar, because “the Almajiris are more contagious and pose a threat to the nation which is...
spreading like wild fire. The only devote their time for Islamic studies with no hope after being sent away by their parents. Islam does not teach… with the way things are going, we are only grooming them as future terrorists if we don’t act now” (Umenne, 2011:22).

Closely related to the above, is the attractive nature of political positions in Nigeria. The political office holders have lucratised their respective positions at the expense of the whole nation in a situation where other vital sectors of the economy are either comatose or dead and the politicians are wallowing in ostentation. Running for elected office has become for many, both an escape from poverty and avenue to great wealth within the shortest possible time. So, they invest so much on it and bankroll militia groups because of the future dividend. The salaries and allowances of political office holders are out of tune and glossily disproportional to the environment in which they are earned. For example, while a graduate civil servant in grade level 08 earns about N18,000 a month, a local government councillor with limited qualification is on a total package of N132,000 a month. Ogan (2010:7-8) provides staggering statistical data on the salaries and allowances of senators:

Table 3: Basic Salaries and Allowances of Nigerian Senators (Legalized)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>TYPE OF ALLOWANCE</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF BASIC SALARY</th>
<th>ACTUAL FIGURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Hardship</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>1,242,122.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Constituency</td>
<td>200%</td>
<td>4,968,509.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>1,242,122.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Annual Basic salary: N2,484,245.50
Annual Total Salary and Allowances: N29,479,749.00
Salaries and Allowances per month: 2,456,647.70
109 Senators Grand Total: N3, 264,329.10
When one compares the above salaries with those of professors in most of the Nigerian universities who earn less than N600,000.00 totaling less than N7, 200,000.00 annually and the poverty rate, especially in northern parts of Nigeria, one will understand why some of the northern political elites have always been reluctant to allow power shift to the south. Table 4 below shows ranges of poverty among the geo-political zones in Nigeria.

Table 4: Trends in Poverty Level by Geo-Political Zones in Nigeria (1980-2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South-South</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>31.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-East</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-West</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-Central</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>64.7</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-East</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>72.2</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-West</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>71.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Source: Author’s compilation from NBS and NAPEP.

From the table above, it is quite clear that the three northern geopolitical zones, most especially the North-East that remains volatile, are rated high above every other zone in terms of the poverty rate. The above demonstrates how some northern political elites, with a token of money and religious identity, can manipulate and mobilize the masses toward violence.

Finally, the northern youths’ perceived sabotage by some of their political, economic and traditional elites in consolidating the Hausa – Fulani oligarchy account for some of the salient reasons for the post-electoral violence. That explains why some of the houses of some prominent northern elites were either vandalized or burnt. For instance, the burning of the family home of Vice-President Nnamdi Sambo in Tundun Wada, Zaria in Kaduna state; the torching of Emir’s palace in Kano and the residence of the Emir of Zazzau in Kaduna State. For the northern youths, it is a corruption for some of its elites to support a southern Christian president. This was attested by a northern intellectual elite, Is’haq Modibbo Kawu (2011:17), who said that the northern uprising was a rejection of a class project which unites the corruption of different segments of the ruling class: political, business and traditional.

Conclusion

Mainstream analysis of post-2011 electoral violence in Nigeria mainly focuses on state fragility and legal dimensions of the phenomenon, thereby neglecting the complicity of some of the northern political elites in fuelling the crisis and lack of fundamental social contract, ab initio in creating a strong state in a multiplicity of ethnic nationalities. In fact, these selfish ethno-religious politics and absence of social
contract have plunged Nigeria into a Hobbesian jungle of “state of nature” where life is nasty, brutish and short as exemplified in the death of hundreds of Nigerians in post-election mayhem in northern Nigeria. Actually, there is a war of all ethnic nationalities on becoming the president of Nigeria. These destabilizing ethno-religious violence, zoning controversy, high culture of impunity, illegitimate Hausa-Fulani hegemony, sabotage, etc, in Nigeria as a whole, are functions of contextual social contract and political elite’s dynamics.

Nevertheless, observes of political events in Nigeria based on the map that appeared after the 2011 presidential election are worried that it was conspicuously voted along the North and South divide. This polarization constantly affects the unity of the country. Therefore, it logically follows that the wish of the majority expressed along ethno-religious and anti-state paradigm, within the multiplicity of religion, without recourse to the best, cannot lead, in all indices of democracy, to consolidation and unification of any country, hence, Nigeria being “trapped in disintegration”.

Although post-election crises are not unique to Nigeria, the magnitude and cruelty of human and material destruction threatened the corporate existence of Nigeria. Thus, urgent steps are needed to tackle the menace. First and perhaps most important, is the convocation of sovereign national conference as a viable option to address some of these imbalances in Nigeria. This conference will redefine as well as project a distinct, declared punishment for those who violate the code of mutual co-existence. Second, the Nigerian police and other law enforcement agencies should learn how to act on intelligence reports swiftly as those places had earlier been identified as likely trouble spots. Third, these post-election rioters should be made to be answerable to the law to solve the problem of culture of impunity in Nigeria.
Certainly, there are some of Northern political elites who may like to reverse to the old order of answering born to rule and others are born to follow, by fuelling further political crisis. Therefore, appropriate punishment should be meted out to such political elites to serve as a deterrent to the remaining bad eggs because nobody should be above the law. One thing is only needed, the political will to carry out the letters of the law.

**Endnote**
1. NBS stands for National Bureau of Statistics and National Agency for Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) in Nigeria respectively.

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A LOOK AT THE STRUGGLE OF ZIMBABWEAN MARRIED WOMEN REGARDING SAFE SEX

FRANCIS MACHINGURA

KEY TERMS:

ABSTRACT:
The debate on HIV and AIDS has attracted necessary attention in all facets of Zimbabwean life. Today, the assumption is that all people, men and women, understand the urgent need to openly discuss and negotiate the need for safe sex, whichever way necessary, for the preservation of life and the integrity of families. Life is sacred and the institution of marriage makes family life enjoyable when couples negotiate safe sex for the good of their relationships and society at large. Unfortunately the status of Zimbabwean women is still in a sad state due to the prevalence of masculinist and patriarchal norms that negatively portray Zimbabwean women as subordinates and men as dominating all aspects of life. This portrayal of men and women does not end in the public sphere but is also found in the private sphere where men decide what is good for their partners in relation to safe sex. Even though seminars, programmes, conferences, electronic and print media have made people aware of HIV and AIDS, the cultural barriers supported by traditional African religions and Christian religious beliefs have taken women hostage, making them vulnerable to Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), HIV and AIDS. This article looks at Shona cultural and spiritual beliefs that promote masculinity and considers the negative impacts on the sexuality of women and, in turn, the ongoing HIV and AIDS pandemic. With the popularity of Christianity throughout Zimbabwe in mind, the article uses 1 Corinthians 7:4 (“The wife’s body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband”) as the text that can be used for the liberation and empowerment of all women in the face of HIV and AIDS.
Introduction

The prevalence of HIV and AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa calls for an urgent resolve to equip every member of society, especially the weaker members of society: women, the disabled, and children. Women constitute the biggest percentage in terms of population in the world, let alone in Zimbabwe. Even though women are the majority in every nation, their ineffectiveness at negotiating for safe sex is a cause for concern. In some cases, African cultures have not been supportive of women especially with regard to safe sex and the challenges of HIV and AIDS. Truth be told, men and women of the cloth have also been found wanting in their interpretation of the Bible. Often they use the cultural lenses of their own African societies to interpret the Bible, which can lead to a perpetuation of the exploitation of women that serves little more than masculine egos and selfishness. In Zimbabwe, the Bible is a popular document on all matters of faith, morality and socialization. Yet, unfortunately, the Bible has been used to justify the oppression of women in relation to sexuality. Women have been made to believe that it is improper for them to talk or negotiate for safe sex. Sometimes claims are made about the Bible ‘saying this and that,’ yet it is really the power of masculinist perspectives that are at play. According to these interpretations of the Bible, women are made to facilitate the enjoyment of the lives of men and little more. In order to get the ball rolling, let us first look at Shona culture and the status of married women with regard to sexual matters.

The Zimbabwean Women’s Failure to Negotiate for Safe Sex: a Dialogue with the Shona Culture

Culture represents the accumulated symbolic social information necessary for the structuring and directing of the social system (K C
Hanson and Douglas E Oakman 1998, 16). Culture influences people’s behaviour in terms of thinking and acting (M F C Bourdillon 1976, 23). Culture has had an influence on Christians’ attitudes towards sexuality particularly the sexual status of women. When Christians use the Bible, they use the same cultural lenses to define and characterise the sexual status and roles of women. Christianity has greatly grown in Zimbabwe but this has not changed the perception of the Shona people on marriage, status and the roles of women in marriage. Even though churches advocate for couples to get tested before they get married, the attitude of the church towards the use of condoms in marriage is very unfortunate. Interestingly, many couples are tested before entering into marriage but that does not mean that, testing negative when entering marriage, one has escaped the virus altogether.

Many couples have lost their lives because of the church’s attitude towards the use of condoms and their patronising interpretation of the Bible in relation to sexual issues. The attitude in most cases is that ‘HIV and AIDS may be wicked but not as wicked as condoms.’ The reluctance of the church to tackle the growing problem of promiscuity amongst men in Zimbabwe is a great betrayal by the church. That said, it is our contention that the Shona culture is the major force behind the challenges faced by women in general, and married women in particular, on sexual issues. Even though women had certain privileges and powers in the Shona culture, it is unanimously agreed that the Shona culture furthers masculinist behaviours.

It is sad to note that gender is culturally constructed from birth to death and those constructions create fertile fields for the spread of HIV and AIDS (Musa Wenkosi Dube 2008, 100). The Minister of Women’s Affairs, Gender and Community Development, Olivia Muchena, also blamed cultural and religious practices for
limiting the access of women and girls in Zimbabwe to HIV counselling and testing, as well as Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) services. She states that cultural beliefs and practices place the women and girls at a disproportionate risk of contracting HIV. Olivia Muchena (Robert Tapfumaneyi, 22 November 2011) argues that,

Some of these practices include polygamy, spousal inheritance, *ngozi* (i.e., the traditional belief and practice of appeasing avenging spirits), *chiramu* or *sibale* (a mock marriage cultural practice where a young sister-in-law can be fondled in a practice that can lead to sexual intercourse), sex as a cure for HIV, and property inheritance. An effective response for women and girls must improve their access to quality HIV prevention, treatment, care and support, addressing the structural drivers of vulnerability and risk for women and girls and mitigating the impact of the epidemic. Some negative religious practices also contribute to exposing women to HIV as some apostolic sects promote early marriage of girls and young women to older men who are already in polygamous unions.

It is sad that it is sometimes culture, as shown by Olivia Muchena, which exposes a female child to patriarchal violence. But the fact is that both the patriarchal Church and the underlying masculinist cultures play a role. A case in mind is the state of women in apostolic sects where polygamy is celebrated even though it badly impacts on womanhood. As I have noted elsewhere, the Johane Marange and Johane Masowe sects are known for marrying off ‘young girls’ under the guise of religion. What complicates the status of women in such sects is that, they are barred from using any form of family planning methods (Francis Machingura 2011, 185-210). The Bible is invoked to support and qualify the position of men as decision-makers in the institution of marriage and women as just followers in that marital partnership. The claim being that ‘it is the voice and mind of God’ that must be respected when in actual fact it is
'the voice and mind of men supported by the masculine culture’ that sometimes spoke through the Bible. And in most cases, this has had a negative impact on the powers that married women have in negotiating for safe sex. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (1983, 7) observes that, the Bible is not a ‘neutral’ book but a political weapon against women’s struggle for liberation. She observes that the Bible bears the imprint of men who never saw or talked with God. The Bible has been used to supplement or support what the broader Shona culture says about women particularly as it emphasizes women’s submission to men. It does not matter the challenges that arise against the freedom and rights of women. In most cases where couples accuse each other of promiscuity, it is always the man who culturally and religiously takes the lead in negotiating for safe sex and not vice versa. This does not matter whether the man is known for going out with other women and in return infects his wife with sexually transmitted diseases (STI). What is painful is that, HIV and AIDS greatly exposes some of the social, cultural injustices of the African culture as observed by Olivia Muchena. The Shona culture in most cases conditions married women to become subservient to men even in cases where their existence, role and status are felt.

In the present era of HIV and AIDS, it is married women who suffer more than the unmarried women or single mothers. HIV and AIDS show how cultures play double-standards by tolerating unfaithfulness amongst males and at the same time expecting married women to be slavishly faithful to their husbands. Most married women realise that, after faithfully committing themselves to their husbands, they found that they were HIV positive when they fell pregnant after being tested for HIV. It is unfortunate that the majority of women learn the hard-way that marriage is sometimes not a safe place from HIV without proper empowerment. Ezra Chitando (2011) sadly notes that, the HIV epidemic has highlighted the fault-lines that are caused by gender inequality whereby women’s powerlessness and
men’s abuse of power are significant factors in understanding the epidemic in the sub-Saharan Africa. This was confirmed by Thandiwe that, were it not for the patriarchal society she could not be in the situation of a full-blown AIDS that she is in now. Despite the fact that she knew that her husband was promiscuous she did not have the courage to negotiate for safe sex as it is much worse for married women to request their husbands to use condoms. Thandiwe (Raymond Mhaka, 20 November 2011) regrettably noted that:

My husband was promiscuous, and the community even identified him as one of the bulls. I knew my husband was promiscuous but I could not move out of the marriage because of stigma attached to divorced women. I was also afraid to ask my husband to put on a condom every time we had sex because culturally it is taboo to do that. I knew about the female condom but I had little information about it. I thought the female condom was for prostitutes. Even when I became visibly sick I still did not have the courage to go to the local clinic until when it was almost too late.

Thandiwe in this case shows us that, the Shona culture does not fully empower women in relation to sexual issues especially women married to promiscuous men. The sorry state of women is so dire in Zimbabwean rural areas where there is little or no information about how married women can protect themselves in promiscuous marital unions. Even when empowered with the information, it is still a daunting task to put their safe sex knowledge into practice or engage in any sexual discussions with their husbands for fear of being labeled ‘prostitutes’. Women have been rendered powerless and have become minors to push on safe sex matters when they are suspicious that their lives are being endangered (Musa Wenkosi Dube 2008, 104). Culture has set a wedge against women in such a manner that, it is men who are expected to take the lead on sexual issues. As a result, women still lack the information as well as proper empowerment.
This was confirmed by the Deputy Minister of Health and Child Welfare, Douglas Mombeshora, who speaking at the launch of the *Zimbabwe Accelerated Agenda Country Plan and Work Plan on Women and Girls, Gender Equality and HIV in Harare*, said that (Robert Tapfumaneyi, 22 November 2011):

> Through concerted efforts from all fronts, Zimbabwe has made great strides towards achievement of universal access targets but still remains below the targets particularly in the area of treatment and care. Although we have quite a wide array of HIV prevention services, sadly very few of these are women-oriented, and as a matter of necessity and empowerment of women, we still need to expand HIV prevention services that target women, and the recently concluded National AIDS Conference has reiterated our commitment to reduce new HIV infections through virtual elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission.

The empowerment of women can go a long way to curb the spread of HIV and AIDS. What is so painful is that, the Shona culture values the sacredness of the marriage institution at the expense of women. It is always women who suffer and get infected with the HIV virus because of cultural beliefs. It is culturally a taboo for Shona women to openly talk about sex and discuss safe sex methods without inviting cultural stigmatisation. Women who dare openly talk about sexual issues are labeled ‘immoral, un-African, uncultured, loose and ominous’ to the societal order. Further to that, it is again a taboo for the married woman to turn down the sexual advances of her husband even if she knows that the husband is promiscuous. A good woman submits to the husband on everything and does not nag her husband about his worrisome sexual behavior. The Shona women behave as expected by the broader society, that is, reprehensibly and amorally (Isabel Mukonyora 2007, 63), even if their rights are suspended or violated against. What is shocking is that, in cases of rape, the Shona women are usually considered at fault, even in cases where they are
victims of sexual abuse (C W Pape 1992). It is even much worse for the married woman to think of moving out of the marriage. Even if the marriage has proved to be an albatross to the neck of women; respected elderly men and women take the leading role in persuading the woman to persevere as well as preserve the marriage. It is such sad cases where elderly women, aunts persuade the abused married women to stay and endure. It is also said that, women though innocent victims are sometimes collaborators in perpetuating mind-sets and exploitative social structures that demean women (Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza 1994, 12). The Zimbabwean H Metro (22 September 2011) reported an emotional article about Stembiso Maunde’s predicament to her bed-hopping husband, Goodwill Muzanenhamo, who pesters her to have unprotected sex. Stembiso expressed her fear of contracting HIV at the Harare civil court where she was applying for maintenance and was quoted saying ‘My husband is dating a number of girlfriends and at times he doesn’t come back home but he still insists that we have unprotected sex’. The sexual violence by men against married women is still going on despite World Conferences of Human Rights that seek the total elimination of violence against women. The World Development Report (2003) rightly noted that violence against women was a serious cause of death and a global cause of ill-health (Nelson Okorie 2011, 171-184). With so many stumbling blocks, can married women stand up and challenge their husbands on safe sex?

It is important to note that, most women are economically dependent on their spouses such that, they cannot negotiate for safe sex, neither can they refuse on the grounds that they find themselves on. Most women in Africa are culturally dependent on their opposite sex as brothers, husbands, fathers and grandfathers. As the world celebrates thirty years of AIDS activism, it will be difficult to champion the Zero new HIV infections, Zero discrimination and Zero AIDS related deaths if the empowerment of married women in Africa
is not urgently and seriously taken into consideration (2011 World AIDS Day Campaign). Women particularly the married ones are still discriminated against when it comes to safe sex empowerment. They still have no control over their bodies and cannot insist on safe sex. In the end, forced sex in marriages relegates women for pleasure catalysts’ where it reduces their ability to negotiate for safe sex as they are threatened with expulsion from the home if they refuse to oblige (Clifford Chiduku, 20 October 2011). As a result, for fear of the economical backlash, they choose to keep quiet. In most cases they are afraid that, the end of their marriage is an invitation to poverty and hunger. Most of the economically dependent women are not prepared to single-handedly raise their children. As a result, most women suspend their rights in exchange for their supper to survive. Gender activists cite gender-based violence as the major contributor to increased infections in marriages. Musa Dube (2008, 103) noted that, domestic violence is fuelled by accepted gender inequalities that often leave many women afraid to call for abstinence in relationships. Married women in some cases endure being raped and violated against, being coerced through fear of the consequences that would follow if they demand their rights. There are also many women losing their lives in childbirth today. In most cases, family planning is in the hands of man as the head of the family. Sadly as a result, babies end up being born HIV positive and many others die in their first years of life.

The society at large has not helped much on the plight of married women in the light of HIV and AIDS. Popular Shona sayings like ‘Musha Mukadzi-A home exists because of the woman’ are invoked to convince married women to endure sexually abusive marriages despite the consequences that arise from such unions. There are popular cultural beliefs that celebrate masculinity, for example, the common Shona saying that ‘Murume ibhuru rinovonekwa nemavanga-a man is a bull when it is seen with battle
It is the ‘scar’ cultural and masculine philosophy that some critics believe as one of the major factors contributing to the abuse of women and rise of HIV and AIDS in Zimbabwe. The philosophy of the scar manifests itself when men engage in extra-marital affairs and unprotected sex that often expose women to sexually transmitted diseases (STIs). Yet even though the husband is known to be promiscuous, the wife still cannot initiate or discuss with her partner about HIV testing let alone to ever mention something about the safe methods of preventing infection. The entire hullabaloo about the ABC prevention strategy—‘abstain, be faithful, or wear condoms’ will come to note as long as women play the second fiddle in marriage. Recent research has shown that marriage increases the frequency of sex but at the same time surprisingly exposes married women to HIV and AIDS. It impedes women’s ability to negotiate condom use or abstain from sex if not interested (The Sunday Mail, 05 November 2011). Tsungai Nhorito of the Hopeful Life for Widows and Orphans in Africa (which mainly assists orphans and widowed women because of the HIV and AIDS scourge) argues that (Raymond Mhaka, 2011):

Rates of HIV and AIDS infections continue to rise in Zimbabwe despite increased efforts to fight the problem. This was being caused by social and cultural beliefs within the African society which do not allow women to ask their husbands or partners to use condoms or to get tested. During their outreach programmes, most women, especially in rural areas and farms, admitted that they were afraid to ask their partners to go for HIV testing as the men would accuse them of infidelity.

The Shona culture and most religions in Zimbabwe like African Traditional Religion and Christianity are the major stumbling blocks in the empowerment of married women on safe sex. Some women though having enough knowledge about living a healthy life and safe sex cannot practice it because of culture. The other
contributing factors are: the highest level of illiteracy on healthy issues, marginalization of women and poverty which force women to depend on men. They attend HIV and AIDS seminars and New Start Centres sessions but are not given the space to live safely. Married women have little or no choice when it comes to what is good for their bodies. Condom usage invites controversy and misunderstandings in marriage. Yet as observed by Olivia Muchena, the consequences of living with HIV and the burden of care are severe for women and girls, as they have both social and economic implications (The Herald, 16 September 2011).

Single Women Better Placed than Married Women on Safe Sex
What is sad is that, the recent Zimbabwe National HIV/AIDS Conference unveiled that the majority of new HIV infections occur in stable relationships and particularly in marriages where it is more difficult to adopt preventative behaviour with a regular partner than an occasional partner. Mrs Margaret Butau, the acting director for technical services in the Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council, rightly observed that (The Sunday Mail, 05 November 2011):

Low condom usage in marriages can be attributed to a number of factors. There is the issue of low risk perception when people think they are not at risk because they are in a stable relationship, diverse cultural beliefs, norms and values and lack of knowledge coupled with limited access to services. However, there are a number of myths and misconceptions that condoms are used by prostitutes, condoms can slip off and remain in the uterus among other things. Male involvement and participation in sexual reproductive health issues which include family planning is critical in bringing about change in the use of condoms in marriages.
Musoni Ndaizivei, Free Health Aid Director, observed that, women were more exposed to HIV when they are in the home as wives such that the institution of marriage can’t be certified as a safe haven from HIV infection (Clifford Chiduku, 2011). Cultural beliefs and myths are to blame for the sexual reproductive status of married women. Some traditional beliefs put married women at more risk than their unmarried counterparts. It seems as if, the common traditional belief still works amongst men that the use of condoms is not for married people under whatever circumstances. It is common to hear men saying ‘Hazvina musoro kudya chihwitsi nebhepa racho kunyanya uchidya naMai Mwana-it is a sign of madness for a man to eat a sweet with its paper (condom)’ particularly when sharing with your wife. Vurayai Chivenge, a father of six, laughed it off and quickly dismissed the use of condoms in his matrimonial home as culturally laughable, immoral and unacceptable. During the interview, he argued that (Interview, 16 September 2011):

I do not see any reason why I should use condoms with my wife. If we are both faithful why should we use a condom? Even if when I am unfaithful to my wife, there is no way I can use a condom with my wife. To me the use of a condom is totally unacceptable. Better still, the ultimate decision lies with the head of the family.

Vurayai Chivenge represents the traditional perception of the society particularly men that, condoms for most people are meant to be used with immoral women or the so-called ‘ladies of the night’. Condoms usage in marriage is unlikely to succeed if its usage only borders on mistrust or the assumption that it is for immoral people or those with the HIV virus. Therefore, for most married women, suggesting condom use to a husband is as good as accusing him of infidelity which is a punishable offence. To this end women have become silent victims of their husband’s sexual networks. Had it been
that, people are made aware that, condoms are part of contraceptives against pregnancy, it would have gone a long way. Noble women ‘Vakadzi chaivo-real women’ are typified as not to be associated with the use of condoms, even in the face of promiscuity. The perception also shows that, single or unmarried women are better empowered than married women because they have some choice to use protection or engage in safe sex. The majority of married women do not have any choice as the choice is mostly left to the husband. According to Moreblessings Zulu (The Sunday Mail, 05 November 2011),

In most African settings, it is difficult for a married woman to take up the initiative to use condoms as a contraceptive in her matrimonial home because it is regarded as taboo. Besides being regarded as taboo, most husbands will not agree to use a condom. As a woman I would not mind using one because I know I will be protected from a lot of things. It is very worrying when we get to hear about such developments on issues that matter most to women. I don’t get to understand why women are always at the receiving end in everything that happens in the world?

Ragies Gunda and Ezra Chitando (2007, 184-197) rightly observed that, “much more still needs to be done as long as HIV and AIDS continue to affect individuals, families, communities and nations. Sub-Saharan Africa countries have been greatly affected by the pandemic, and the number of orphaned children is rising. It is our understanding that, with these sad dynamics, if married women are given the right empowerment to initiate safe sex; condom use is the only tool for women in matrimonial homes where the husband has proven to be promiscuous. Men can also use protection if they suspect their wives to be promiscuous. It is sad that conservative Christians take such safe sex calls in marriage as an invitation of the devil into many homes let alone the sacral marriage institution. Yet it is not far
from the truth that condom use in a promiscuous marriage protects women against the transmission of HIV and unwanted pregnancies. But why do marriage women feel so disempowered to stand up and defend their rights on safe sex in life threatening marriage.

The Shona culture, traditional beliefs, the Bible and Christianity in the case of Zimbabwe are the major albatross on the necks of women particularly those in marriage. Certain Shona cultural practices like Lobola have led gender activists to argue that, it’s a practice that enslaves and takes away the rights of women. Stella Mapingure (not her real name), a mother of three, further adds that (Interview, 24 September 2011),

It is considered improper for a married woman to ask from her husband who paid lobola for her, to say I will not have sex with you if you do not have a condom or even to suggest that the man wears one.

Lobola or payment of dowry (could be in form of cattle, sheep and now money) is a cultural practice amongst the Shona people. It is a practice that is symbolically done to show value to the women as well as the parents or guardians who raised her. What is interesting is that, the bride-price is negotiated by the male-heads of the two families without the input of the woman who is married off. Unfortunately the practice has in some cases disempowered women in marriage as they are always reminded about the lobola which was paid whenever they fight for their right to life and protection in marriage. The husband has total control over his wife because of the lobola. In most cases because of the Lobola, the married woman can lose her status especially if she fails to have children. The major purpose of marriage amongst the Shona is the continuation and expansion of the man’s lineage by giving birth to sons. As a result of
cultural influences, the problem arises when the married woman gives birth to girls only. It is common to hear about stories of men who go out of their marriages to try their luck for a son with other women. In most cases such extra-marital endeavors result in infections and clashes in marriage. Married women in most cases cannot do anything to stop such kind of behaviour from their men lest their husbands will regard them as disrespectful. For some critics, lobola takes away everything from the woman in marriage particularly on sexual issues. The married woman is expected to respect and serve all relatives of her husband. In some cases she has to do unpleasant chores around the homestead (J F Holleman 1952, 39). The married woman’s right to sex is also infringed against, as it is the man who decides when, where and how to have sex. The choice to have or not have children is the prerogative duty of the husband. Most married women have become slaves to their own marriages where as slaves; they are not supposed to speak at all about their untenable condition. In other hands, they are considered as ‘property’ and deficient in human nature (Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza 1999, 3).

Sexual enjoyment in most African marriages is gendered to an extent that, power defines and outlines who must have bigger share of sexual pleasure between the husband and wife. Therefore, if the woman is sick, it is mostly at the generosity of the man to decide to have or not have sex with his sick wife. Yet for marriage and sexual union to be a lifetime occupation and experience, it must have mutual meaning, respect and significance to both partners. According to J S Mbiti (1973, 41), it must fulfill the ‘whole self’, both physical and psychological, both organic and spiritual. Sadly the Shona marriage in most cases confers on the husband exclusive sexual rights on his wife. M F C Bourdillon is right to argue that:

Marital fidelity on the part of the husband is not essential to Shona marriage, but the husband is supposed to keep his wife informed of his extra-marital relations, and a failure to do this may be regarded as endangering his children.
The concern over the husband’s actions about his decision to take another wife is not much on seek the woman’s thought about it but to avoid endangering children. Yet it factually true that, is it the woman who suffers more than children, it the actions of the man are detrimental. The Shona culture allows the man to have as many wives as he can afford to take care. The married woman though a partner in marriage cannot stop her husband from taking over another woman. Worse still she cannot insist or ask her husband whether he is using protection or not with other women.

The monthly researches on the percentage consumption ratio of male condoms against female condoms confirm the masculine power in Zimbabwe. It is men who still take a leading role in the use of condoms. We want a situation where women also take a leading role in the protection of their lives. According to Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council statistics (Zimbabwe Aids Network), the current average monthly consumption for the male condom in the public sector is 4,741,061 while that for female condoms is 352,124. The total number of condoms used between October 2010 and September 2011 is 56,637,425 and 3,983,141 for male and female condoms respectively. Unfortunately in a survey conducted by the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, Gender and Community Development, the National Aids Council and other partners, it confirmed that, men who have multiple concurrent partners seem more prepared to use condoms in their sexual relationships outside of marriage, and yet would be unwilling to do so with their wives at home (Zimbabwe Aids Network). The same outcry was made in the neighbouring South Africa by the Health Minister, Aaron Motsoaledi, who said ‘in the married couples it is men who are causing these problems. Condoms are working. The question is faithfulness. We need to target the elder age groups, the married couples. The married couples are a big problem. We know that they’ve been very stubborn about using condoms’ (The Times, 30 November 2011). What is interesting is that,
greater effort has been put on the use of condoms outside than inside marriage. If the reduction in HIV and AIDS prevalence rate is to be taken then it implies some awareness successes have been achieved. Unfortunately the recent researches on the rate of HIV infection in stable relations like marriages are not motivating. One of the big stumbling blocks created is the traditional assumption that, condoms are not for marriage and even in circumstances that expose married women to HIV and AIDS. Many discordant couples, where one is HIV positive and the other is not, normally fail to reach an agreement on safe sexual practices and risk having the other party infected. Mr Sinokuthemba Xaba, the national condom programme co-ordinator in the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare, encourages condom use in marriages that (The Sunday Mail, 05 November 2011),

In view of the recent study that shows a significant association of hormonal contraceptives and HIV transmission implies that there is need for condom use among couples. In a patriarchal society like Zimbabwe, men generally decide on how sexual relationships are held and negotiated, hence women are socially handicapped to negotiate for safer sex. According to the Demographic and Health Survey 2005/6, condom use among married and those in long-term relationships is low. Some people do not have the adequate skills to negotiate for condom use within their relationships, be they male or female.

Even though men are religiously, culturally, politically and socially regarded as heads of their families let alone the society at large; it seems women are on the receiving end when it comes healthy and safety of their wives. President Mugabe once castigated some senior Government male officials for contributing to the spread of HIV and Aids through promiscuity. He was quoted saying (The Herald, 06 September 2011; H Metro, 06 September 2011):
The role of men in society is unquestionable. It is for this reason that men should take their place in the HIV response, both for their own health as well as in support of women and children and it is not just treatment, but also a fact of discipline. It is discipline in a custom that recognises that men are free to have as many wives as possible........maybe this is the custom that lies behind the fact that our men are not satisfied with one woman even if they know that they are HIV-positive. I know of cases of men, who even though they are taking ARVs are running from one woman to the other. These are not men I know because of my extended family, but because of my being Head of Government.

The lack of responsibility by male government officials shows the bigger challenges that society and particularly women face against HIV and AIDS. Better and urgent safe methods that empower women in the area of sexuality are needed. Therefore it would be much better and easier if health personnel come up with something that married women can silently use before sex so as protect them. The safety methods would go a long way in liberating and empowering married women. The safety methods must enable married women not to be detected by their promiscuous husbands, for example, the use of undetectable smearing liquids.

Our concern with married women is informed by the number of HIV and AIDS widows and orphans in Zimbabwe. The growing number of orphans and street children is cause for concern which needs a concerted effort from all stakeholders. We have observed from our experiences with friends, relatives, colleagues and brethren that if married women are not fully empowered in relation to safe sex, the number of HIV and AIDS related orphans will continue to grow. The life of married women is a life of struggle, first as a small girl and later a grown up woman against a pre-conditioned gendered society.
It is really important to realize that, if many women are empowered, many lives will be saved. Our concern is also guided by the multiple crises (1998-2008) that forced many Zimbabweans to emigrate and this had a greater impact on the stability of many marriages. Circumstances exposed both men and women to HIV and AIDS. When these couples met after several months if not years, they usually don’t get tested for HIV even if one of them especially men knows they had been engaging in unprotected sex. The sad thing is that, most husbands flatly refuse using any protection as argued by Mary Mwadu (not her real name) that (The Herald, 08 July 2011):

I got the female condom from the clinic in anticipation of my husband’s home coming. To my surprise, he asked me if I was now into sex work. He would not use any protection. I contracted a sexually transmitted infection immediately and felt very embarrassed to go to the clinic where I was well acquainted with the staff. I thus went to see a private doctor and got treated. I fear that recurrent STIs are not good for my health. My husband wilfully infected me and still insists that we use no protection.

The STIs infection is clear that the partners do not use protection and most of them are not aware of their HIV status. It is clear that, women particularly the married ones experience gender-based violence on a daily basis where in most cases they endure painful or thorny marriages instead of enjoying them. This article did not seek to just analyze and explain the socio-economic, religious, cultural and political dynamics as well as structures that marginalize and exploit women; but it sought to push for the change of exploitative and exclusive structures. Women must be empowered and the broader society must be made aware of the painful realities that married women face in marriages. Therefore in order to offer a liberating call for the empowerment of married women on safe sex,
we find the mind of Paul on sexual issues so encouraging. So let’s turn to Paul.

The Mind of Paul on the Marriage Institution: The Status of the Married Women

In order to have a dialogue with the Bible, there is need to admit that the biblical texts convey meanings derived through a specific culture and particular social constructs. Bruce J Malina and Richard L Rohrbaugh (1992, 11) noted that:

For the most part, ancient documents refer to their contemporary social systems only indirectly. They assume that their readers share their world and know what they mean. Yet we do not share important social understandings with the writers of these texts. Because our social and cultural experiences do not match those of biblical authors, we can be seriously misled about what they mean.

Since the Bible is arising from certain cultures, it will only make sense to us if comparisons are not made in relation to our cultural world-views. 1 Corinthians 7:4 is one of the biblical texts that are usually quoted in relation to married women. It is common to hear men saying to their spouses ‘See your body is mine to do with it what I want. So you have to do what I say’ (Aimee K Cassiday-Shaw 2002, 65). The text has been used to support cultural beliefs and practices that tend to put women as subservient to men. 1 Corinthians 7:4 and other biblical texts are usually quoted to support men’s erroneous views that in no way can a wife tell her husband what to and not to do in relation to sexual matters. The husband has the God-given right to just “take what is on his wife” in spite of her feelings or disagreements. Neil T Anderson (2008, 41) asks an interesting
question that ‘Should a wife submit to anything her husband wants her to do sexually? No. Neither spouse has the right to violate the conscience of the other. If a sexual act is morally wrong for one, it is morally wrong for both’. There is need to realize and establish Paul’s mind in relation to the natural sexual role of spouses in healthy and mutually supportive relationships (Barrington H Brennen 2011). The reference to the Bible by both men and women on marital issues on most occasions is not meant to serve women but to make them subservient to men. The Bible is then invoked to make women particularly the married ones realize that ‘even God expect them at all cost to submit to men’. When Paul wrote that ‘the wife’s body does not belong to her alone but also to her context, that is, a husband’ (1 Cor. 7:4), this was nothing new at all to the people of Paul’s day. It was part of their belief and practice that women were the sexual property of their husbands (Tom Hale and Steve Thorson 2007, 86). The important role of women in the family unit was to bear children for their husbands. The Pauline texts share in the hegemonic ethos of antiquity and mediated theologically the image of the ideal woman through cultural codes that required ‘a closed mouth (silence), a closed mind, a closed body (chastity) and an enclosed life of domestic confinement (Cheryl Glenn 1997, 1). Yet Paul thinks that, in the new salvific narrative brought by Jesus, every human body and soul was equal in the eyes of God. In a marriage, both the man and the woman have equal sexual rights and responsibilities to each other.

It is important to also note that, 1 Corinthians 7:1-7 has been associated with the controversy on celibacy that Paul was addressing and its impact on married couples who were shunning having sex. The institution of marriage during the time of Paul is believed to have faced some influences and problems from certain cults. According to Paul J Achitemier (2001, 341),
It has already become clear that the loose sexual practices of their seaport city have influenced how the Corinthian Christians have lived and have raised questions about how they must live. Perhaps some felt that absolute sexual abstinence was the only way to react to the kind of immorality they abandoned when they became Christians, just as others seem to have felt that since they were now spiritual; sexual immorality no longer mattered. Paul’s basic advice is that if celibacy is not possible for an individual, marriage is perfectly acceptable.

The Corinthian Christians wrote to Paul seeking clarifications on marital issues. Certain pagan cults at Corinth and other locations taught about abstinence from sex for long periods of time, even within marriage. The idea behind this was that, denying the natural desires of the body purified the soul. Some in the puritan age embraced the idea that sex within marriage was sinful. They thought sexual expression was an unfortunate necessary evil. Richard Oster (1995, 153) argues that, in the Latin Satirist Juvenal, it was wives who needed to seek for forgiveness of sins from sexual intercourse from the goddess Isis by devoting to celibacy. Even if the text is regarded as addressing the challenges of celibacy or purity, the way Paul addresses the issue is interesting. Paul upholds the equal status of both the husband and wife in making sexual decisions on whether to do it or not. Paul’s perspective on sexual intimacy is that, there is no platform for either spouse to claim the prerogative super preference over the other. Paul’s perception empowers women in the marriage institution. Partners were expected to agree to abstain from sex only for communion with God for a short time so as not to be tempted. Mutuality and understanding is the way to go for married couples as in the case of Adam and Eve.

However, Larry Richards and O Richards (2004, 356) thinks that, the text does not suggest anything to do with a puritan attitude
toward sex considering that the Bible affirms the mystery of and special nature of the sexual relationship. Biblical texts in fact forbid sex out of wedlock. Sex is biblically regarded as sacramentally pure and must be kept like that in marriage (Lev.18). Sexual enjoyment within marriage is upheld and celebrated. Even though Paul is believed to have been unmarried, he was not anti-sex or anti-marriage (1 Cor.7) as some would like us to believe. This text is not simply just talking about physical and emotionless sex, but rather a holistic connection between the two persons. What Paul brings is something totally new to his community when he turned over the tables and argued that, ‘in the same way the husband’s body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife’ (1 Cor.7:4). In the eyes of Paul, married persons no longer controlled their own bodies but must surrender authority over to their spouses. It does not matter the woman is part of the marriage equation. Paul is not saying here that the physical bodies of the husband and wife belong to each other, but rather he is talking about the whole person with its physical and sexual characteristics (Richard Collins 1999, 259). Despite the male dominant culture of the period, Paul advocates a much more egalitarian conduct when it comes to marriage. The Jewish culture just like most traditional cultures like that of the Shona people in most cases assigned women a secondary role in society and the family because of women’s derivative creation (Gen.2:18-25) and the portrayal of women as weak (Gen.3:1-7) (Richard N Longenecker 1984, 78). Paul overturns that and brings in the ‘redemption’ model where both men and women are equal in the salvific power of God (Gal.3:24). Richard N Longenecker (1984, 78) notes that, Paul broadens the discussion to deal with the spectrum of male-female relationships within the family. The emphasis is on equality and mutual obligations that exist between the sexes. We find the same house rules to do with relations between slaves and their masters in Colossians 3:18-4:1 and Ephesians 5:21-6:9. Paul’s broader perception of relations set him apart from broader understanding of ‘house rules’ in antiquity (Richard N
Longenecker (1984, 78). Paul took women as partners not pieces of the man’s property as emphasized in most white weddings in Zimbabwe, as couples put on their rings to seal the union of partnership as shown below.

Unfortunately Christian women, especially from apostolic churches, are the most affected as they are encouraged to live within the confines of the Bible which demands ‘women to remain silent and be blessed in child bearing.’ It is our view that the church must not just rush to wed people and give them useless rings and marriage certificates without fighting for the proper empowerment of all partners including women in the institution of marriage, particularly on safe sex in cases of a promiscuous husband. The radical mind of Paul to stand and fight for the weak must be a wake-up call for the church to stand with the weak, in this case, married women in their fight for a healthy life free from STDs, HIV and AIDS. Paul’s statement still reminds modern men about the meaning and purpose
of the institution of marriage, that their wives are equal partners in marriage. This includes partnership on sexual matters where sex is a special menu that must be enjoyed by all partners in marriage.

Paul brings out the original plan of God when He equally created humanity as ‘male and female’ (Genesis 1:27). In marriage, Paul teaches that one’s ‘other’, be that husband or wife, and holds the authority over the mate’s body. Paul in not concerned with ownership or property rights but with relationships and relatedness (Marion L Soards 1999, 139). This passage does not teach that a wife (or husband, for that matter) should submit to sex whenever and wherever the partner demands it, no matter how she feels. Rather, it is about mutual responsibility and not selfishness. In fact Paul emphasizes on dialogue between the married partners and this can only be realised when both partners value each other as important. Equality in 1 Corinthians 7:4 results from the limitation of freedom given in the presence of the partner (H Conzelmann 1975, 117). The freedom that Paul expects in marriage is that which benefits partners in marriage and not that one that enslave the other as in the case of some married women. Paul’s concept of marriage will go a long way in empowering women, even those in marriage to have a say on how their union should be run. Even if Paul is against divorce and remarriage in 1 Corinthians 7:10-17, he gives flexibility to both partners to separate. Divorce from a dysfunctional marriage is an aspect that is absent in the Shona culture. Yet married women must have the freedom to move out of a marriage that is detrimental to their lives. Paul’s understanding of the woman’s sexuality or body helps us in our argument against people who arbitrarily use the Bible in disempowering women and making them suffer sexual abuse from their husbands. The mind of Paul in relation to the position of women in marriage was not to make them sexual slaves to irresponsible and promiscuous husbands. Paul’s ruling permits separation when one of the partners is not a Christian and will not live in peace with the
believer (1 Cor.7:12-16) (Raymond E Brown 1997, 519). Paul shows the extent to which a workable marriage can be sustained or not sustained as long mutual respect and peace is there or not. Anthony C Thiselton (2000, 505) adds that:

To Paul, in Christian marriage, husband and wife ‘belong’ to each other. This belonging is grounded in avgaph, which entails respect for each other, even placing the other first, far from being incompatible with union with Christ, it instantiates the priority of concern for the other which finds paradigmatic expression in Christ’s love........The precedence of others over self.

Sex between husband and wife expresses the bond of friendship and respect that exists. At first reading, this passage may also seem to teach that sex is a duty, a required act. But duty is better translated as sacred responsibility between the married couples. The intent of this duty isn’t that a wife complies with a husband’s selfish appetite for sex on demand but to fulfil her sacred obligation to meet her husband’s sexual needs or vice versa. In that marital arrangement, mutual support and companionship cannot be excluded (Raymond F Collins 1999, 255). In fact, the husband cannot abuse the wife because of the mutual giving of the self (everything) in the marriage contract. Therefore, Paul’s language was an emphasis on mutual agreement as opposed to unilateral decisions that put women in marriage at risk. An injury or risk to the wife by the husband is a breach of contract and trust hence the paradox of not doing to the other what one cannot do to oneself. Paul’s understanding of marriage can help heal the wounds that many women at large and the married in particular in the light of safe sex.
Conclusion
The government with the help of civic organisations, HIV/AIDS researchers, and Churches should pull their ideas together in creating effective prevention programmes in Zimbabwe. Better methods and ways to empower women must be devised like tackling the religio-cultural issues that help spread the HIV virus. The sorry state of married women in cases of a promiscuous husband can be reversed if Paul’s view of marriage can be applied against the cultural, religious and political stumbling blocks that have become an albatross on the necks of many married women in marriage.

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LAND TO THE LANDLESS? A THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON SOME CHRISTIAN VIEWS TO THE LAND REFORM PROGRAM IN ZIMBABWE, 2000-2008

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Key Terms: Christian churches, chimurenga, land reform, theology and politics, Zimbabwe

ABSTRACT:

The land reform programme in Zimbabwe has been evaluated from a number of perspectives, for instance, by historians, social scientists, agronomists and political analysts. The present study provides a theological reflection on the contentious issue of land reform in Zimbabwe. Many weird happenings have taken place in the agrarian history of the country, beginning roughly from the momentous year of the land ‘invasions’ in 2000. The contemporary Christian churches are at a crossroad and given their diversity, the earliest views were unclear and watchfully cautious. The lukewarm attitude was largely dictated by the fear of the possibility of inviting unspecified reprisals from the machinations of the State. The study argues that, theologically speaking, the churches were ensnared up with a heavy culpable conscience for back-tracking their historical responsibility as prophetic voices for the voiceless in society. The study further asserts that as Zimbabwe's myriad of crises continued to escalate in scale and scope, due to the thorny land reform programme, the Christian churches re-considered their existential mandate. They progressively transformed themselves into a determined force ready to get face-to-face with ‘Babylon’, the evil and symbolically the ‘antichrist. Thus, the study has established that some of the current voices and actions of the Christian churches constitute an emerging theological paradigm of liberation in light of the deepening woes in Zimbabwe today.
Introduction

The agrarian revolution or land reform programme has been known by several names in the political discourses in Zimbabwe. Chief among them are: the *Third Chimurenga* (the struggle for liberation), *chirongwa chejambanja* (the fast-track programme) and *hondo ye minda* (war for the restoration of land). Nevertheless, what seems to be common in these names is that the land reform programme is a product of the historical grievances which emerged on account of colonialism in Zimbabwe.

The study is an appraisal on some of the views and actions of the Christian churches in Zimbabwe in the context of the contemporary land reform programme. On the onset, it must be mentioned, however, that beginning from the colonial era, the history of the land question that has climaxed into contemporary events continues to be hotly contentious. Reflecting on some of the views of the Christian churches on the land reform exercise in Zimbabwe, the study highlights some of the strengths and challenges that the Christian churches have experienced between February 2000 and March 2008. This was a momentous period for the country, as Zimbabweans had gone through a spate of four landmark national elections, notably in 2000, 2002, 2005 and the harmonised elections of March 2008.

First and foremost, the notions of *ivhu kuvanhu*, that is, land to the landless, has always been a sensational electoral cry to contending political stakeholders in the Zimbabwean context. Principally, the ZANU (PF) party has used the contentious land question for political mileage in all the successive national elections in and after 2000. Early on, ZANU (PF) politicians coined a number of electoral slogans to portray land as the key issue in Zimbabwe. The ZANU (PF) propagandists claimed that, for instance, ‘land is the economy and the
economy is the land.’¹ In 2002 Josiah Hungwe, as ZANU (PF) provincial Governor of Masvingo claimed, thus ‘God created Zimbabwe for Zimbabweans and the land therefore belongs to us, we should therefore defend it at any cost.’² Central to ZANU (PF)’s nationalist and patriotic argument was the cry that from the dawn of colonial rule in 1890, the white settlers ‘stole’ the land from the indigenous blacks and forced them to live in overcrowded ‘reserves’ in the poor communal lands.³

In order to get the electoral support from a confused population across the country, ZANU (PF) politicians swayed Zimbabweans through some dubious means. Firstly, ZANU (PF) used *jambanja* (violent force) to coerce the ordinary people to vote out of fear. The study, however, established that *jambanja* in the end worked to discredit ZANU (PF) and made it unelectable over the years after 2000. Secondly, ZANU (PF) tried to use the emotive power of jingles (music) by appropriating certain religious themes to sway the ordinary people. In particular, the Ministry of Information and Publicity, which was headed by Professor Jonathan Moyo, repeatedly released some jingles which echoed Biblical stories of creation and liberation. For instance, in one of the most popular jingles a deep narrator’s voice reminiscent of most Biblical documentaries set a scene like, thus:

'In the beginning was land. As it was in the beginning, so shall it always be. Welcome to Zimbabwe, we are always down to earth! Such jingles were broadcasted on State Radio and Television to sway the people so that they might vote for ZANU (PF). It must be noted that the jingles recast the Creation story in the book of Genesis in the Old Testament and ideologically linked to the land question in Zimbabwe. The hope was that such music would appeal to a wide range of people since about 90% of Zimbabweans claim to be Christians. In fact, about 90% of the respondents during the 2000 Draft Constitutional hearings preferred Zimbabwe to be declared a Christian country. In addition, through an appropriation of some religious themes, President Mugabe gradually developed his own theology of land where God set aside Zimbabwe as a sacred space for black people. In fact, President Mugabe re-enforced the Pan African ideology of ‘Africa for Africans’ and asserted that it was God’s plan that blacks in Zimbabwe should re-possess their land. Mugabe (2001), as cited in Chitando (2005:225), borrowed insights of liberation theology to justify a radical approach to the land reform programme, thus

‘And for you specifically as church leaders, you must face one fundamental question. What are Christians supposed to do when they live under an unjust system which claims to be Christian, to be Godly? What do we tell God’s oppressed people, what do we tell the ‘purchased people’? What do we tell the widows, the needy, the fatherless, the landless? What form does Christian witness take in such circumstance?

The foregoing insight is significant in as far as it shows that ZANU (PF) politicians sought some Christian themes to portray the land question in Zimbabwe as a battle between the forces of righteousness and those of darkness. Clearly, Mugabe’s ZANU (Pf)
government was effectively re-writing the history of chimurenga (struggle for independence) and reducing it to one theme—land.\(^4\) Yet, it must be noted that the essential goal for the ruling ZANU (PF) was political expediency meant to remain in power in Zimbabwe.

The Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), a party which was formed in 1999, on the other hand, was deeply worried by the land reform exercise for two main reasons. In essence, the reasons are as a result of the mechanics of the land reform itself. Firstly, the MDC party relentlessly pointed out that the land reform exercise was causing the deterioration of living standards of the majority of the people. The economy was sliding to its knees, year in and year out. The rate of inflation which kept on sky-rocketing was the case in point. For instance, at the start of the land seizures in February 2000, the rate of inflation was 420%. In November 2005 the rate of inflation soared to 856%. In November 2006, the rate of inflation had risen to 1070 %.\(^5\) On the eve of the harmonised election of March 2008 this inflation had registered a staggering 1200 000%. These rates of inflation help to show that the people’s shopping consumer basket was becoming smaller and smaller on daily basis. Secondly, the MDC party pointed out that the land reform programme was causing diplomatic ‘injury’ to Zimbabwe. The country was particularly being diplomatically isolated at the United Nations and at the Commonwealth Conferences. The much needed Foreign Aid (Forex) was being withheld and sanctions, whether targeted or not, were ruining Zimbabwe as a result of her international image that had been diplomatically battered.\(^6\) In fact, Zimbabwe became a landmass of the poorest and unhappiest people in Africa as foreign investors left due

\(^4\) E. Chitando, ‘In the beginning was land: The Appropriation of Religious Themes in Political Discourses in Zimbabwe’ in Africa, Vol.75/2(2005), 223.

\(^5\) The Zimbabwean, 23-29 November 2006.

\(^6\) The Standard, 9-15 March 2008
to prevailing insecurity in the country. When viewed from the perspectives of the landless peasants, the land issue simply meant a demand for the re-distribution of land from about 4500 the white commercial farmers who owned the most fertile and arable land in the country. As a result of these different perceptions concerning the land reform exercise, many weird happenings took place and stimulated a surge for a new theological mutation amongst Christian churches in Zimbabwe.

It must be noted that after February 2000, almost every facet of Zimbabwe’s life was deeply affected by the harrowing impact of the land reform programme. Some of the effects have included, among others: grinding poverty, swelling unemployment, business closures, shortage of foreign currency, shortage of goods in shops, sky-touching inflation, black racketeering, massive brain drain into diaspora, unprecedented levels of corruption and unending imposition of the declared and undeclared sanctions by the West. In simple terms, the economy is at its knees and the entire ripple effect has translated into the current political crisis of governance in Zimbabwe, today. What is this in the eyes of God? The Christian churches in Zimbabwe have been perturbed to ask. Clearly, the ruling elite that is anchored by a small petty bourgeoisie class has been getting richer whereas majority of the innocent people, both rural and urban, have been getting poorer than even before. The scenario has

7 Douglas Mwonzora, a senior Movement For Democratic Change (M.D.C.) member of the House of Assembly (Zimbabwe’s Parliament), speech at a Public Seminar on African governance at Jameson Hotel, Harare, 15 July 2008.

First and foremost, it has to be submitted that it was the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe that put the current issues into proper context that is relevant for the study. Operating under the auspices of the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference, the Catholic Church put a Press Statement to capture the real situation, thus:

The people of Zimbabwe are suffering. Their freedom and fundamental human rights are violated daily with impunity, the shelves of the shops are and supermarkets are empty, our currency has become worthless, the public health services has collapsed.... Corruption is rampant and young people are risking their lives daily in growing numbers to escape the catastrophe that our country has become.

As envisioned in the study, the foregoing Catholic Church’s observation is representative of other weird situations that are responsible for the birth of new liberationist discourses that are manifest in some Christian churches today. This land reform programme, dubbed Third Chimurenga, sparked a wide range of

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10 Marechera wrote this book whilst as a student at Oxford University, depicting the kind of life that Africans Zimbabweans under colonial rule were experiencing.


13 In terms of chronology, the first Chimurenga was the initial 1896-97 war of resistance that Africans fought against British colonisers. The second Chimurenga was fought from 1966 to 1980 and unleashed in Zimbabwe’s...
outcries from several quarters more on moral and humanitarian grounds. Early on, Nyatsanza underscored this fact when he claimed, for instance, thus:

true, the major debate has been on modalities of land or agrarian reform, which have been adjudged as haphazard, illogical and downright illegal, by some sectors of Zimbabwean society. Philosophers and moralists would say the old adage holds true; the means do not justify the end. 14

As will be shown in the study, the above insight constitutes the crux of the matter behind the new voices as expressed by the Christian churches in Zimbabwe. In general, the designers of the land reform programme did not consider the fundamental factors that are supposed to guard against the deterioration of the economy, as is happening at the moment. And this is straining internal and international relationships as so many innocent people, black and white, were maimed, tortured, killed and some lost their jobs and property overnight. To this effect, Verstraelen remarks ‘when people’s lives are destroyed and people have to live under dehumanising conditions, it becomes a theological issue. The God Christians believe in is the God of life… a God of justice.’ 15

Against the foregoing background, some Christian views across the country represent a fresh paradigm of doing theology in Zimbabwe. Progressively, majority of the churches are standing up and saying ‘No, it is not right’.\(^{16}\) This liberationist paradigm continues to evolve as the churches in Zimbabwe are recognising the urgent need to re-assess the practical implication of their divine message in the light of social, economic and political woes. This necessitated a formulation of a new theological understanding and juxtaposes fresh missiological reflections in accordance with the praxis that liberates the groaning poor lot of Zimbabwe. From 2003, there was a steady metamorphosis of Christian ‘alliance’ trying to create a unified stance on land reform programme in Zimbabwe. By so doing, the churches broke a ‘theology of silence’ and embraced a ‘theology of action’ that acts as a theology of promise, giving a new charter of life to the marginalized classes. This theological transformation is on-going in Zimbabwe, today.\(^{17}\)

**Methodological Issues**

The study benefited from a number of interviews carried out from June 2010 to March 2011 with some Heads of Christian Denominations, some individual Christians of note, laypersons and some Christian-related institutions involved in the welfare of the disadvantaged people in Zimbabwe. The Christian churches in Zimbabwe are not a monolithic body. On one hand, there are the


\(^{17}\) From time to time, the Heads of Christian Denominations have offered joint pastoral letters in printed media showing solidarity with the suffering people. This ecumenical spirit and action has, to some extent, helped to comfort and call a large section of the people of Zimbabwe to dialogue among themselves towards possibility of reconciliation.
mainline/historical churches. These are organised denominationally. On the other hand, there are a number of independent African-initiated churches, which are indigenous in nature. In the study, ‘Church’ with a capital letter ‘C’ was used to designate the name of a denomination/indigenous church, like United Methodist Church or Johane Marange Apostolic Church, respectively. A sampling of the two typologies of these churches was done during the interviews. The study also benefited from both electronic media and printed media. Some published books and journal articles dedicated on Zimbabwe’s land reform were consulted, though written from other perspectives: historical, sociological, economic and political ones. This present study represents a theological reflection and is done by a Zimbabwean theologian from the perspectives of the Third World. It is prudent, however, that Biblical perspectives of land be highlighted because of their relatedness to the Zimbabwean context.

Some Perspectives of Land in the Bible

In general, the theology of land for Christians is anchored in Biblical perspectives and drawn especially in the Old Testament. Those perspectives run back to the history of the Israelites as the ‘Chosen people’ and their relationship with God, Yahweh. Theologically, land is perceived to belong to God, who is the Creator of the universe (Leviticus 25:23). In the conceptions of the Deuteronomist writers, land is linked to human salvation and identity. In a way, where there is no land, there are no people and ultimately implies that there is no identity. In the Old Testament, the faith and redemption of the Chosen people are inconceivable without the reality of land. First and foremost, when God promised Abraham that he would be Father of the Holy people, land was a key package of the covenant (Genesis 12:7). Even years later when the same God liberated the Chosen people from Egyptian bondage, land was promised. Through Jacob,
and as freed slaves, these Chosen people were given a new name, Israel (Genesis 35:10-12), to express their common identity and heritage. The land was Canaan that was a geographical space and purportedly full of milk and honey (Exodus 3:8). As such, the Israelites were to share joy and freedom together on their newfound land. The durable seal for all the promises to the Israelites was a covenant that God bequeathed to them on Mt Sinai (Exodus 20:1-20).

Nevertheless, it must be noted that when common joy and freedom are denied, land can become a source of dehumanisation, exploitation and oppression. In the Old Testament, for example, we have a classic story of Naboth and his vineyard (1 Kings 21:1ff). Basing on a patrimonial law, Naboth refused to depose away the piece of land of his forebears. King Ahab had intended to grab this piece of land not because of shortage of land but due to human greed, corruption and discrimination. Thus, Naboth went on to lose, both his ancestral piece of rich and fertile land and his precious life. This incident was only an archetype to what befell Israel. It must be realised that from time after time, Israel saw the land of God’s promise become the land of durable human problems. The very land that contained ‘milk and honey’ made great and greedy kings to become ‘Machiavellian princes’ of death. The good covenant that gave every person a direct access and responsibility to land was usurped by the ruling oligarchy. Again, time after time, Nathan, Elijah, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah, one after another, supplied critical voices on behalf of the voiceless, admonishing the cruel kings and their

aristocrats of reckless land graft and monopoly of the day. The few privileged people monopolised fertile land. This monopoly is a mark of unequal and unfair distribution of God’s gift of land. It must be noted that each time when there was injustice, these fearless prophets of Yahweh preached reform in order to re-instate justice in society. That is why these prophets are depicted as the great champions of social justice. Their theology was rooted on the Mosaic traditions of ethical righteousness that must prevail.

In the contemporary period, the Jews who belong to Zionism, as a political ideology, are claiming the land of Palestine, which is modern Israel, by using historical and biblical perspectives. In this land of Israel seemed doomed from time to time, to be cast in the role of a frontier caught between rivals as if it really were at the centre of the world. For that reason, Zionism has seen a large immigration (relocation) of Jews into Israel and with the systematic emigration (displacement) of Palestinian Arabs from their space, land. As expressed by the historian Halevi, ‘...the Jews are a nation. A nation cannot exist without a common territory, but the Jews have no territory, so they need one, without which a nation cannot exist.’ In the backdrop of this insight, modern Israel was born amid blood and fire in 1948. Thereafter, one-third of the population took over exclusive control of two-thirds of the land by driving out, denying and dispersing Arab Palestinians, who are purportedly the indigenous peoples of the land. This unfair land distribution, in the

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21 Halevi, 165.
context of modern Israel in the Middle East, forms the heart of the contemporary Palestinian question. As will be described in the next section, the Palestinian scenario has some parallels to the contemporary Zimbabwean situation as well.

The classic stories of Israel, ancient and modern, and her interaction with God are evidently enlightening and didactic in the context of the delicate land reform programme in Zimbabwe. By taking some cues from their biblical and theological perspectives, the Christian churches in Zimbabwe are ensnared to evoke their historical mandate. That mandate calls for the Christian churches to stick to their vocation as a prophetic voice of the voiceless in society. From what we have highlighted, it is critically clear that the issue of land reform in Zimbabwe is deeply radiated in the ancient biblical setting. To some extent, what has happened in Zimbabwe is nothing new but an on-going process in a new horizon. For example, Reverend Al Simpson, a United Methodist pastor in Chicago and a member of Louis Farrakhan’s Nation of Islam delegation that met Zimbabwe’s president Robert Mugabe on 13 July 2002 in Harare, encouraged him to read the Holy Scriptures, particularly Joshua 1:1-18, in the light of the land reform. This passage is a commandment to possess land, be strong and of good courage in fast-tracking the land redistribution. As a matter of fact, such external encouragement received publicity in the state-owned media, as theological justification of the land reform became a basic part of the ruling ZANU (PF)’s strategy to win internal support. Drawing from such biblical perspectives and sensibilities the implication is that the Christian churches in Zimbabwe must participate in the land reform programme by adopting new theological voices and pastoral choices that are in line with

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22 Halevi, 195.
liberationist discourses in the light of the deepening woes.\textsuperscript{23} For this matter, the Christian churches need not negate central government efforts in the current dispensation concerning land reform. As a delicate human commodity, the issue of land has to be addressed honestly and fairly by all stakeholders.\textsuperscript{24} Indeed the Christian churches constitute a bloc, one such major player, in the gigantic land reform exercise, which is a foundation for any meaningful national development in Zimbabwe. The biblical-land theology is central and very relevant to the current social, ecological, economic and political issues in Zimbabwe. Thus, the subject of the land question in Zimbabwe carries serious Christian corroboration. However, this land question is complex in nature because of its long historical background which is steeped in colonial racial discrimination. We now turn to highlight the roots of the land question in Zimbabwe.

Roots of the Land Question

Zimbabwe was colonised by Britain in 1890. Thereafter, successive white settler laws were passed that alienated indigenous Africans from their land. The white colonisers expropriated land from the black majority. The history of land question in this country is fundamentally a history of alienation.\textsuperscript{25} It is a paradox to note that the

\textsuperscript{23} Interview with Rev. E.T. Ngadziore, Pastor-in-Charge, Masvingo Church of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe (UCCZ). He is also currently serving UCCZ denomination as its Vice President in Zimbabwe.

\textsuperscript{24} Interview with Dr Lovemore Madhuku, National Constitutional Assembly (N.C.A) chairman and is known internationally as a constitutional and labour lawyer. He is also a senior national moderator of UCCZ Christian church in Zimbabwe.

continuing land imbalances have not been due to shortage of land as a human resource and national asset but about unfair and unequal distribution patterns. Africans in Zimbabwe were forced to leave their historical and ancestral land. They were driven into the so-called Tribal Trust Lands (TTLs). But, the TTLs were hot, poor, and stony. The TTLs were simply ‘reserves’ for indigenous labour. On one hand, in the whole of the western Matabeleland province, for instance, the most deplorable reserves were Gwaai and Shangani that were created in 1894. On the other hand, in the entire eastern Manicaland province, Chikwaka reserve in Chimanimani, then Melsetter district, was the most unbearable place in colonial Zimbabwe given its rocky and mountainous geographical terrain. By 1899, nearly 16 million acres of good land had passed into white settler hands. But white ‘hunger’ for land was not quenchable. This land hunger was finalised through the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 which divided land along deep racial lines so much that about 1000 acres of land per head were set aside for 48000 white settlers whilst only 29 acres per head were set for blacks who were the majority. Though the Land Tenure Act superseded this Land Apportionment Act in 1969, the basic principles were retained and the pattern of land distribution decisively put indigenous Africans at an awful disadvantage. Worse, 48000 acres of land by the 1970s were

31 Auret.
specially meant to produce cash crops for external export to metropolitan markets. For example, the level of damage for the indigenous people in 1977 can demonstrate how local Africans were groaning under poverty and undernourishment, whilst the white Rhodesian government realised Z$122 million from agricultural exports. Exports included 59000 tons of meat, 507400 tons of maize, 104500 tons of raw sugar, and lesser tonnage of tea and coffee. These statistics show that white commercial farmers increased productive output of land, primarily through black labour exploitation. In sharp contrast, black productive output of land deteriorated and the size of black allocation of land also diminished due to population pressure for much of the colonial period. Again in terms of statistics, 96% of blacks occupied 50% of the total land of the country whilst whites, coloureds and Asians who made up the remaining 4% of the entire population occupied the other 50% of the total land of the country. It must be asserted that the Second Chimurenga in Zimbabwe was mainly fought under the banner of land restoration, *ivhu kuvanhu*. Thus, in the nationalistic politics of the 1960s and 1970s, every black person was *mwana wevh*, son of the soil, land, so to speak. Viewed from political and theological perspectives in Zimbabwe, every son of the soil must continue to be tied to the land, mother soil. To deny the son of the soil this land becomes a naked violation of human rights as enshrined in the natural divine law.

Today, when the government of Zimbabwe says the land question is a bilateral problem between the United Kingdom and

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32 Auret, 6.
33 Halevi.
34 Halevi.
Zimbabwe, many people around the world sniff at it.\(^{36}\) What happened at the Lancaster House Conference in 1979 perhaps validates the manner at which the present government is handling the land reform exercise in our day. The Conservative government of Mrs. Margaret Thatcher that came to power in 1979 in the U.K. under whose auspices the Lancaster House Conference was held reneged to honour the promise. It only gave 20 million pounds, instead of 75 million pounds, spread over five years.\(^{37}\) The newly created ZANU (PF) government of President Mugabe, then Prime Minister, was tricked yet it faced a daunting task of how to urgently resettle more than 162 000 families on nine million hectares of land only. The new black government could only acquire land on the willling seller-willing buyer formula and principle.\(^{38}\) This obviously set the limits to the quantity, quality and location of land to be re-distributed. Again, such particular land ‘free market’ characteristic was deeply entrenched in the Lancaster House Agreement of 1979. Had the government of the U.K. honoured to fully finance land resettlement early on in the 1980’s the history of the land question would probably have been closed. But this was not to be. The black government in Harare had to battle with piece-meal efforts at land reform between 1980 and 1990 but so many people continued to be landless. Even as late as 1999, fertile land was still in the hands of the few 4000 white farmers whilst about 80% of the black population had no land.\(^{39}\)

It was only in February 2000 that a gigantic programme of commercial land seizures was unleashed, following the failure of the

\(^{36}\) *NewAfrican*, winter magazine, 2007/8, 8  
\(^{37}\) *NewAfrican*.  
\(^{38}\) The principle did not work as many white farmers stayed on in the new Zimbabwe. Many began to enjoy Mugabe’s hand of reconciliation, so very few commercial farms were acquired through this way.  
\(^{39}\) *New African*, 4.
government sponsored constitutional Referendum in January 2000. Land was violently seized in what came to be known as ‘Hondo ye Minda, war for land, and code-named, Third Chimurenga. In essence, this Third Chimurenga is still with us, as it is perceived to offer a lasting solution to the history of the land question, once and for all.

**Brief mechanics of the Land Reform**

A tripartite collaboration of the ambitious war veterans of second Chimurenga, ruling ZANU (PF) militias and the long-disgruntled landless rural peasants initiated the land reform programme in February 2000 following the rejection, in a referendum, of a proposed national Constitution. This trio of the initiators of the land invasions embarked on the politics of violent disruption and coercion across the country.40 The land invasion kicked off at Svosve communal lands in Marondera district of Mashonaland East province in February 2000. Other areas in Mashonaland West and Central provinces, Masvingo province and Matabeleland province soon followed suit. The land seizures soon engulfed the whole country by the end of 2001. White commercial farms and ranches were suddenly and spontaneously seized through the use of violent force. Figure one below, shows white commercial farms and some ranches that were taken by the acclaimed landless people of Zimbabwe.

A new name that has come to characterise the events of Third Chimurenga is, *jambanja*, violent force. Notable war veterans like Joseph Chinotimba, Chenjerai Hunzvi, Andy Mhlanga, Jabulani Sibanda and the so-called Black Jesus of Masvingo, caused mayhem of the land seizures across the country. These war veteran leaders

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mobilised the ordinary rural peasants and exerted the government to parcel land to the landless. In response, the government passed the Rural Land Occupation and Protection from Eviction Act (chapter: 20: 06). The Act legalized land seizures across the country. It became a ‘baptism of fire’ that saw white farmers who resisted came to lose, literally, everything of their existence. These Rhodies were evicted through jambanja from their isolated farmlands that were sarcastically dubbed as ‘little Englands’ inside the Zimbabwe of mwana wevhu, son of the soil. Some white farmers fled to Zambia, Nigeria, Malawi, Tanzania, Namibia and Mozambique. Many of these white émigrés took away their farm equipment and livestock in order to start a new lease of life abroad. Agricultural activity almost came to a standstill as whites and occasional black farm labourers were injured, maimed, lost property and some murdered. This scenario of lawlessness was usually abrupt with every parliamentary and presidential election done in 2002, 2005 and 2008. Public institutions like the police, army, courts and prison services increasingly have aligned with the machinery of the present government in power. Such mechanics of the land reform were swift that by April 2001 about 17000 commercial farms had been seized and parcelled to the formerly landless indigenous Zimbabweans, now popularly known as varimi vatsva, that is, new black farmers. As late as April 2008, war veterans led by Jabulani Sibanda, were still causing the land seizures, mostly in Masvingo province. The war veterans were avowing to save the country from western neo-colonialists so that ‘Zimbabwe will

41 These were the unrepentant white Rhodesians who, despite having Zimbabwean citizenship and some born in this country, still did not regard themselves as Zimbabweans.
43 New York Times, 5 May 2001
never be a colony again’. As many stakeholders have observed, this land reform exercise is one of the nastiest programme in Southern Africa due to the excesses of *jambanja* and high levels of death that incurred inside *Third Chimurenga*. This is the point of departure for our theological reflection on some of the views of the Christians in contemporary Zimbabwe.

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44 This has become a catchy political phrase in the ZANU (PF) campaign speeches and coined by President R.G. Mugabe in several of his fiery attacks on the West.
Figure 1: Map of Zimbabwe showing Provinces and Study areas where land was grabbed mostly

Legend

- Capital city
- Main cities

1 Harare Metropolitan Province
2 Bulawayo Metropolitan Province
3 Manicaland Province

Ranches occupied by new black farmers
Old communal lands occupied by peasants
White commercial farms occupied by new black farmers

45 Map of Zimbabwe produced by Richard Mazuru, Senior Computer Technician, Department of Information and Communication Technology, Great Zimbabwe University, Masvingo, Zimbabwe, 15 September 2011.
Some Christian Views on Land Reform

From the time of the land reform in February 2000, the Christian churches were found in a dilemma of their very existence. With the passage of time, the dilemma increasingly became theological, pastoral and moral as the churches had to grapple with the decision on how to identify with poor, the very people who still could not get a patch of land despite the re-distribution in these past eight years whilst maintaining traditional loyalty to the State. In retrospect, it must be noted that the Christian churches of Zimbabwe had kept and cultivated a good working relationship with the government. It must be mentioned that the churches had proved to be handmaidens of Mugabe’s government since 1980. Even when ZANU (PF) government in the 1980’s was bent on establishing a socialist society, the relations were generally ‘cool’. For instance, the churches generally cooperated with the State in initiating development packages across the country. In the backdrop of such manifest ‘cool’ State-Church relations, some theological questions relevant for the study come to the fore. For instance, if the churches proved to work as handmaiden of the Mugabe’s government for much of the years after 1980, whose handmaiden is it in face of a political crisis and economic recession after 2000? What type of ‘Christian theology’ is at the service of Christian churches in Zimbabwe today?

Initially, the churches tended to hide behind protecting their names from abuse and attack. In the period 2000-2003, some churches

47 Chitando, 230.
48 In fact, majority of the Mainline Churches, after the Pearce Commission of 1972, gave humanitarian and philanthropic assistance to liberation movements fighting for Zimbabwe’s independence. So, the good state-church relations are rooted during the armed struggle.
and individual Christians attempted to speak courageously against human rights abuses. But they were always accused of meddling in politics while hiding behind the pulpit. Some church leaders also became victims to the widespread violence which was perpetrated by the ZANU (PF) militias.\(^49\) This made some churches to take a neutral stance for fear of the possibility of ‘inviting’ unspecified reprisals from the State machinations, in general and from ZANU (PF), in particular.\(^50\) For example, the Anabaptist churches like Seventh Day Adventist Church, Jehovah’s Witness or Watch Tower Church and several independent Christian churches like John Marange Apostolic Churches have remained lip-tied. These churches have called upon the separation of the religion (church) and politics (government). The main principle which has underscored their stance being that the land reform exercise is not part of church business since a Christian cannot serve ‘two masters’, that is, no faithful Christian can serve ‘God and mammon’ (Luke 16:13). In fact, these Anabaptist churches remained aloof because they perceive the State and its politics as morally evil.

These churches have not spoken, neither in support nor to condemn any land reform programme. Such Christian churches tended to sit on the fence. It can be estimated that such churches that have remained neutral by sitting on the fence and their non-pronouncement of ‘oracles’ concerning this topical land exercise


\(^{50}\) In order to scuttle any dissent voice, the government, early on, undertook some measures. For instance, in 2002 the independent JOY TV was struck off from airwaves. Next, outspoken newspapers like *The Daily News* was controversially silenced in 2003. Lastly, privately owned newspapers like *The Standard*, *The Financial Gazette* and *The Independent* were vehemently attacked for lack of patriotism.
imply that they are sharing complicity with the status quo, Babylon. 51
Their theological conviction being that religious issues take
precedence over any other secular matters. 52 Nevertheless, whereas
the theological conviction could be understandable to account for
neutrality, it must be mentioned that some churches, like the United
Methodist Church, United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe, Salvation
Army Church and the Seventh Day Adventist Church, continue to
own large tracts of commercial farms themselves in Zimbabwe. Many
of their farms are unused to agriculture. These could be targets for
invasions by angry mobs from the communal villages. Therefore, the
principal fear was that if such churches could be outspoken, then
Mugabe’s government was going to seize the unused church land and
redistribute to the landless peasants. Thus, in the early period of farm
invasions, roughly up to 2002, a number of mainline church
denominations interacted with ZANU(PF) politicians so that they
could be spared of the ‘wrath’ of war veterans and ZANU(PF)
militias.

It must be noted that as the land reform exercise deepened,
the majority of the Christian churches and Christian-related bodies re-
defined their stance. Some became pro-government and others anti-
government. This means that there have been some Christians on
either sides of the conflict arising out of the land reform exercise.
Indeed, some active churches members are subscribed officials at all
levels of ZANU (P.F). Equally distinguished are committed office-
bearers in the ranks of the opposition political parties but who
support church activities. It has become an irony that Christian
agents, policemen soldiers and other underground operatives
sometimes assault civilians, torture detainees and beat unarmed

51 Catholic Bishops of Zimbabwe Pastoral Letter, 3.
52 Interviews with Tompson Makahamadze and Mrs. A. Madembo. Both are
senior members of Seventh Day Adventist Church in Masvingo City.
people, like peaceful demonstrators. Yet, paradoxically, the next day these people may sit in the same church on a Sunday to pray to God and sometimes partake in the same Christian Eucharist. Clearly, this is how the moral and spiritual crisis emerged in the context of a crisis of governance in Zimbabwe. The views of the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God in Africa (ZAOGA), which is the largest Pentecostal church in Zimbabwe, were summed up by the press pronouncements of Pastor Vukani Dhladhla. Speaking at a three-day Business Conference in Bulawayo, which was attended by Zimbabwe’s Heads of Christian Denominations, Pastor Dhladhla claimed that there is nothing wrong about the current land reform. The ZAOGA pastor was evidently pro-government as he did not mince his views when he asserted, that ‘all the resources are hidden in the soil that is where all the wealth is. It is not demonic to fight for your land. There is nothing treacherous about Zimbabwe’s land reform programme...even biblical land disputes were ruthless a well’. We observe two insights here. One, Vukani Dhladhla conceded that land exercise currently going on in Zimbabwe is ruthless. Two, this land exercise has biblical inspiration to imply its justness. It becomes a blanket confirmation irrespective of the mechanics and dynamics done in the reform process over the last eight years. But such views should not be taken to represent the official stance of ZAOGA as a church. The contrasting views expressed by ZAOGA’s Archbishop Ezekiel Guti perhaps could be

53 Interview with Rev. M.C. Kuchera, Chairman of Heads of Christian Denominations, Harare. His tenure of office as President of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe ended in March 2004


55 Sunday News. Another ZAOGA Elder, Tobias Zephaniah Matanga, despite the fact that ZAOGA preaches not to be active in politics, expressed similar views in an interview. Elder Matanga has, in fact, served in Zimbabwe’s government as an elected Senator for Chipinge and Chimanimani constituency from 2005 to March 2008.
helpful in gauging the overall attitude of this Christian church. Speaking at a Deeper Life Retreat in Masvingo on 2 March 2008 just on the eve of the controversial March 29 harmonised election, Archbishop Guti stated and urged his ZAOGA flock not to be on the forefront of national politics. Archbishop Guti perceived politics to be a dirty game that must be left to politicians in secular society. Though not openly anti-government, we see that the general ZAOGA perception on national issues, land reform inclusive, is largely an adoption of a flimsy ‘sitting-on-the-fence’ attitude.

In a wide range of national issues, Rev. Obadiah Msindo, a pastor and leader of Destiny For Africa Network, is an example of an avowed Christian who has rigidly pro-government Heaven is here on earth and human salvation must be realized here, not after. And just like the government attitude, Rev Msindo views the land as the economy, and the economy as the land. Rev Msindo functioned as ZANU (PF)’s conduit to sacred power in Zimbabwe. He has officiated at ZANU (PF)’s conferences and conventions where he affirmed that God chose ZANU (PF) to be an instrument to reclaim the ‘stolen’ heritage-land. He has likened President Mugabe as Africa’s Messiah who has taken imperialist forces by the horns. Thus, we see that Rev Msindo’s presence in government functions lends spiritual significance to events. This attitude is repeatedly affirmed in the views of Bishop Nolbet Kunonga, of the Anglican Church of the Province of Zimbabwe and staunch supporter on government policies. Bishop Kunonga has identified with Mugabe’s nationalism (or rather exhausted nationalism) and drive for economic

56Rev. O. Msindo has taken a rigid political line in supporting the government action on land reform.
57 Chitando, 231.
58 Much of Kunonga’s views are personal and do not necessarily represent the position of the entire Church.
empowerment of blacks in Zimbabwe. For this pro-government support, Bishop Kunonga was allocated a farm under the land reform exercise despite considerable opposition from his parishioners who have contended that their leader was too close to ZANU (PF). More so, prominent preachers like Andrew Wutawunashe, head of Family of God Church and Rev Noah Pashapa, a Baptist minister, are also pro-government who have bolstered ZANU (PF)’s nationalist rhetoric on land reform in Zimbabwe. It is interesting to note that the State media, which is still principally controlled by ZANU (PF), has ensured that the pronouncements of Kunonga, Pashapa and Wutawunashe on land re-distribution must be given wide circulation. In particular, Rev Wutawunashe came to endorse the view that the land reform programme is ‘biblical’ as it tries to restore the dignity of blacks. Nevertheless, whereas some of the church leaders survive on political patronage one may not conclude that the whole church flock agrees with the views of its leader. Church leaders can be co-opted by the ZANU (P.F) government to publicly support land reform but the flock can subscribe to different views. But, they did not take cognisant of the mechanics of land reform programme on the ground, irrespective of rape, murder and torture that went on at the former white commercial farms.

It must be noted that the churches or certain individual Christians who strongly supported the ZANU (PF) government were mostly influenced by the conceptions of Martin Luther (1483-1546) concerning church-state relations. Luther saw the church as falling directly under the State. Luther agreed that ‘Every one must submit

59 Interviews with Robert Sithole and Ian Watadzaushe, Harare. Both are Kunonga’s senior church followers in Harare.
61 The Chronicle, 25 March 2008
himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. Thee authorities that exist have been established by God’ (Romans 13:1-2). This shows that the church is related to the State by subjection and obligation. Thus, it is this biblical inspiration which has been strong in shaping the views and actions of some Christians or church denominations vis a vis the attitude of the churches to the land reform programme in Zimbabwe.

As has been mentioned before, it must be noted that Zimbabweans have welcomed this land reform as their chirongwa (scheme), meant to redress the imbalances of long years of colonial rule. But methodologically speaking, there is a consensus that the ZANU (PF) government never done it so good. As it turned out to be, the land reform has been the cause of internal instability after 2000. The government has been seen to be misfiring in giving land to the landless. Those who have emerged as meaningful beneficiaries of chirongwa, are not the purely landless, not the needy at all. Rather, they are the ‘breadwinners’ of the second Chimurenga, who since 1980, had emerged as a dominant class in post-independent Zimbabwe. This class is drawn from the top army officers, top police force, top civil servants, top corps in the foreign diplomatic service, influential intelligentsia and loyal party cadres. All these beneficiaries, in one way or the other, are closely linked towards

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62 Interviews with Rev. Jeremiah Mangiza, senior pastor with the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe and Rev. Dr A.R. Mutumburanzou, Senior Ecumenical chaplain of Great Zimbabwe University. Rev. Dr Mutumburanzou is a past President of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe.
63 This has been the major concern of the opposition MDC party, pointing out the continued land imbalances as a result of black-to-black discrimination and nepotism.
64 Most of the beneficiaries allocated big and fertile chunks of land remain as professional urban dwellers. These are the so-called ‘cell phone’ farmers.
65 Many of these are war veterans of second Chimurenga in the 1970s.
entrenching the political power *nexus* of the ZANU (PF) government in Zimbabwe.

The above picture constitutes the core of the alleged injustice and unfairness that renders land reform contentious in the Zimbabwean politics and international relations. Accordingly, as early as 2001 the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe has always been clear on its views on the issue of land in Zimbabwe. It has consistently expressed deep concern within its own ranks. At a conference in Harare, the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops met and criticised the government for its lack of sensitivity to tackle land redistribution properly. One of its top ranks, Bishop Mutume, who is the Auxiliary bishop of Mutare, has consistently made it clear that land is a means of human livelihood, for without it there is no development and no human liberation. In their booklet, with a section on, ‘*Action For Change*’, the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops have sided with the landless people, the oppressed people living in the ‘underside of history’. This is in line with Vatican11, 1962-65’s theological new ethos on the need to focus on social service for the ordinary people by adopting a *preferential option to the poor*. Thus, the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe is endorsing this central tenet of a theology of liberation. In accordance with this theological mutation, the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe has established a network of committees of its Justice and Peace Commission in all the ten provinces across the country. These networked committees act as eyes and ears, picking up information from the grassroots communities to their Silveira House in Harare. Silveira House is Catholic Development and Educational centre located in the capital city that analyses and publishes on social issues

67 Catholic Bishops Pastoral Letter, April 2005
affecting the ordinary people across the country. In the 1990’s, for instance, Silveira House wrestled with the effects of Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP). Today, it is dealing with the effects of land reform programme. It is calling people of all shades to work towards inculcating some values on peace, justice, unity, fairness and racial harmony. These are core Christian values that earned Zimbabwe a lot of admiration and good international image so soon after independence in 1980. But, in light of the hurriedly done land programme exercise, these ideals have been wiped off. The fact that the landless peasants continue to be landless bears testimony to the foregoing assertion.

As a matter of fact, on the eve of parliamentary elections in 2005, quite a number of blacks were still landless and poor. In statistical terms, whereas in 2000, 61% of the entire population was regarded as poor, in 2007, the figure had touched a staggering 80% rate. Of these 80% poor people of the entire population, 45% were categorised as ‘the poorest of the poor’. The reason, among others, was that they could not afford buying basic food, basic health care, basic education, basic clothing and basic housing. This was exacerbated by the effects of the ill-timed and ill-fated Operation

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69 This ESAP was an economic programme but it failed to re-energize the economy because, as people perceived, it was imposed from the West, mostly, by IMF and World Bank
70 Catholic Church’s Pastoral Letter, Op.Cit. On a related note, the disappointing fact of continued landlessness on part of the very poor lot in Zimbabwe was bemoaned way back in 1996 by the late Methodist Minister, Canaan S. Banana, see, for example, his, Politics of Repression: Face to Face with Combat Theology, Gweru Mambo Press, 1996.
Murambatsvina\(^{72}\) (clean up exercise) that was haphazardly launched by the ZANU (PF) government in May 2005. In the process of executing Operation Murambatsvina, houses were demolished, tuck shops were forced to close, goods under sale at the informal markets were impounded by the State operatives as directed by ZANU (PF) politicians.

The government had distributed land in a partisan way. At several fora, the Catholic Church has consistently spoken against the dangers of emerging reverse racism. For instance, a new black farmer with 6000 acres of land has suddenly replaced a white farmer who used to own say, 6000 acres of fertile land. A few rich blacks own multiple farms that they are hoarding for themselves. This shows unequal land distribution and is biblically condemned as it is done at the expense of the poor peasants who are wailing into abject poverty (Micah 2:2). But perhaps what appears poignant to appreciate is that whereas the white farmer stayed on at the farm itself, the new black farmer is invisible. The new black farmer stays away as a ‘cell phone farmer’\(^{73}\) whilst land tillage is done by new farm labourers drawn from *kumusha/ekhaya*, rural home. However, some of them lacked technical know-how and also lacked accountability on inputs, as basic inputs like maize seeds, fertilisers, machinery and diesel usually ‘disappeared’ without trace.\(^{74}\) For instance, with reference to diesel

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\(^{73}\) These continued to stay in towns and some never set foot in their newly allocated farms.

\(^{74}\) Interview with Rev. E. Gwararaoma, pastor with the Baptist Church in Zimbabwe. This observation was confirmed by several of my ordinary respondents visited in the former commercial areas. See also, The Financial Gazette, 20-26 December 2007, p2.
allocation by government, the new black farmers diverted fuel which was meant for farming. The new black farmers claimed that farming was not viable in order to justify the tendency to sell allocated fuel at the black market. Evidently, this is another evil eye in the land reform process in Zimbabwe.

The Zimbabwe Council of Churches and Christian Care have tried, since 2000, to forge a coordinated alliance to offer an ecumenical action based on Christian commitment in seriously considering God’s preference for the oppressed Zimbabweans. In October 2006, an alliance of Christian churches constituting ZCBC, EFZ and ZCC published a document, *The Zimbabwe We Want*. It is an honourable attempt by the Christian churches to play a role in nation-building, healing and reconciliation. The document has two fundamental purposes. One, it accused the government for violating human rights by denouncing the scandalous manner in which Third Chimurenga on land reform is being conducted. It pointed out the negative impact on the ordinary people. It also urged the government to respect basic human rights, stop intimidating people, stop cold bloodied murder that had characterised Zimbabwe’s life after 2000.

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75 Christian Care was formed in 1967 by the Zimbabwe Council of Churches and is a registered welfare organisation, number W.O.79/67. A full list of its member churches are: African Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, African Methodist Episcopal Church, Anglican Church (all Dioceses in Zimbabwe), Christian Marching Church, Church of Christ in Zimbabwe, Dutch reformed Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe, Fambidzano Emakereke Avatema, Independent African Church, Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, Reformed Church in Zimbabwe, Salvation Army, United Assemblies in Africa, United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe, United Congregational Church of Southern Africa, United Methodist Church and Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa.

76 *The Herald*, 3 November 2006.

also pointed out by Bishop Sebastian Bakare, of the Anglican Church in Harare, land is being politicised by the government for electoral advantage while the people suffer abuse. Two, the document formulated a framework which is intended to act as a roadmap towards national reconstruction, to build a new society on a sound footing, where there is equity in all existential areas of human life.

It must also be mentioned that this alliance of Christian churches is currently actively involved in civic advocacy for the promotion of establishing a civil society, a Zimbabwe that people want. In their paradigmatic shift, the affiliate members of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches have provided, since 2004, secretariat assistance to the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA). NCA is a civic organisation formed in 1998 to work towards constitutional reform in Zimbabwe. Together with NCA, the Zimbabwe Council of Churches has criticised the person-centred leadership of this country. For instance, only the President, as the Head of the State, is entitled to appoint members of the Electoral Supervisory Commission, judges of Supreme Court, Director of prison services, Defense Forces Chiefs, Commissioner of the Police and Non-Constituent Members of the House of Assembly (Zimbabwe’s Parliament). Thus, numerically, there cannot be a vote of no confidence passed in parliament. There is no impeachment in the Zimbabwean legislative arrangement. These executive powers make the President above the law and thereby undermining true democracy in Zimbabwe. This is one aspect which has worsened the political crisis over the years in Zimbabwe.

In light of the above challenges facing Zimbabwe, perhaps it was Bishop Pius Ncube, former Bishop of Bulawayo, who articulated the views of the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe with more precision.

Bishop Ncube lambasted the ZANU (PF) government for monopolising power by using unethical and unconstitutional methods.\(^79\) Whilst as a full bishop of Bulawayo, Ncube expressed critical views way back in 2000.\(^80\) Bishop Ncube’s pastoral letter, ‘A Prayer of Hope for Zimbabwe: A Concern on the Present Situation in Zimbabwe’, which was issued on 26 April 2000, vehemently deplored the lawless invasion of the commercial farms. In this letter, Ncube also condemned racism, denounced the use of violence and reminded the government of the earlier policy of reconciliation. But, President Mugabe was convinced that Ncube had become an enemy of the state. The president charged that the ‘prayers became full-bloodied politics and congregations became anti-ZANU (PF).’\(^81\) The existence of Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) and Public Order Security Act (POSA) certainly limit people’s freedom of expression.\(^82\) The draconian legal instruments confirm the sizzling views of Bishop Ncube as a critic of the ZANU (PF) government.\(^83\)

**Some Missiological Implications**

Irrespective of the diversified views on the controversial land reform programme in Zimbabwe, the Christian churches are called upon to

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\(^82\) Auret. Similar views can also be traced in the press statement released by Catholic Church Bishops of Zimbabwe. See their Pastoral Letter of April 2007.

\(^83\) Rev. Dr. C.J. Machukera, Principal of the United Theological College in Harare, expressed a similar view in an interview. He is a past Vice President of UCCZ as well.
partake in the process so that they become more and more relevant and vibrant in the context of their historical mandate. In terms of theological formulation, it must not be forgotten that God is involved in every activity where human beings are involved. This is a resonant incarnation of contextual Christianity possessing the potentialities and power of bringing ‘good news’ to the groaning landless people in Zimbabwe, today.

There are deepening woes in the country, which if not stifled on the bud, may usher into a spiral of violence, to use a title of the Brazilian Catholic priest, Helder Camara’s theological treatise.84 As Zimbabwe is suffering, the Christian churches have to realize that the ordinary people, though not mentioning it, are enquiring: ‘watchman, how much longer the night’? (Isaiah 21:11) As the great Peruvian priest Gustavo Gutierrez has rightly observed, to do justice in the arena of human interaction is what it means to know God85 and so the churches, wide-ranging as they are, have to become pillars of hope. On account of their traditional mandate and commitment to the gospel of Christ, the churches are called upon to address all the issues that hinder the fulfillment of people’s hope as proclaimed by Jesus ‘I came so that they may have life and have it abundantly’ (John10:10). This must inform the ethos of a relevant missiological and ecumenical spirit.86 The implication is that the Christian churches have to re-focus

84 H. Camara, The Spiral of Violence, London: Sheep and Ward Stagbooks, 1971. In this book (especially pages19-23), Camara analyses three paradigms of the nature of violence that exist in a revolutionary situation in a society. Simply put, violence number one is embedded in a superstructure of oppressors. The oppressed people themselves, as a search for redemption, exercise violence number two. Violence number three is unleashed by the status quo regime
86 Gundani 42.
towards addressing the existential plight of the people in the struggle for equity. The churches have to grapple with the critical and practical challenges as a demonstration of God’s concern for humanity. We perceive this theological re-formulation as supplying what can be called, the *status confessinis*. The *status confessinis* must be understood here as providing the new moment of crisis which is shaking the foundations of society but that requires truth.  

In the context of Zimbabwe’s troubled life, the implication for the Christian churches is that, far from hiding behind a wall of theological silence, they must emerge as sources and resources for national regeneration. The Christian churches of God in Zimbabwe must deeply re-engage a theology of hope by adopting the model of Isaiah’s command, thus: ‘Ancient ruins shall be rebuilt and sites long desolate restored…’(Isaiah61: 4). Pope John Paul II once affirmed that in order to understand the reality that confronts God’s people, the Christian churches are obliged to learn to give a name to the root of all Babylon, evils = sin, which upset humanity.  

By following the clarion call of St Luke of the New Testament, the Christian churches in Zimbabwe are encouraged to have the determined to declare, thus:

Among the Gentiles it is the kings who lord it over them, and those who have authority over them are given the title Benefactor. With you this must not happen. No, the greatest among you must

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behave as if he were the youngest, the leader as if he were the one who serves’ (Luke 22:25-27).

Certainly, the above insight must offer part of the present mission of the church so that the implications of Christ’s ‘good news’ of salvation may dawn in Zimbabwe. As part of the discovery in the present study, Christian churches in Zimbabwe are encouraged to be guided by a new theology of reconstruction which functions to give birth to a new lease of life. This insight provides a fresh missiological paradigm which still fulfils the traditional role of the Christian church as a prophetic voice of the voiceless in society.

**Conclusion**
The study has shown that the land question has always been contentious in the Zimbabwean context. In this paper, it was affirmed that land in Zimbabwe is a national asset and thereto must be regarded as a public resource. The biblical parallels to the Zimbabwean experiences were highlighted to show that the essence of land is linked to notions of human identity and salvation. The paper also made it clear that the history of the land question in Zimbabwe goes back to the colonial era but it is a paradox that imbalances continue even in post-independent Zimbabwe due to human greedy and a sense of ungodliness. As succinctly put by Sir Shridath ‘Sony’ Ramphal, former Commonwealth Secretary-General (1975-90) and who acted as an adviser to President Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo, the two leaders of Patriotic Front at the Lancaster House Conference in London in 1979:

The land issue in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe is not ancient history. It is modern history. Black Zimbabweans were dispossessed of the land that was theirs within the lifetime memory of some, and certainly in the lifetime of the generation before. Now, if you forget that, then you can’t answer rationally any of the pertinent questions about
Zimbabwe. And I think it is the forgetting of that, which ultimately has led us to where we are.  

In every case, the study stated that whilst the aims of the land reform programme were justified and meant to benefit the landless Zimbabweans, the mechanics of land restoration have flawed to the extent that they have sent shockwaves internationally. Zimbabwe is therefore inside Third Chimurenga where the land reform has attracted mixed responses and views from several quarters, both inside and outside. The Christian churches, sundry as they are, have held diversified views modalities of the land reform programme. Those diversified views and responses culminated in stances that ranged from neutrality, pro-government to anti-government. But in our reflection, we have stated that the Christian churches represent a foremost stakeholder to the on-going land reform redistribution in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe was once a great and proud ‘breadbasket’ country of Africa but it is turning into almost a ruined basket case. The Christian churches have to be drawn into a new missiological re-appraisal. The Christian churches of God in Zimbabwe must not be ‘unvoiced’ when majority of the people are fast ‘progressively’ becoming poorer each day. Zimbabwe stands at a critical crossroad. Perhaps it is God’s visitation that signals for a new Kairos that should mitigate the Zimbabwean crisis. Accordingly, the Christian churches have to remain standing for the truth of the gospel in ways that are clear and uncompromising.  

92 H. Assmann, Practical Theology of Liberation, Chichester: R.J.Acford Ltd, 1975,102
requires the Christian churches to be fortified by a fresh missiological outlook and new theological insights if ever they have to stay relevant and vibrant as bearers of hope in the context of scary woes that are pervasive in the Zimbabwean society today.
CONFRONTING NEGATIVE PEACE IN AFRICA: CIDJAP AND PEACE-BUILDING IN ENUGU STATE OF NIGERIA, 1991-2003

DR. JACINTA CHIAMAKA NWAKA

KEY TERMS: Enugu State, government, violence, peace-building, CIDJAP

ABSTRACT:
This paper describes a case study of the peace-building activities of CIDJAP (a non-governmental organization) in Enugu State of Nigeria between 1991 and 2003. The study was conducted with the aim of finding out the extent to which the organization confronted the structural violence that was endemic in the state during this period. The findings showed that CIDJAP, in spite of its struggle, was yet to realize its vision of non-violent society in Enugu as at the period under review. Through qualitative content analysis and the application of open and axial coding, it was discovered that a major obstacle to the realization of CIDJAP’s goal was the unwillingness of the Enugu State Government to assume responsibly its duty of building peaceful and just society. One implication of the study is that achieving positive peace requires that government takes initiatives which are supplemented by the activities of non-governmental organizations, but that this is a long-term, challenging task.

Introduction

A general attitude of peace researchers and practitioners in Africa is emphasis on violent and post violent conflict zones with little or no attention to those areas with no visible eruptions. The latter are erroneously regarded as peaceful zones, hence attentions have been on volatile areas to alleviate human sufferings, prevent relapse into
violence and forestall spill-over into other regions. Researches have shown that most violent conflicts in Africa are not as a result of spill-over effects but rather a consequence of state failure and resultant prolonged frustration of its citizens (Daddier 2006, 265-284). Post-colonial West Africa, for instance, was characterized by arbitrary coups and counter-coups ostensibly as way of salvaging the states from the corrupt and unpatriotic leaders of that period (African Leadership Forum- ALF 1993, 6). Unfortunately, the military themselves were more corrupt and repressive with gross mismanagement of the region’s resources which ushered in endemic poverty and kept the states in a state of underdevelopment (Adejumobi and Momoh 1994, 75).

Nigeria was one of those countries in the region that were subjected to long period of military rule. For twenty-seven years, more than one hundred million people were left helpless under unemployment, repression, insecurity, poverty amidst plenty under military rule (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance – IDEA 2000). When the mantle of leadership eventually fell on the civilians in what ought to be democratic provisions, not much changes were recorded (IDEA 2000). Both leaders at the national and state levels pursued policies that kept the masses in perpetual agony (Ibrahim 1992 132). While some states and organised unions in Nigeria erupted in the face of these problems, others such as Enugu did not.

Enugu State is the home of one of the old mega cities in Nigeria with a multi-ethnic character (Okoye 1996, 77). Between 1986 and 2003, its inhabitant, like other Nigerians, were subjected to prolonged frustration orchestrated by repressive regimes of both military juntas and civilian leaders; economic insecurity brought about by Structural Adjustment Programme - SAP and other liberalization measures; insecurity produced by ethno-religious and
political crisis; and mismanagement of state resources (Kukah 1999, 51-62). Consequently, violation of human rights, armed robbery, poverty, high unemployment rate and lack of infrastructural development became common characteristic such that many people could not boast of common basic needs of water, food, shelter and good health (Forrest 1995, 56 -70). While a good number of states and cities like Kano, Jos, Kaduna, Bauchi, Warri and Lagos which experienced a similar situation exploded in the wake of the above problems, Enugu did not. The inhabitants of Enugu State experienced all these frustrations without any record of violent eruption as in other states and cities mentioned. (Odoemena 2008, 2). Yet the effects of structural violence - unjust, repressive, or oppressive political and economic structures that result from policies of nation, states or bureaucrats which involve the denial of equity that can be averted, and engender inequality, hunger, starvation, diseases, lack of education and freedom of expression and assembly (Galtung 1969, 167-91) - were rife in the state. It was within this context that the Catholic Institute for Development, Justice and Peace – CIDJAP, was founded by the Catholic Diocese of Enugu in 1986 to embark on a struggle of two fronts - peace and development, i.e., confronting negative peace – exploitation through injustice and denial of human rights without physical or direct violence (Galtung 1969) - with the aim of building positive and durable peace in Enugu Diocese and its surroundings. With the creation of Enugu State in 1991, the activities of CIDJAP were limited mainly to Enugu.

Available literature on conflict and its management in Nigeria show that scholarly contributions towards handling conflict have focussed on understanding the origins causes and nature of these conflicts and possible solutions to them (Agbese, 2001; Albert, 1993; Nnoli, 1998; Otite, 1999 Osaghae, 1994; Mangvwat and Danfulani 2007, 350-363; Mohammed and Adeoye 2006712-736). Put differently, scholarly attempts at building peace in Nigeria are largely sought in
conflict zones and among the parties to conflict. Not much has been done on relatively peaceful area of heterogeneous religious and ethnic groups as a way of exploring further peace options. Odoemena’s (2008) work seems to be the only detailed study of ethnic harmony in a Nigerian city. However, his study concentrated more on the migrant quarters in Enugu city. Moreover, while his findings revealed among other things, the influence of Christianity as a contributory factor to relative peace in the area, the role of outstanding Christian organizations like CIDJAP in the city was not taken into consideration. This research is therefore an attempt to extend the scope beyond migrant quarters to Enugu City and its immediate surroundings and to explore the role of CIDJAP in relatively (though negative) peaceful atmosphere in the city.

Furthermore, while nongovernmental organizations in Nigeria particularly those with religious flavour are increasingly getting involved in the search for peace in Nigeria, their activities have not received desired attention of scholars (Enwerem, 1999, 33-40). This study is a contribution towards filling that gap.

The limitations of this research lie in the fact that it does not cover in detail other zones: Abakaliki and Nsukka which were under Enugu State during the period under review. Similarly, most suburbs of Enugu were not fully studied. The work is largely a case study of the situation in Enugu city and its surroundings and the response of one non-governmental organization to the situation found there. This implies that activities of other non-governmental organizations in addressing the problems in Enugu and beyond are still rich for further research.
Theoretical Framework

The research is anchored on the social contract theory of the state as well as the institutional and emancipatory peace theories. Social contract theory holds that man prior to state formation was in a state of nature which Hobbes noted was anarchical (Sabine and Thorson 1967, 427-430). The unsatisfactoriness of this state, i.e., its unsecured nature, propelled man to decide to place freely his right of protection and direction under a sovereign (Hobbes 1962 48-49)). Central to the legitimacy of a state therefore, is the realization of this social contract, i.e., the unwritten law of duty and obligation between the citizens and the state. The primary duty of a state is to provide security for its citizens for it is the fear of returning to the insecure state of nature that gave birth to the state. The state commands the obedience of its citizens when they are secured and vice versa. Since the citizens have given up their right to the state, their role regarding their security and general well being is a supplementary one unless they decide to take back their individual rights to security. As this will return man to that detested state of nature, the only solution is to act as a community and take back their right and give to another sovereign who will ensure their security. Thus, no amount of effort by a civil society or non-governmental organization can provide security for the inhabitants of a state to live peacefully and attain their potentials without the state.

Identifying institutional peace among his three views of peace, Richmond (2006, 253-300)) noted that with cooperation rather than competition among states (at the international level) or between states and its components (at the domestic level), over economic and political issues, war is likely to be less. Affirming this Amisi (2009, 1-18) argued that state reforms and reconstruction such as establishment of a democratic state, implementation of the rule of law, protection of human rights, constitutional review and security sector reforms are all expressions of peace. When they are lacking, peace is
not within reach. Similarly, by highlighting socio-economic justice like equitable distribution of resources, economic development, poverty eradication, social reconciliation, identity representation and de-emphasizing unjust, repressive, and oppressive political and economic structure, emancipatory peace like institutional peace is geared towards promoting a healthy state that will in turn promote peace through its attention to human welfare when supported by its components (Richmond, 2006b, 360-381). The state therefore is the principal actor in peace building since it has more than its single components the most viable political, economic and military means of bringing peace. When it fails to promote peace, efforts of its component alone may not be sufficient in building lasting peace.

**Conceptualizing Negative Peace**

Peace as defined by Miller (cit in Kings 2005, 54) is a political condition which provides justice and social stability through formal and informal institutions, practices and norms. For peace to be positive, social structures must be non-exploitative with enough components of justice and human rights (King and Miller, 2006, 42). It is a widely held notion that when social structures are non-exploitative, offering people the opportunity of realising their potentials, there will be no violence. It is in this context that Galtung (1969,167-191) defines positive peace as a situation without exploitation and violence physically or structurally. On the other hand, negative peace is a condition of exploitation through injustice and denial of human rights, albeit, without physical violence or what Galtung (1967) refers to as personal violence. This implies that negative peace goes hand in hand with violence which is not physical.
Conceptualizing Peace-Building

The most desirable and efficient employment of diplomacy is to ease tensions before they result into conflict, or, if conflict breaks out, to act swiftly to contain it and resolve its underlying causes… preventive diplomacy is to avoid crisis, post conflict peace-building is to prevent a recurrence (Ghali, 1992)

Peace-building is widely taken as a post conflict affair; thus, it has been defined as the normalization of the relationship between people previously in conflict through economic and political transformations, reconciliation and institution building necessary for sustainable peace (Malek, 1994). In the words of Miller, peace-building means” policies programs and associated efforts to restore stability and effectiveness of social, political and economic institutions and structures in the wake of a war or some other debilitating or catastrophic events”(Miller, 2006).

Peace-building can be a pre-or post-conflict affair. The European Union refers to phases of conflict: situation without obvious tension, situation of tension, open conflict, twilight zone and post conflict period, as phases during which peace-building may take place (European Commission on Conflict in Africa- ECCA 1995). Ghali’s supplement to the Agenda for Peace in 1995 modified his earlier position in the1992 Agenda, which limited peace-building to post-conflict period, to include pre-conflict peace-building (Ghali, 1995).

Peace-building can therefore be broadly defined as preventive measures that are geared towards reducing the gap between the rich and the poor, promoting and implementing human rights and rights of the minority, promoting durable development and realization of a just and fair social order in which there is no discrimination based on race or sex (Rehler cit in Albert 2003, 31). In a constructive metaphor
used by Lederach 1997,20) peace-building is conceived as a process of building which includes investment, gathering of resources and materials, architecture and planning, laying solid foundation, walling and roofing as well as finishing touch and maintenance. Respect for human rights, promotion of economic growth and equitable distribution of resources, and building the capacity of state institutions are measures geared towards crisis prevention. They are pre-crisis and post-crisis priorities.

Methodology

Being a case study that is geared towards describing the profile of a non-governmental organization with the aim of explaining the situation in a particular area, the research adopted a qualitative methodological approach. Methodological issues analysed are data collection techniques, sample frame and data analysis.

Data collection for the study lasted for three months (June – August 2008). However, Being from South Eastern Nigeria and having lived in Enugu Township from 1995-2006 as a student researcher and a regular user of CIDJAP’s facilities particularly its library, some events that took place during this period were witnessed. Some data were therefore generated through direct observation and kept before the formal commencement of this study in 2008. In-depth oral interview, direct observation, review of records such as annual and progress reports, minutes of meetings, fliers and posters were all selected as data collection methods. The study sample in in-depth oral interview was made up of 15 people (male and female) Among them were CIDJAP’s executives, senior and junior workers of the body who did not only gave me permission to conduct the researcher, but provided me with all the annual reports and other official documents of the body, Beneficiaries and victims of
violence in Enugu State were among those interviewed. A purposive sampling frame was used in conjunction with snowballing sampling technique. This means that those interviewed were not randomly selected but were picked based on their relationship with the topic of the research and these people helped in identifying other potential informants. The interviewees described what the situation was in Enugu before the coming of CIDJAP, the extent to which the organization has confronted it and the challenges facing the body. Beneficiaries of the programmes of the organization described its impacts on their lives and their society as well as their expectations. Direct observation and reviewed records in addition to new information in them were used to affirm what were gathered through other sources. Applying a qualitative content analysis on data collected through these techniques, there emerged links between themes that revealed nature, patterns and challenges of peace building activities of non-governmental organization in Enugu State. The original outcome of this research was an MA thesis submitted to the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, with a complimentary copy to CIDJAP in December 2008.

CIDJAP in Enugu State, Its Origin

The Catholic Institute for Development, Justice and Peace was founded in 1986 by the Catholic Diocese of Enugu to assist in the search for peace and justice in Enugu Diocese and its surroundings. With the motto, “if you want peace work for justice,” CIDJAP began in 1986 what could be described as building a just and peaceful society. Beginning with a staff strength of about fifty personnel including foreigners, the organization had two thousand personnel and twelve departments by 2003 (Annual Report - AN, 10). These departments were: Caritas Desk, Health Department, Conflict Resolution Centre, Education Department, Small Project Fund,
Library, Vocational and Technical Centre, Nazareth Skill Acquisition Centre, Research and Publication Department, Human Rights/Prison Department, Christian Muslim Dialogue Department, Democracy and Monitoring Department.

The organizational structure comprised of the Trustee, who was the then Bishop of the Diocese, the Board of Directors, Executive Director, Deputy Director (Administration), Assistant Director (Project), Personnel Manager, the Registrar, the Secretary and Heads of departments (see chart 1).

ACTIVITIES OF CIDJAP, 1991-2003

Convinced that one of the major causes of violent conflicts is the violation of human rights, the organization devoted a large chunk of its resources, human and material, towards promoting human rights. Under the CIDJAP PLEAS (Prisoners Legal Education Assistance Scheme), the cause of those who were unlawfully detained in prisons was championed. PLEAS, at the time of the research, was made up of five lawyers headed by P.C. Egbuna. They were specifically concerned with speedy dispensation of justice and rights to stop the miscarriage or truncation of justice and following up cases at the office of Director of Public Prosecution (Idu, 2008, Private Communication/Oral Interview-PC).

PLEAS granted bails to innumerable citizens of Nigeria during the period under review. An average of eighty prisoners was released annually between 1998 and 2003. For instance, the number of inmates in four prisons in Enugu State namely, Enugu, Nsukka, Oji River and Ibite Oru, decreased from one thousand four hundred in January 2003 to six hundred and eighty in December (Egbuna, 2008, PC). Cases of those who were unjustly detained were also championed as some aggrieved parties were approached for out-of-
Chart 1: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND ORGANIGRAM

- TRUSTEES (BISHOP)
- BOARD OF DIRECTORS
- DIRECTOR/CEO
- DEPUTY DIRECTOR (ADMIN)
- ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (PROJECTS)
- PERSONNEL MANAGER

- REGISTRAR
  - CSTTPLP
  - RTC
  - Academic Linkages/Affiliation

- SECRETARY
  - Media/Publication
  - Public Relations
  - Intern. Relations

  - Youth/Women Dev

- Youth Sponsorship

- VITTC, SPF, Research, Nazareth House, GAMLB, JAP Farm, Housing Estate, SEPTA, Project Development

- Health, JDPC Education Sponsorship, Youth/Women Dev., Library, Civil Society, Transport, Prisons, Media Publicity, Human Right, Accounts Dem & Governance, International Bookshop
court settlement. PLEAS carried out after-care service through the Prisoners Welfare Scheme. Between 1996 and 2002, eighty-one ex-convicts were rehabilitated with financial assistance for small scale business (AN 2001, 16). Similarly, some inmates wrote their West African School Leaving Certificate (WAEC) and Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) examinations while in prison. By July 2002, there were about twenty-two students on the whole (Prisoner’s Welfare Officer Report - PWOR 2000). Teachers from different secondary schools were arranged to give them lessons. Opportunities for craftwork, tailoring and weaving were provided as well. Social welfare section organized talks and counselling sessions for the inmates.

Besides prison apostolate, CIDJAP had series of confrontation with the Enugu State government in relation to violation of human rights. Prominent among them were the struggles for re-entrenchment of 5000 workers who were disengaged from the state civil service between 2002 and 2003, compensation and re-establishment of traders whose trading stores were destroyed by the state government, and the right to justice for the victims of the 2002 adoration ground massacre by state-sponsored agents (Ike 2008, PC).

Realizing that some inter-group conflicts that have claimed lives in Nigeria had religious undertones, CIDJAP did not only enter into partnership with HMK Germany to promote Christian - Muslim dialogue in the state but its research and publication department also organized four major international conferences and other local conferences, symposia and seminars where issues relating to peace were discussed (AN 2002, 5-17). Included in the papers presented at these conferences and workshops are:

- “Justice and Peace: Utopia or Basis for Co-existence of Humanity on the Way to the Third Millennium” - Adolf Pastor Hifa.
• “The Bankruptcy of Justice in Nigeria” - Prof C.N. Okeke.
• “The Legacy of Pope John XXIII for Human Rights and Peace Forty Years After
• The Vatican II” - Evans Offor.
• “Catholic Social Thought and Action in Nigeria” - Monsignor Prof Obiorah Ike.
• “Dialogue as a Better Alternative to War: Legacy of Pope John Paul II for
• Muslims and Christians to Exploit for Peace on Earth” - Alhaji Isa Okeke (a Muslim).

The outcomes of these gatherings were published for general consumption. About fifty of them appeared as articles in books. Others were distributed as pamphlets to sensitize the general public. CIDJAP also carried out a research on “Building capacity of Youth in preventing and combating Political Violence in South-Eastern Nigeria” (Mokwuah and Ugwu 2004) The organization operated a library service with the aim of availing student the opportunity for researches and conducive environment for reading especially during holidays when school libraries were closed.

In addition to the prison-education programme, the organization provided diploma programme on human rights, justice and peace studies, Islamic studies, Catholic Social Teachings, social ethics, liberation theology and cultural studies. By 2003, the programme had graduated two hundred students in affiliation to faculties of social science, University of Bonn, Germany, and the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (Ike 2008, PC).

CIDJAP was committed to the drive towards maintaining democratic culture and good governance. It would be recalled that one of the motivating factors behind the establishment of this organization was the political mess to which military and civilian
rulers subjected the country. In 2002, more than thirty thousand men and women were trained as observers and monitors for 2003 general elections (Twentieth Anniversary Documentary – TAD, 2006, 17). Activities of government, especially budget tracking, were another area where the institute monitored because poverty cannot be reduced if attention is not paid to how public fund is spent by the CIDJAP’s Small Project Fund (SPF), as at the end of this research, had managed a revolving loan fund of over one hundred million naira (TAD, 33). In the year 2002, for instance, loan facility amounting to Thirty Million Naira was offered to individuals and groups (TAD, 34). CIDJAP under SPF established several urban and rural-based co-operative societies which included Grassroots Women government. Also party officials and members were gathered at various periods for training. In 1998 and 2002, for instance, they were gathered at the Ofu Obi African Centre where they received training on their role in preventing political violence in Nigeria during elections TAD 23).

CIDJAP established micro-credit facilities to reduce the poverty rate in Enugu State. It was believed that the high rate of crimes, frustration, violence, suicides, killings and kidnapping will be reduced when hardworking people whose major problem is the absence of capital either to begin business or to boost services/production are helped out. The organization solicited financial help from Misereor, Germany and Swiss bank Foundations, Switzerland. Loans from banks and other finance houses: Growing Business Foundation (GBF), Lagos, Citizens Investments and Securities Ltd (CISL), Lagos, the UNDP and subventions from the Catholic Diocese of Enugu, were secured (AN 2002, 34). Support from and linkages with other bodies were established (see Chart 2) Dividends from shares bought by CIDJAP generated resources from which loans were made available as well.
Empowerment Development Education (GWEDE), *Chukwu Du be Anyi* (God is in our town) Organization of Widows Emancipation Owelli, Small Enterprise Promotion Association (SEPTIA), with an outreach to over five hundred thousand people. (AN, 2003, 16) It was recognized as a leading micro-finance institution in Enugu State selected by the UNDP in the year 2001, and is the sole micro finance institution approved to extend the N60m micro credit facility to communities in Enugu State up till the end of the period under review (AN 2002, 14). It assisted in the disbursement of loan for other poverty reduction agencies like the UNDP, GBF, Enugu State Developments Trust Fund (EDTF) and other agencies. In 2002 for example, the breakdown of Six Million Naira received from UNDP/EDTF is as follows:

### Table 1: Distribution of funds by CIDJAP in 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMUNITIES</th>
<th>AMOUNT (₦)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iheakpu – Awka</td>
<td>2,035,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mbu</td>
<td>570,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ugwuogo</td>
<td>430,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mpu</td>
<td>250,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agbani</td>
<td>330,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogurute</td>
<td>250,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ameze</td>
<td>500,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obiagu</td>
<td>480,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akpawtu</td>
<td>60,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eke</td>
<td>200,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edem</td>
<td>200,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,255,000.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A beneficiary of the SPF noted thus:
I did not know that one day I would own my own shop and make a meaningful contribution to humanity especially in my town. For seven years, I neither saw my parents nor any of my siblings. Whenever I travelled home, they will not be happy with me. There were always tension and misunderstandings. There were times we fought simply because I was a burden and a threat to them. Thanks to CIDJAP, all these are stories to tell today. (Ogbu 2008, PC)

One of the most obvious threats to peace is unemployment. This is more prevalent among the youth who can easily be mobilized for violent action. In a research conducted by Edmond (Mokwuh and Osmond Ugwu 2004, 198) on youth and political violence in south eastern Nigeria, it was found that unemployed youth more than any other group are easily enticed by tokens made available by politicians. Thus political violence has become a common phenomenon in areas where they are in large number. *Olu Aka Di Mma* (hand work is good) Vocational Industrial and Technical Training Centre (VITTC) was another response of CIDJAP to the endemic problem of unemployment in Enugu State during the period under review. The aim was to train youth who will not depend on other people for employment but have the capacity for self-employment from which they can generate enough resources for self sustenance. The training covered such areas as wood, metal, electrical and mechanical work. Its programme takes two years of studies and six months of industrial attachment. A good number of them who graduated from the school gained employment there as staff. Companies employed some other ones. For instance, the centre, according to its director D. Yves (2008, PC), sent the Nigerian Bottling Company and Emenite with some of their graduates in 2003. Interaction with some inmates of the centre revealed that some of them who graduated for more than six months were yet to secure employment in any government or private establishments (Chidi and
This may imply that employment opportunities are not so much available for the rained personnel as was the case during the period under review.

Similarly, Nazareth Skills and Vocational/Training Centre for Women was established in 1992 with the aim of empowering young girls in:

- Computer/Secretarial studies
- Tailoring/Fashion and Design
- Soap/Pomade making/Productive skills
- Domestic Training and cookery

The centre by 2003 had rolled out more than two hundred women skilled in all these areas (AN 2003, 30). Some met at the training centre expressed their desire for capital and equipment to start off after their training. However, there was the anxiety over the ability of CIDJAP to provide them with all they need because the organization, according to some inmates, seems not to be enthusiastic about the centre anymore (Helen and Joy, 2008, PC).

Shelter is one of the basic needs of man in maintaining his dignity. Enugu city is known for acute accommodation problems which consistently breed tension between landlords and their tenants. With financial grants from the European Union and Papal Missionary Works for Children (PMWC) Germany, a housing estate was built at New Haven Enugu, to offer accommodation to people. The estate of approximately three hectares and fifty units of semi-detached bungalows have each one sitting room, two bedrooms, one kitchen, one water closet and one shower. The housing project had provided accommodation for twenty-eight families as of 2003 (TAD 2006, 33).
Through caritas department, a soap–making industry was established for Oji River war veterans. An average of fifty people according to caritas report were aided yearly in settling their hospital bills between 1993 and 1998; about forty students received part of their school fees yearly while a good number were given grants for petty trading. Three students interviewed at the central library of CIDJAP summed up what they have received from the organization between 1998 and 2003 as 87, 000, 108 000 and 120 000 respectively (John, Uwakwe and Emeka, 2008, PC).

With the health section as one of the foundation departments of the organization, many hospitals, maternities, primary health care centres were built in Enugu State and beyond during this period, courtesy of CIDJAP. Among them were: Ntazi Obi Ndi No N’afufu (comforter of the afflicted) Specialist Hospital, Trans Ekulu, Ezenwanyi Nke Udo (queen of peace) Health Centre, Ugwoma Nike, Archi joint Hospital, Mother of Mercy Maternity, Iwollo, and St. Monica Hospital, Mmaku. Some rural areas also received health services through mobile clinics. In these hospitals, CIDJAP mobilized equipment, accessed funds, trained personnel and negotiated for drugs.

The organization was also involved in direct peace-building activities between communities and groups. For example, in a religious dispute between traditional religious worshippers and Christians at Amokwu-Affia in Enugu State, the latter won the case. Aware that lasting peace was not in view, CIDJAP provided a forum where the two groups met regularly to find a lasting solution to their problem (Egbuna 2008, PC; Case file 0082). A similar strategy was adopted in 1996 in a religious clash that sprang up at Igbo Ezeagu. The organization intervened as well in Uruku case involving a group supposed to be outcasts and the town. There were other involvements in disputes settlement at the family, organizations and village levels.
Assessment

Viewed from the general concept of peace-building, there is no doubt that CIDJAP was into peace-building during the period under review. The crucial question however is: to what extent did its peace-building activities confront the situation (structural violence) in Enugu during the period under review? One of its major aims was to alleviate the poverty situation by creating employment opportunities. The rate of unemployment in Enugu State and indeed Nigeria was still very alarming as at the end of 2003. In 2002, about five thousand civil servants were disengaged from their work, and three thousand forcefully retired in Enugu State. Although the workers won the case, courtesy of CIDJAP, the state government was yet to comply with the court rulings as at the end of the period of this study (Ike 2008, PC). Consequently, unemployment soared the rate of armed robbery attacks in the state. In the three months the researcher was at Ogui Enugu (June to August, 2008) for field research, there was not a week without at least one case of robbery attack in that area. This showed that beyond the period of the study, Enugu was still experiencing structural violence in that regard.

In spite of the body’s commitment to human rights promotion, violation of human rights was on the increase in Enugu from 1999. On the 8th of September 2000, thugs, believed to be from the state house, attached workers who were on industrial action pressing for the payment of their wages, better conditions of work and other benefits, at the labour congress secretariat, Enugu (Punch 2000, 7). Similarly, on the 9th of September 2002, workers in Enugu State who staged a peaceful protest against the use of thugs in terrorising the inhabitants of the state were attacked by thugs in the presence of heavily armed policemen who made no move to arrest them (Punch 2000 11). Indeed various governments in Enugu State have relied on the use of thugs recruited from various societal groups
of criminals including students of higher institutions to silence the populace.

In 2000, the government of Enugu State compelled motorcycle commercial operators to pay five hundred naira each for an apron that would have cost less than a hundred naira in the market (Ugwu 2006, 100-120). Those who could not pay were arrested and tortured by the police. Another three-hundred and fifty naira was imposed in 2002. Those who protested against this second imposition were treated like the former to the extent that seven of them died. The students of Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT) who were protesting peacefully over 500% hike in their school fees in 2000 were arrested, tortured and detained. More than ten of them were badly injured (Direct Observation - DO 2000).

During the 1999 elections, people were prevented from exercising their civic rights. In Trans Ekulu and Ufuma Aninri local governments, some who voted could not have their votes counted as some young men appeared with sporadic shootings which dispersed the people at some pooling centres and gave them the opportunity of making away with the ballot boxes. A similar situation was the case in Igbo Etiti local government. In Nkano East, designated voting centres had no sign of election as materials were not sent there. The 2003 election was not different. Before the elections, there was serious indication that opposition to the ruling party - People’s Democratic Party (PDP) would not be tolerated. For instance, Jim Nwobodo’s faction of the party’s (opposition party) congress was frustrated with thugs who attacked, horsewhipped and scattered the people in the presence of heavily armed policemen with no single arrest. On the election days-12th and 17th of April, many lives and property were lost in all the senatorial zones. In Igboeze, North and South, Uzouwani, Udenu, and Igbo Etiti, as well as Enugu East, sporadic shootings prevented a large number of people from coming out to vote. Where
they were courageous enough to venture out, electoral materials were either not available or ballot boxes hijacked by thugs in most cases.

Furthermore, in 2002, a group of Christians at the popular adoration ground was molested and fourteen of them, including a pregnant woman, massacred during a night vigil prayer session by a group of unidentified gun men suspected to be government-sponsored thugs going after Rev. Fr. Ejike Mbaka, who was known to have openly criticized government policies that were not for the betterment of the people. A peaceful demonstration organized by the Catholic youth of Enugu Diocese in response to this was followed by the arrest and detention of the director of CIDJAP, Rev. Fr. Ike, and some youth leaders by the state government. In the same year, young men dressed in priestly attire made an unsuccessful attempt at assassinating Rev. Fr. Ike for speaking against the violation of human rights in the state (Ike 2002, PC). Rt. Rev Dr. Anthony Gbuji, the then Bishop of Enugu Diocese, attracted the attack of hoodlums by his criticism of government policies in Enugu state in 2002. All these were attempts at frustrating people’s interests in criticizing violation of human rights and bad governance.

The State House of Assembly was not left out of this intimidation. In most cases, the house was surrounded by thugs making it impossible for members to speak freely. Nwabueze Ugwu, who spoke against the attitude of the state government towards workers and their salary had to pay the price with the life of his brother, Sunday Ugwu, who was mistakenly shot in place of him. (Mokwuah and Ugwu 126). During the 2002 impeachment process, an army of thugs was visibly shooting randomly to scare members. The presence of heavily armed policemen did not deter them. By frustrating the members of the house, the principle of check and balance was eroded in the state.
Violation of human rights and corruption in public places especially by the police in the state went on unaddressed during this period irrespective of the activities of CIDJAP against such. Both the state and federal police in Enugu during the period under review became so dreaded for their corrupt practices and intimidation of the common man that their regular and reckless arrests of innocent citizens at weekends was named “weekend holiday” (Progress Report Legal Department – PRLD 2006. 9) These law enforcement agents did not only extort money from commercial commuters but sometimes shot drivers or impounded their means of livelihood (buses) particularly when they failed to part with their hard-earned money. Many people opted to suffer injustice in silence than report to the police stations as the latter will amount to greater injustice and frustration. A few cases in point will buttress this situation. In the case of Nebife N. vs the State E/452M/2003, (PRLD 2006, 2-6), the culprit was dismissed courtesy of his closeness to the police while the innocent Nebife was subjected to severe torture after which the sum of three hundred and fifty thousand naira was demanded by the State Police Headquarters for his release. He was not only tortured to unconsciousness but was forced as well to sign a statement written by the police themselves - a statement which indicated that he stole a motorcycle. In Osita Akube vs the State-E/453M//2003, the young secondary school graduate was tortured and raped by several police men which sent the boy into psychological trauma. Apparently, the decayed state of the judiciary and the corrupt practices of the police have resulted in their abandonment by the people for shrines and spiritual houses in search of justice. It is within this context that one will appreciate in the 21st century, the famous Okija Shrine in Anambra State of Nigeria, which thrived for several decades as a renowned dispenser of justice attracting both non-Christian and Christian clients from all parts of Nigeria, including Enugu State. Similarly, sleepless nights which thousands of people spend at the popular adoration ground of Rev. Fr. Ejike Mbaka in Enugu town
could be understood from this frustration theory. With all these, it seemed the organization, in all its effort, was pouring water on a rock.

Although CIDJAP made appreciable impact on the four prisons in Enugu, unfortunately, as they secure the release of old inmates, new ones replace them. The four prisons as of the 2003 were still congested in spite of many years of legal aid from PLEAS. The prisons and their inmates were in a mess just like other prisons in Nigeria. Most structures there were those left by the colonial government. CIDJAP’s Welfare and Rehabilitation Scheme did not go a long way in changing the fate of many inmates. The amount provided was too meagre to make meaningful living given the economic situation in the country. Some inmates who secured their freedom through CIDJAP’s PLEAS turned out worse criminals than they were. One of their strategies was to relocate and continue their “business” as soon as they are released.

The institute made its presence felt in Oji River War Veterans camp, but there were still much to be done. Recently, these war victims have not only multiplied their tents pitched along Onitsha-Enugu express way where they solicit for help from passers-by, but have also increased in number as they give birth indiscriminately (DO. 2008).

Aside Ntasi Obi Ndi No N’Afufu (comforter of the afflicted) Hospital, which is a specialist hospital, all others health facilities of CIDJAP were maternities, and clinics. Orthopaedic hospital and the University Teaching Hospital Enugu were left with moribund equipments. Patients were not provided with adequate medical attention. Some stayed in pains for months waiting for either bed spaces or doctors. Some doctors indirectly turned patients to their own private clinics where they either died for lack of proper equipment or were made to pay through their nose.
Furthermore, Nwanne Di na Mba Housing Estate’ by 2003 was already providing accommodation for twenty-eight families. What is this number to thousands of people who were living in slums, inside cargo containers, beside Ogbete Main Market, Coal camp, under bridges and flyovers?

In 2003, CIDJAP officials monitored elections in Eastern Nigeria. That obviously neither forestalled rigging nor did it usher better governments. The developments in Nigeria since 2003, particularly the cancelling of gubernatorial elections and the reversal of supposed election results by election tribunals, are clear indications that the monitoring was more or less a futile effort.

From the assessment so far, it suffices to argue that despite the institution’s doggedness, Enugu State was still not too far from what it was on the eve of the birth of CIDJAP. After seventeen years of existence, the body was yet to realise its aim of confronting negative peace in Enugu. Why then would an organization with such capacity in building peace still remain far from its goal after many years?

Problems and Challenges

One of the major challenges of CIDJAP vis-à-vis its goal was the state leaders and their policies. Most leaders the state produced during the period were not only corrupt and unpatriotic but also unfocused. These were manifested in their policies which were antithetical to the development of the state and the security of the people. For instance, how can a governor of a state disengage five thousand workers without preparing for how to reintegrate them elsewhere? That was an indirect way of endorsing poverty and robbery operations. Again, why would the government of Enugu State insist that the motorcyclist
apron would be bought through the Prime and Power Konzult, a company registered in the name of Mr. Ike Ekweremadu, the then Secretary to the State Government? Why again will a government initiate the dismantling of people’s trading stores without first of all making an alternative provision for them? In a state with this kind of government, it is obvious that hundreds of CIDJAPs will not make much impact.

Furthermore, education is meant to improve the condition of man. Unfortunately, people were not well equipped with the kind of education provided by the government. Not all could afford to train their wards in private schools or abroad. Thus, unemployment problems keep escalating.

The deplorable state of government health facilities in Enugu State and its environs was a major challenge to CIDJAP. The institute was meant to complement the effort of government in providing health facilities for the people. Since most government hospitals like the University Teaching Hospital, (UNTH), Orthopaedic hospital, and few other hospitals in Enugu were left with moribund equipment, the effort of CIDJAP could scarcely be noticed. Similarly rehabilitation of prisons and inmates is largely the responsibility of the government. When they are abandoned, there is a limit to which a non-governmental organization, no matter how buoyant, can go.

In addition to the above problems is the issue of funding. As a non-profit and humanitarian organization, CIDJAP was faced with the problem of limited resources during the period under review (Ike, 2008, PC). This brought some set back in its speed towards the actualization of the set goals. For instance, not all prisoners were rehabilitated financially after their release from prison during the period under review. The amount given as capital was not usually enough for a prospective business in Nigeria. Similarly, the housing
project did not receive its second phase because the organization lacked fund to embark on such a gigantic project. Meagre sum in the name of rent received was geared towards maintaining the estate and so could not finance such a project. Every department and project of the organization needed expansion to meet the challenges.

Again, there was the need to build the capacity of staff of CIDJAP numerically and otherwise. While some were already studying abroad as at 2003, more need to be sponsored. CIDJAP PLEAS for instance covered only four prisons in Enugu between 1991 and 2003. More could have been incorporated if there was expansion of the department.

From the above exposition, it could be argued that though Enugu has not recorded major eruptions like some cities in Nigeria as at the end of this study, it was not a peaceful state as it appeared. The absence of war does not mean peace as Galtung noted. In fact, in some war situations, there may be peace. When a state has structures that enhance the well-being of its citizens, such a state is said to be peaceful positively even though it may be at war with another state or with its component like terrorists or rebels. In the same way, a state like Enugu, with structures that retard the well-being and development of its citizens even though there is no open confrontation with neither its component nor with another state, is not positively peaceful. What exists is negative peace, i.e., the mere absence of war. The citizens are subjected to suppression, hunger, poverty, fear, insecurity and so many other situations of war without war at hand. It can therefore be argued that what matters most for peace is not whether there is war or no war but that the citizens of a state are free from the unbearable conditions that often result from war with or without one at hand. Such conditions were abundant in Enugu during the period under review even though there was no war or major eruption.
Conclusions

Although Enugu State has not known major eruptions as in some other states with a multi-ethnic and multi-religious character in Nigeria, this does not suggest the absence of violence for structural violence has eaten deep into the fabric of the state as manifested in the activities of CIDJAP. The peace in Enugu may, therefore, be referred to as negative peace which is highly inflammable. Despite the doggedness of CIDJAP in combating the ugly situation, it seems little or nothing has been done. It is a truism that the organization has financial and capacity-building challenges; a major obstacle to its goal is lack of government’s positive presence in the state. In other words, the government has reneged in providing individual and communal socio-economic security for the people. Unless the state assumes its primary duty of protecting its inhabitants, the efforts of CIDJAP alone or any other non-governmental organization will yield little or no considerable result. The state lays the foundation; the civil society helps in providing some building materials. Without the foundation, the blocks will not stand.

It suffices to argue, therefore, that the primary role of non-governmental organizations is not to assume the mandate of the state which they cannot actualise. The strength of non-governmental organizations, as part of the civil society, lies in ensuring good governance either by calling the state to order through consultations and dialogues or education, sensitization and mobilization of the general public as a community for a new government. The role of civic groups is therefore complementary. However, when there is combined effort of many active, well-articulated and committed civil society groups, even a weak state can be propelled and strengthened to deliver. Thus, formation of such groups should be encouraged
particularly in Africa where such weak states abound. Evaluating the roles of some existing ones like CIDJAP is also necessary to understand their challenges and the nature of problems facing African states and their leadership.

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Very Rev. Msgnr. Prof. Obiorah Ike, 50 years, the Director of CIDJAP at No. 13 Isiukwaato Street Uwani Enugu. Interviewed on the 19th and 25th of July, 2008
John Agum, Uwakwe Onuoha and Emeka Ani, 27, 23 and 36 years respectively, males, students of the University of Nigeria Nsukka (Enugu Campus), at the CIDJAP’S Central Library, No. 13 Isiukwato Street Uwani Enugu. Interviewed on the 3rd of August 2008

Joy Ofoedu and Helen Ugwu, 45 and 39 years respectively, females, apprentices at the Nazareth Skills and Vocational/Training Centre for Women. Interviewed on the 22nd of June, 2008

Chidi Ngwoke and Gabriel Ani, 37 and 29 years respectively, males, at the Vocational Industrial and Technical Training Centre (VITTC) Ogbete Enugu. Interviewed on the 4th of July, 2008

Chidi Ogbu, 47 years, male, beneficiary of CIDJAP Small Project Fund and a trader, Ogbete Main Market Enugu. Interviewed on the 14th of July, 2008

Yves, 41 years, male, a French Volunteer worker who is presently the Director of the Vocational Industrial and Technical Training Department. Interviewed on the 17th of August, 2008.

Christiana Ajagu, 38 years, female, the head of Caritas Desk, No. 13 Isiukwuato Street Uwani Enugu. Interviewed on the 17th of August, 2008

NOTES

i About four of these cyclist commercial operators expressed their bitterness over the death of their colleagues as well as the government extortions. They noted that sometimes they do not go home with more than 60% of what they earn in a day because some people who call themselves special task force of the state government add to this extortion.

ii The research was an eyewitness to the crises and was involved in rushing some of the victims to the Hospital.

iii The researcher was one of those who monitored elections in Enugu in 1999 and 2003 under the auspices of the Justice and Peace of the Catholic Church in Nigeria.
iv As a regular worshipper at the Adoration Ground of Rev. Fr. Ejike Mbaka, the researcher was present at the night of the incident and witnessed the commotion and the scampering for safety when the tugs struck at midnight.

v A poster with the caption “Nnamani (then governor of Enugu State) has done it again” was seen pasted by the wall of Peace Mass Transit Park in Enugu. Several of such posters were seen with cartoons depicting the callousness of the government of Enugu during this period.
Re-Imagining and Re-Casting ‘Us’ and ‘Them’: The Novel Coming Home and the Contemporary Resurgence of Race-Inspired Nationalism in Zimbabwe’s Past Decade

Oliver Nyambi

Key Terms:

Abstract:
Today, race occupies the heart of Zimbabwe’s nationalist discourses that were revived circa 2000 to prop up the idea of correcting the racial land tenure system. However in the succeeding years this country, once touted as the epitome of progressive African independence, underwent a serious political and economic implosion marked by world-record inflation and a collapse in basic social services. The political ‘crisis’ was rooted in the unfinished business of decolonisation where race, land and nationality were subjected to serious revisions and transformation. The cultural sphere (incorporating the literary sphere) also engaged with the spatio-temporal political discourse to create an emergent racial nationalism which re-defined Zimbabweanality or nativity strictly on the basis of race and origins vis-à-vis land ownership. While not directly involved with the political tussles, literary interventions in the discourse on race and land inevitably engender sympathetic emotions for certain national identity formations. This paper is an attempt to demonstrate the importance of imaginative literature as a cultural site to experience some of the most crucial debates shaping the much debated political landscape of Zimbabwe’s past decade. With the aid of one of the best known literary texts published in the period, the paper argues that the political significance of the novel (Coming Home by Olley Maruma) is tied up with its subtle political hegemonic function in which it celebrates and props up the ZANU (PF) government’s revived race-inspired nationalism.
Introduction

It is no longer adequate to imagine postcoloniality in literary-critical discourses as simply articulating an ideological theory and methodology of challenging self-serving myths in colonial European representations of Africa and Africans in the European canon of modernist grand narratives, which (as Ania Loomba asserts) were used by imperial societies “to impart Western values to the natives, constructing European culture as superior and as a measure of human values and thereby in maintaining colonial rule” (76). An important development in postcolonial theory is its contemporary gravitation towards an interpretation of the political and socio-economic present as a consequence of not only the accumulating effects of the colonial past, but more importantly, of the local forces that have emerged in the post-independence epoch. It seems that the impulse of “writing back to the empire” is waning (although proponents of the neo-colonial discourse including the ZANU PF regime in Zimbabwe believe in the constantly metamorphosing forces of colonialism and a necessary perpetual formulation of counter-measures). The most urgent critical gaze now, is inward-looking and Ella Shohat has aptly spelled out this emphasis on the ‘now’:

Echoing "post-modernity," "postcoloniality" marks a contemporary state, situation, condition or epoch. The prefix "post," then, aligns "post-colonialism" with a series of other "posts" "post-structuralism," "post- modernism," "post-Marxism," "post-feminism," "post-deconstructionism" – all sharing the notion of a movement beyond. Yet while these "posts" refer largely to the supersession of outmoded philosophical, aesthetic and political theories, the "post-colonial" implies both going beyond anti-colonial nationalist theory as well as a movement beyond a specific point in history, that of colonialism and Third World nationalist struggles. In that sense the prefix "post" aligns the "post-colonial" with
another genre of "posts" "post-war," "post-cold war," "post-independence," "post-revolution" – all of which underline a passage into a new period and a closure of a certain historical event or age, officially stamped with dates. [emphasis added] (101)

Political developments in Zimbabwe in the post 2000 period require one to search for an understanding of forces shaping the twenty-first century epoch with a firm conception of the dynamics of local forces at play. Land reform and national sovereignty were (and remain) the mainstay of liberation ideology and independence. Therefore, for a nation like Zimbabwe which went through a protracted liberation war to achieve political independence, the most meaningful way of ‘litmus-testing’ the postcolonial present is to engage with the discourses with which the post-independence political establishment has managed or attempted to sustain self-rule and address pressing, colonially induced problems – chief among them, the land ownership inequalities. In contemporary Zimbabwe, however, the radical and nativist Third Chimurenga discourse that emerged to deal ‘once and for all’ with the land question projects the colonial past as an important – indeed permanent and enduring – point of reference in its present search for justification, legitimation and even methodologies of land reform. It is in this context that the transitional (colonial-independence) setting of Olley Maruma’s semi-autobiographical novel Coming Home becomes an important site to experience not just the authorial narrativisation of history and ideas, but also the convergence of the political and ideological implications

1 The Struggle for liberation. In the matrix of the three Chimurengas, the first involved the earliest native uprisings which were easily quashed by the colonialists – Cecil Rhodes British South Africa Company; the second Chimurenga finally won independence for Blacks while the third (and most recent one) involved land re-appropriation from Whites for Blacks’ resettlement.
of that authorially narrativised past with the state’s versions of that past, which allows the novel to grapple with “the underlying logic rather than just the effects of a particular historical moment” (Helgesson 235).

The cosmopolitan narrator as the purveyor of a pro-hegemonic stance on race and land

_Coming Home_ was published in 2007 and immediately made an impact, winning the 2008 Zimbabwean National Arts Merit Award for the “Outstanding First Creative Published Work” of that year. What makes _Coming Home_ a unique contribution to the burgeoning and diverse post-millennial Zimbabwean literary corpus is its subtle pro-hegemonic tone that is given impetus by its semi-autobiographical texture. The novel’s back-cover blurb offers the initial hint at its ‘patriotic’ inclination:

> In many ways, the novel skillfully unmasks the root causes of the West’s hostility and demonisation of Zimbabwe’s President Robert Mugabe since his government’s nationalization of farmland formerly owned by Rhodesian white farmers of mostly Anglo-Saxon origin. (book cover)

Without overemphasising the analytical value of this claim, I contend that it indeed highlights and justifies my intention to read the novel as a ‘patriotic literary narrative’ subtly aligned with the state’s defensive Third Chimurenga rhetoric. In his distinction of what he calls “secondary (complex)” and “primary (simple)” speech genres, Bakhtin categorises the language of imaginative literature (particularly the novel) as a secondary speech genre which acquires complexity in the process of “absorb[ing] and digest[ing] various primary (simple) genres” (62) into its own system. As a complex utterance, therefore, the novel becomes a convenient site to encounter
a wide range of processes, ideas and perceptions about time-space, since it is a product of the compaction of many “primary speech genres” that have a direct relationship with the real world. Transposing this Bakhtinian conception into an analysis of Maruma’s novel, it can be argued that this novel (perhaps unlike much of the literary works published in the last decade) projects a life-world that (when read in the context of the historical and political context) may be largely interpreted as a “complex or secondary speech genre” supporting the government’s political conduct, particularly the land redistribution exercise and other black empowerment policies encapsulated in the Third Chimurenga. Coming Home’s contribution to the contemporary debate on the politics of land ownership and the attendant discourse on race can be located in the quasi-autobiographical guiding narrative of the first person narrator and protagonist. The narrative chronicles part of Simon’s life that coincides with the end of his expatriate educational sojourn in Britain where he obtained a Law degree. Simon returns to a country undergoing a transition from colonial to black rule. The setting (a transitional period) effectively shifts the modern reader’s mind back into the historically familiar past where the narrator’s ‘witness’ account becomes the sole authoritative source or window through which the reader experiences a past repackaged to the taste of the narrator. The setting, therefore, allows for a ‘strategic’ relapse into the colonial life-world, where the reader (re)encounters the problems of white supremacy and black slavery and starts to re-imagine their political and ideological significance on the post-independence side of the transition. One also finds in the recurring motif of Simon’s Law degree a sense of enlightenment which threads throughout the narrative, giving it an intellectual dimension to back up his firm ideological intuitions in his critique of the socio-economic and political outlook of both the colonial and the postcolonial worlds as he experiences them in the transitional period.
As hinted above, *Coming Home’s* semantic effect is intricately bound up with the construction of the narrator as an intellectual. This narrator and narrative framing is given impetus by Simon’s academic discipline – Law – which makes him the voice of reason and justice. Simon’s interpretation of the realities of the transitional period is informed by a prior intellectualism that apparently derives from his access to debates on law, history and world politics. This ‘conscious’ element in his character informing his critique of the unfolding transitional moment makes him the novel’s ideological ‘spokesperson’ and a prototype of reason; a feature which constantly enlists the reader’s sympathies to identify with his opinion. Also linked to the narrator’s intellectually informed stance is Simon’s British experience. He emerges as a ‘been-to’ with practical, racially coloured experiences of the colonial Metropole and its Empire – an invaluable (personal) history shaping his focus and indeed the novel’s ideological and political vision. Focusing on the circumstantial evidence of his representation of the race problem in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia and England, one realises the influence of his transcontinental experience, as the following quotation demonstrates:

In those days, I had believed that living in England would be like living in paradise where one would never be demeaned or despised again because of the colour of one’s skin. I deluded myself that it would be a world where I would not be forced to live in perpetual fear of authority and the police […] But I had also seen the ugly underbelly of British society, the subtle and sometimes not so subtle racism and class bigotry, which, in some cases, were just as virulent as those in colonial Rhodesia. (3-4)

Simon is here presenting the Rhodesian race problem as a transoceanic problem that materialises (especially) wherever the British are present, be it in the Metropolis (Britain) or in its Empire in the colonial world. As a cosmopolitan and intellectual ‘witness’ to
racial prejudice, Simon invokes his diasporic cosmopolitanism to project white Rhodesians as just another British ‘tribe’ in foreign lands who, therefore, share a common supremacist and imperialist mindset and a racial contempt for Africans.

While race occupies the center of Simon’s worldview, personal relationships and conduct, it most importantly informs the very narrative of the nation in transition that comes to us by means of his narration. A close study of narrated instances of racial prejudice experienced by Simon situates his bitterness in the wider “chronotopic” nationalist spirit of anti-colonial resistance that forms the bedrock of the empirical Third Chimurenga narrative. One major observation that Simon makes as he scrutinises the transitional society (and one that feeds into the contemporary Third Chimurenga demands for at least total equality and at most Black superiority) is that the white citizens do not only behave as if superior to the blacks because they own land, but because they undeservedly own it. Some of the numerous race-based phenomena that Simon is keen to narrate involve the topical land question. His eight years of endurance of British racist attitudes have intensified his refusal to continue to suffer racial denigration particularly on his home ground. This sense of nationality as inherently informed by nativity resuscitates his confidence in black people’s worth. One finds in his narration of every racist moment and situation, a deep sense of disgust at and abhorrence of a racialised society; this appeals to the reader as a sign of anger building up whenever Simon is denied his sense of belonging to his original home by an outsider – as it would in any self-respecting native-born person. This fury leads to Simon’s invocation of his intellectual arsenal to expose the false premise of his debasement, even in his native country, as can be seen in his encounter with a group of singing white supremacist Rhodesian soldiers. Here, Simon responds to a cruel shove by a Rhodesian soldier with vituperative criticism of the false basis of a belief in white superiority and the
misplaced pride which to him shows up the soldiers’ song, “Rhodesians Never Die”, as a self-deluding temporal construct soon to be demolished by the ‘real’ black owners of the country:

It [the song “Rhodesians Never Die”] was an ironical comment on Clem Tholet’s curious notion of national pride, that he had conveniently forgotten that the “enemies” whom the Rhodesians wanted to prevent from “coming in” were, in fact, the indigenous sons and daughters of the land, whose blood was being spilled in the name of freedom. They had taken up arms against the white rulers because they were no longer prepared to live as serfs in the land of their own ancestors […] As the three soldiers went past me, the one closest to me deliberately staggered into my path, knocking me hard against the wall. He was a blonde boy with a pimply face and a snub nose. (18)

While the “stagger[ing] into [Simon’s] path” (18) makes a striking and pertinent symbolic allusion to colonialism’s violent disruption of the indigenous society, it is more usefully read, in this context, as a symbolically revealing action indicating an invalid attitude of white supremacy glaringly in need of correction. The Rhodesians’ pride is thus shown to be founded on loose ground – stolen land – a basis whose unsustainability, as Simon says, is exposed by the natives’ resolve to fight in order to regain their own (now occupied) territory.

Read in the context of a post 2000 Zimbabwean public sphere marked by autochthonic considerations of nationality², the white world

² I am thinking here of the renaissance, renditions and wide circulation of such “patriotic” anti-white liberation war songs as Cde Chinx’s “Maruza Imi” (“whites are losers”) in the post 2000 era. This kind of music propagated and dispersed the emergent anti-white turn of black nationalism – almost in the
depicted in *Coming Home*, then, appears to be its own worst enemy, crumbling as a result of its own failure to distinguish between what is ‘home’ and what is ‘foreign’ land. In the song “Rhodians Never Die”, Simon discovers the irony of Rhodians becoming too attached and passionate about the country they have ‘stolen’, to the point of being willing to sacrifice their lives defending it from its native black owners. To the readers, however, Simon’s conservative conception of nationality as inextricably anchored in nativity appeals to their sense of history – where they begin to perceive the Rhodesian soldiers’ show of a precarious patriotism towards ‘stolen’ land as being spurred by their artificially acquired identification with it – a point that is revealed in the song’s lyrics: “And we’ll fight through thick and thin/we’ll keep our land a free land/stop the enemy coming in” (18). The self-awarded supremacy, self-importance and pride displayed by the white soldiers and revealed by the symbolic violence of the soldier (and the irony of the theme of the Rhodesian song) are portrayed as consequences of their claim of owning and belonging to the land, Rhodesia. However, Simon is less interested in the irony of the colonial casting of the autochthonous as ‘enemies’ of the land but on the whites’ (the actual outsiders’) fear of the black people’s “coming in” and remaining in and on the land where they have always been. As the protagonist and narrator, Simon becomes the proverbial ‘jury, judge and executioner’ who expels ‘false’ white owners of the country from the ‘imagined black community’ in the fashion of the Third Chimurenga slogan “Mwana wenvhu” (children of the soil) – which fixes nationality on race and descent.

As hinted at above, the delineation of Simon as a studious intellectual endows the narrative with a scholarly quality that

same way that (a few years later) Julius Malema’s ‘re-discovery’ and singing of “*Dhubul’i Bhunu*” (“Shoot the Boer”) created racial frictions amid revisions of land and black empowerment policies in South Africa.
influences the reader to accept the narrator’s world view without any skepticism. Simon is not ‘just another character’ in the novel. More than functioning as the narrative’s and plot’s lever whose voice is the only source of information about the transitional period that he inhabits, Simon’s life, acquaintances and occupation reflect on ideological issues at the heart of his thought and intellectual inclination. A scrutiny of the depiction of his place of abode, work place, family and social places reveals a symptomatic racial ambivalence that not only props up and supplements his ideological commentary, but more importantly, cogently situates the narrative’s impact in the broader Third Chimurenga subversion of an undying white supremacy – what Simon tacitly refers to as “a lingering hangover of imperial nostalgia” (32). Simon’s place of work, home (both his urban and rural one) and drinking outlets all function as sites of substantiation anchoring and certifying his overarching intellectual viewpoints. The Avenues (where Simon lives with his cousin Samson) carries a symbolic significance as testimony to black people’s reclamation of territory and re-assertion of their racial equality. Black people’s economic potential is inscribed in the symbolic ‘success story’ signified by Samson’s Avenues flat and encapsulated in the following description of the flats:

the comfortable Avenues [...] had formerly been reserved for the whites under Ian Smith’s colonial settler regime [...] Ian Smith and his cohorts had been forced by the heat of battle to grudgingly concede that the days of racial segregation were over. [emphasis added] (2)

More than simply guiding the reader’s apprehension of racist policies inhabiting the “Rhodesian space-time” (Primorac 56), the description of space in the above quotation compellingly invites the reader to perceive the intransigence and ambivalence of whites on issues pertaining to redress of colonial imbalances. In the context of whites’
actual reluctance to offer land for black resettlement in the pre-2000 period, awareness of their “grudgingly” conceding to black empowerment in this quotation obliges the attentive reader to draw parallels between the novelistic narrative and the Third Chimurenga narrative’s quintessential dimension – the act of re-distributing wealth from whites to blacks – which is best reflected by the passing of the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act of 2007; ironically the year of Coming Home’s publication.

Robert Fraser has hinted at the propensity of the postcolonial first person singular ‘I’ to morph easily into the collective ‘we’ proxy:

It is a short step from such books, with their implicit identifications of the private and public spheres, to novels in which the first person singular is explicitly construed as identical, and co-terminous, with the nation itself. (77)

The depiction of Simon’s rural space (like his urban home) represents it as an archive of colonial land and economic imbalances ‘certifying’ land reform as an indispensable corrective measure. Simon’s subjective first person singular (‘I’) narrative acquires a representational dimension – the “representative ‘I’” viewpoint (Fraser 78) whose concerns strike the reader as a microcosmic evocation of the collective black national subject. In this sense, the journey motif has little to do with depicting Simon’s family and roots, but functions more as an opportunity through which the narrative can amplify the scale of racial economic imbalance where the illegitimate inequality of racially skewed land ownership takes on firm political significance as Simon becomes fully convinced (in order to convince the reader) that black people’s problems – their peripheral location in the trajectory of nationality – is born out of their loss of land and that they can, therefore, only achieve true liberation and nationality if they can win back the land and start to produce and sustain themselves.
from it – the very founding creed of the Third Chimurenga. Simon’s journey to his rural home in Mhondoro becomes a metaphorical journey towards a form of experiential enlightenment that employs similar codes as the Third Chimurenga policy statements of black empowerment through land reappropriation. The rural setting provides Simon with all the paraphernalia of his nationalist argument and the signs and evidence he needs to buttress his prior, somewhat emotional and academic take on racial land imbalances in Rhodesia. His story assumes a larger historical narrative style as he goes deeper into history to explain not just the colonial origins of the rural communal reserves, but more importantly, their historical existence as a clear proof and consequence of colonialism’s untenable, racist land policies and exploitation of black people. The historical style of narrating events, causes and effects further validates Simon as a reliable narrator and informant, as can be felt in the narrative textuality of the following quotation:

In 1930, the British colonial settlers, who had been granted self-rule by the British crown in 1923, enacted the Land Apportionment Act, which designated most of the best farming land in the area, “European Land”. Reclaiming some of that land had been one of the main aims of the liberation war. (64)

To a reader who is en fait with the Third Chimurenga, the presence of established historical fact in the narrative text (above) not only endows Simon’s critique with an impression of objectivity that easily passes for indisputable evidence in support of his attack on colonial prejudices manifested in the land tenure system, but subtly vindicates any corrective measure as due fulfillment of the revolution.

Following Fraser’s line of argument (above), Simon’s seemingly private apprehension of racial dynamics vis-à-vis the colonial land
and power economy can be read as not only ushering in a ‘popular’ political grievance characterising the colonial space-time, but as functioning (more importantly) as the Third Chimurenga land reform’s very site of legitimation and justification. Read in the context of Zimbabwe’s post 2000 plunge into racial antagonism reminiscent of the liberation war and its setting in the colonial to independence transitional period, the narrative can be easily interpreted as not only subtly providing a case for the government’s anti-white (especially land and foreign) policies, but as lending itself to the anti-white grand narratives of the Third Chimurenga where it begins to function (among other state propagandistic products) as a corroborating voice to the government’s land reform policy. The novel reflects an obsession with actual national history which it re-creates and re-inscribes with a political urgency that is in sync with hegemonic, nativist delineations of the ‘authentic’ Zimbabwean identity. Invoking Fraser’s hint at the proclivity in the first person ‘I’ to function (or represent) the collective ‘we’, it is easy to discern how Maruma’s novel transcends the private confines and political persuasions of the narrator. In *Coming Home* (as in the Third Chimurenga grand narrative), the past is not ‘dead’ – it actually lives as the referential point to the political present.

The ‘nationalist’ leader’s ‘heroic’ past cannot function effectively in the present urgency for legitimation without recourse to ugly dimensions of the colonial space-time, whose extension into the post-independence era is often cited as the object of the leader’s extension of his or her mandate. It is in this ‘unfinished’ decolonisation business that the propagandistic dimension to Maruma’s novel can be apprehended. Real, historical events represented in *Coming Home* are carefully selected and narrated from a first person vantage point that enlivens the otherwise similar inflections, exclusions and total erasures of Third Chimurenga discourses. This monolithic version of history presented by Third
Chimurenga grand narratives and represented in *Coming Home* places especial focus on past colonial injustices which are re-cast as potentially and capriciously mutable and incessantly endangering the nation’s independence, thus the ‘need’ to validate the state’s epistemic call to ‘patriotic’ guardianship of independence in all spheres of expression. In her interpretation of Bakhtin’s theorization on the varying significance of the past in epic and novelistic literary genres, Annalisa Oboe reveals the political commodification of the past in grand projects of hegemonic novels such as *Coming Home*:

> In the novel, the central temporal and spatial human co-ordinate is always the present [...] the past evoked by the novelist is no longer the unquestioningly ‘absolute past’ celebrated in the eternal language and immutable form of the epic; being addressed to/for the present, it rather becomes a ‘usable past’ which can be chosen and tailored. (20)

Zooming in on the aspect of ‘choice’ raised by Oboe, a closer analysis of the implicit socio-political commentary that can be inferred from Simon’s chosen incidents, events and ‘discoveries’ reveals a striking similarity with hegemonic interpretations of the same historical realities that have been ‘chosen’ and ‘used’ to legitimate the Third Chimurenga land reform process and the consequent anti-white spirit characterising the post 2000 period. As Simon journeys to his rural home, his narrative demonstrates a careful selection of reported colonial land and power imbalances which he impresses on the reader as justifying the autochthonous dimension of his nationalism.
The colonially-designated home as a symbol and testimony of untenable, racist land tenure system

The narrative chronicle of Simon’s visit to Mhondoro is loaded with a subtle commentary that politically colours his prior, more factual tone and prepares the reader for his declaration of support for ZANU (PF) and Mugabe. A critical dimension to the narrative’s focus on colonial injustice is Simon’s descriptions of the land and economic imbalance between blacks and whites. Here, the reporting first person singular narrative voice conspicuously becomes representative in the sense of Fraser’s assertion (above), affectively cajoling the reader to experience the reprehensibility of colonial black poverty and consequently to share in the logic of supporting the revolutionary ZANU (PF) and Mugabe. The racial land ownership imbalances are narrated in a historical and persuasively factual narrative style that strikes the reader as brute fact to be internalised without further probing and (more importantly) lures the reader to perceive the justifiability of his ZANU (PF) political orientation. The reader is thus emotionally guided to experience the same awakening to the ‘bare truth’, to perceive the inequity of a racist system and consequently to affirm as valid corrective measures that (as hinted by Simon) involve the return of land to black people – the gist of the Third Chimurenga. In his description of the discrepancy between the black and white settlements, Simon puts a perceptible accentuation on land ownership which ultimately emerges as the ‘maker’ of the rich and powerful, whereas it is the lack of it which ‘makes’ the oppressed and poor:

All along the route, there were lush green fields of maize and tobacco. In some open areas of the verdant fields, Jersey cows were grazing leisurely in scattered herds, their flywhisk tails swinging aimlessly in all directions. Outlined in painted stones against the hills on the left, were the words: KYNTYRE ESTATES, in huge white letters. On the right, irrigated fields
covered with green stalks of wheat stretched as far as the eye could see. Occasionally, we drove past wretched looking housing compounds where the black farm workers lived. Most of these consisted of clusters of old grass thatched mud huts and crumbling ramshackle buildings. Many of the thatched roofs were so old that the dry, dark grey grass was falling apart. (64)

This description of the Blacks’ dwellings (apart from its notable use of one of the Fanonian and postcolonial descriptive term, “wretched”) signals black people’s squalid existence, whose paucity is amplified by the contrasting ‘obscenity’ of the white farmer’s plenty. However, Simon (being black and identifying with the impoverished and colonised labourers) does not seem to gaze at the white coloniser’s wealth with the infamous “lust” of Fanon’s “envious” colonised people (Fanon 30). Instead, the gaze that Simon gives to the plush wealth of the white farmer and master of the black servants is loaded with a subtle demystification of the injustice at the heart of the colonial Land Apportionment Act, whose racist intentions find conspicuous expression in the racial land discrepancies that metamorphose into racist power relations. To the conscious reader, the pithiness of the graphic juxtaposition of extremes, black poverty amid white wealth, provides a strong case for land redistribution as the pinnacle for total independence, a fact encapsulated in the “100% [black] empowerment” (100 Reasons) rhetoric of the Third Chimurenga. Land and economic empowerment become inextricably related in the political grand project of revising and re-auditing national independence.

Markedly, Shimmer Chinodya’s novel Harvest of Thorns (1990) captures the same unjust land distribution vis-à-vis unjust colonial power relations more vividly, thus foregrounding the justifiability of
Benjamin’s response to the ‘calling’ of the liberation war as can be inferred from the following descriptions:

The bus swept downhill, chugged through the townships, purred past the suburbs and cruised out into the green mountain flanks, into the wind, past breathtaking fields of maize and potatoes and sunflowers, whistling round bends through necks of granite jutting out to the very roofs of heaven. The passengers gazed at the rich farmland and indefatigable stretches of barbed wire claiming it. They looked out at hordes of blacks toiling in the green, the occasional sun hatted farmer strutting among them. They gazed at the khaki farm compounds of grass and dagga spinning past and the children waving and racing after them. (101)

However, an invocation of Bakhtin’s principle of the “chronotope” to a reading of the strangely similar narratives reveals their disparate relationship to hegemonic grand narratives circulating in the post 2000 period. Besides its overarching ‘post-independence disillusionment literature’ thematic framing (which is forcefully conveyed through the metaphor of “harvesting thorns”), the anti-colonial tone of Chinodya’s novel (a 1990 publication) may easily be read in the post 2000 period as being ‘caught up’ in Third Chimurenga’s hegemonic revisionist emphasis on past colonial injustices as the basis for present anti-white policies. However, the same may not be said (with the same kind of ease) about Coming Home whose publication date (2007) eccentrically coincides with a surge in ‘patriotic’ demands (and positive responses) to affirm state-circumscribed presentations and representations of the history of racial land and economic imbalances. While Coming Home’s date of publication does not necessarily bind its ideological treatise to particular temporal political persuasions, Bakhtin’s principle of the inextricability of novelistic meaning from the space and time of their production and consumption heightens suspicions that the novel
could be a conscious ‘patriotic literary narrative’ attempting (like the Third Chimurenga grand narrative) to use history in the process of re-casting and re-inscribing national identity formation for hegemonic purposes. In this sense Coming Home’s narrative focus on historical virtuous dimensions of ZANU (PF) and Mugabe and its total eclipsing of some of the bad elements in the history of the party\(^3\) suggest its complex intention (like the Third Chimurenga grand narrative) to re-create history for hegemonic purposes.

The depiction of the colonial space-time in Coming Home reveals the novel’s implicit connection to the state’s deployment of that same past as defining and supporting its legitimation wars. Simon’s journey to rural Mhondoro, therefore, becomes a psychological and intellectual movement towards a Third Chimurenga conception of total decolonisation that holds up the liberation war and black people’s acquisition of land as flagships of any meaningful political independence. Again, unlike in Fanon’s prediction of colonised people whose extreme exploitation ‘cultures’ them to assume simple vengeful notions of independence that require the “take-over” of all of the coloniser’s property and political position, the idea of land reform alluded to in Simon’s description of the coloniser and the colonised appeals to the reader’s sense of (in)justice and invites him or her to appreciate Simon’s discursive and ‘logical’ conclusion – that in the post-independence epoch, land reform is imperative if such independence is to be real or complete. Land ownership becomes intricately linked with the attainment of racial equality, political power and true independence. Olley Maruma is here appropriating what seems to be a common trope in Zimbabwean literature – the

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\(^3\) One of the major silence in the novel is the ‘mysterious’ death of Josiah Tongogara the commander of ZANLA – the combat wing of ZANU (PF) who was generally regarded as liberal and Mugabe’s rival, during the transitional period in which the novel is set.
concept of the colonially constructed “home” – to hint subtly but powerfully at the logic of land reform as a pre-requisite for true independence.

Charles Mungoshi in *Waiting for the Rain* (1985) uses the same trope of the colonially designated “home” to challenge the reader to judge the kind of (colonial) political system that warps a school-boy’s sense of home and forces him to curse it in a touching and troubling diatribe:

I am Lucifer Mandengu. I was born here against my will. I should have been born elsewhere – of some other parents. I have never liked it here, and I never shall and if ever I leave this place, I am not going to come back. It is the failure’s junk heap. Those who go to the towns only come back here to die. Home is where you come back to die, having lived all your life elsewhere. Home is a cluster of termite-eaten huts clinging on the stony slope of a sun-baked hill. What is here that’s worth loving? What is here – in this scrub, in this arid flatness, in this sun-bleached dust to love? You go for mile after mile in this swelter and not here, not there, not anywhere is there a tree big enough to sit under. And when you look everywhere all you see is the naked white earth crisscrossed by the eternal shadow of the restless vulture. I have been born here but is that a crime? That is only a biological and geographical error. I can change that. Or can I? Can’t I change anything here if I want to? Must I live with what I no longer believe in? Because I have been born here and here is home where everyone is and the roots of the Family are. Is that the only reason why I must come back to die in this desert? (162)

Lucifer, the aptly named antihero in Mungoshi’s novel (like Simon in *Coming Home*) not only finds home a repulsive and shameful place to come back to, but (most importantly) describes its lifeless aridity and the people’s settler-induced cargo-cult mentality in a way
that invokes (in the reader) a subtle condemnation of the real force behind the dystopia of this ‘home’ – colonialism. However, unlike in *Waiting for the Rain* where the reader is moved to sympathise with Lucifer by a realisation that his entanglement is not merely a result of “the accident of birth” (Christie 3) but that he is a victim of an alienating colonial education and a youth that have distorted his understanding of the deeper forces behind the problems of “home”, in *Coming Home*, sympathy for the colonised is courted through a mature and intellectual analysis of the dystopia of “home” by the Law graduate narrator, Simon. The anti-colonial sentiment discernible in both texts can be seen to relate differently to the Third Chimurenga’s own anti-colonial grand narrative. The “sociopolitical import” (LaCapra 11) manifest in the novels’ thematic and ideological framing situates the novels in different epochal discourses where their ‘literary meaning’ and social and ideological impact can be fruitfully apprehended in relation to spatio-temporal social, political and cultural discourses. In this sense, (despite the novels’ potential for multiple readings) *Waiting for the Rain* can be easily read as a cultural addition to dominant anti-colonial discourses given rise by its epochal situatedness. In the same vein, the post 2000 space-time inhabited by *Coming Home* proffers unique social, political and cultural urgencies that make up “primary speech genres” (Bakhtin 62) which transform into a more complicated system of signification – the “complex speech genres” (Bakhtin 62) that is the novel. Hlonipa Mokoena argues that “simply writing a description of a particular cultural, social, economic and intellectual status quo and labeling it the context of the writer’s thoughts, is not a solution to the problem of situating writers vis-à-vis their intellectual and social milieu” (285). However, any analytical perspective on *Coming Home*’s peculiar narrative focus on actual colonial injustices which does not utilise as context the immediate realities of the novel’s conception may not fully explain its contribution and relationship to dominant (especially state-circumscribed) grand narratives inhabiting the space-time of its
conception and consumption. That context is marked by the state’s epistemic call to ‘patriotic’ conduct in all forms of (cultural) expression in the production and circulation of the Third Chimurenga “master fictions”\textsuperscript{4}. The Third Chimurenga “master fictions” thrives on what Liisa Malkki has called “mythic-history” – described by Sten Pultz Moslund as:

> a particular, collectivized narrative of the past that comprises more than a mere description or evaluation of the past. It is a narrative that subversively recasts and reinterprets the past in \textit{fundamentally moral terms}, categorising the past into an elementary frame of loaded opposition between agents of good and agents of evil. (Emphasis as in the original 12)

‘Chronotopic’ demands for ‘patriotic’ usage of history in the cultural sphere can explain \textit{Coming Home}’s inclination to the Third Chimurenga practice of narrowing its narrativised history to what is ‘usable’ in the grand project to (re)cast whites as perpetual enemies of the nation and therefore justifying their expulsion from it as an act in the ‘national interest’. This ‘patriotic’ thread in the novel is reflected in its systematically narrow, ‘careful’ selection of events and other actual colonial phenomena that fix whites as \textit{irredeemably} racist, exploitative and therefore unfit for the revised, nativist “sons of the soil” matrix carved by the Third Chimurenga grand narrative.

Besides representing a life-world in which the Third Chimurenga’s focal ideology of “our land, our sovereignty”\textsuperscript{5} is supported, \textit{Coming Home} presents a fascinating ideological angle that echoes the Third Chimurenga political economy of land and its

\textsuperscript{4} Defined by Ranka Primorac as “discursive blueprints which aspire to generate and underlie all socially produced meanings (9).

\textsuperscript{5} ZANU PF’s 2008 Election motto.
significance in contemporary politics (and politicisation) of national identity in Zimbabwe. The novel engages with the potentially explosive discourse on the role of history in the making (and unmaking) of a true national identity by focusing its narrative attention on a historical past that it subtly reconstructs and repackages to render it usable in the ongoing Third Chimurenga revision of national identity. Sabelo Gatscheni-Ndlovu has noted the hegemonic conveniences of such monolithic interpretations of the history of the nation discernible in the novel:

This argument [of Zimbabwean nationalism as premised on Chimurenga] links with Tony Bennett (1995: 141)’s concepts of ‘nationing history’ and ‘historicising the nation’ that involved not only nationalism emerging as an anti-colonial force contesting colonially-created identities of African ‘subject hood’ but also the nationalists actively working towards creating and articulating an alternative national history that ran counter to colonial history. This process of ‘historicizing the nation’ included dominant nationalist movements working tirelessly to claim the identity of being progenitors of the nation whilst at the same time deliberately blending their hagiographies into the history of the nation.

(2)

The past in *Coming Home* is given a foundational position as the major point of reference in any attempt at fixing the fluidity of nationality. The past in *Coming Home* is lively and recent, since it is narrated as it is lived by Simon. Simon’s ‘reported speech’ style of narrative in *Coming Home* makes the past appeal to the reader as a very immediate past whose ‘freshness’ gives it a logical pertinence to contemporary, Third Chimurenga forms of nationalist discourses. To a reader who is abreast of the dynamics of the debate on national identity in Zimbabwe’s social and political spheres (particularly the emergent prominence given to the nationalist struggle in Third
Chimurenga state discourses) in the last decade, the whole narrative of *Coming Home* appears to subtly legitimate the eminence of the nationalist past as the mainstay of national identity construction. *Coming Home* can, therefore, be read in the context of post 2000 Zimbabwean social and political ‘crisis’ as inviting a reading of its ‘flash-back’ narrative focus on colonial injustices as paralleling the broader Third Chimurenga ‘flash-back’ projection of history as the fulcrum of present authentic Zimbabweanness. Both (the novel and the empirical Third Chimurenga) narratives deliberately (though in different ways) occupy the historical and familiar temporality of the (colonialism to independence) transitional epoch in order to ‘explain’ the problems inhabiting the national narrative of the postcolonial epoch. By using ‘flash-back’ allusions to an otherwise historical Rhodesia-Zimbabwe transitional period, the re-lived colonialism-independence transition in *Coming Home* endows the narrative with the impetus to demarcate clear borderlines between the ‘original’ nationals (blacks supporting the liberation war) and the ‘artificial’ ones – the white Rhodesians who are fighting against the transference of land and total political and economic power to the black majority. This dualistic reality of black (deserving but peripheral) nationals and white (undeserving but powerful) nationals heightens Simon’s (and indeed the narrative’s) nationalist tone, which eventually leads to the narrator’s open declaration of his political affiliation: his support of ZANU PF; its leader and its nationalist ideology premised on land tenure reforms; the collapsing of white minority rule and the advancement of black people.

**Conclusion**

Read in the historical context of deep political and racial polarisation, Simon’s firming pro-ZANU (PF) philosophy not only takes a toll on his political and socio-economic worldview, but it also begins to
impose political undertones on his narrative. The first person narrative not only morphs into the representative ‘we’ in the fashion described by Fraser in the foregoing, but it assumes a luring persuasiveness that forces the reader to surrender to a “shared emotional attention” (Currie v) with Simon, the narrator and his political orientation. Referring to the intensely cognitive audience and story-teller relationship in pre-literate societies, Currie asserts that written stories have retained the capacity to influence the reader’s emotions “not simply in the sense of sometimes happening to be in the same emotional state, but in the sense of experiencing, and valuing, our emotional states as shared” (v). It can be argued that this reader-narrative emotional sharing in written stories is mostly felt in stories narrated from a first person narrative viewpoint whose authority as emanating from the narrator of the story dictates the reader’s cognitive attachment to him or her and consequently his or her world views. Being the sole authority behind the unfolding story, Simon’s monolithic and dictatorial hold on the narrative is ironically analogous to the authority claimed by the empirical Third Chimurenga narrative and the ‘indispensability’ of its narrators. A closer look at Simon’s description of the nationalist leaders reveals a discernible urgency not only to project them positively as fair, democratic, reconciliatory and satisfactorily fitting to rule, but to emotionally guide the reader to share in his liking of them. Mugabe, for instance, appears as a popular, magnanimous, revolutionary and racially tolerant candidate, suitable to lead the independent country, as can be inferred from the following quotations:

As Mugabe’s entourage reached the stairs to the podium, a huge roar went up from the crowd. The atmosphere was electric. Everywhere there was cheering, whistling and ululating. It was a tumultuous reception. A large part of the crowd started singing in ecstatic, emotional confusion. (99)
To everyone’s astonishment, his [Mugabe’s] well-delivered speech was extremely conciliatory. He spoke firmly, in a cultured and articulate voice. He promised peace, reconciliation and reconstruction, telling the crowd that if his party were elected to power, it would not seek revenge on its former enemies. It would do everything in its grasp to build a just society for its entire people, irrespective of race, colour or creed. (100)

The joyful enthusiasm described by Simon transcends the hype of a successful transition into the independence era, creating an overwhelming sense of support and confidence in the nationalist leader whose likeability and popularity are made manifest in his being the object of the people’s mirth and high hopes. As Simon later remembers his aunt, Amena, telling him: “people measure a man’s greatness by the number of people who follow him” (124). Simon proves Mugabe’s “greatness” – not only by making him the people’s messiah and source of happiness, but also by making a special note of the size of the crowd that welcomes him from exile: a massive 250 000, which is placed in contrast to the “over 100 000” (98) who attend the rally for another nationalist leader, Joshua Nkomo, and especially to the paltry 35 000 people for the white-backed Abel Muzorewa [who agreed to a coalition of convenience with the Ian Smith regime in the short-lived Zimbabwe-Rhodesia government], when the latter addresses a rally. The portrait of Mugabe evoked by Simon’s symbolic figures reveals a ‘people’s champion’ whose power and legitimacy as a national leader is beyond question as it is endorsed by the support of the majority. But the figures provided by Simon take on new significance in the context of the present enquiry into the novel’s function as a subtle conduit of the Third Chimurenga’s re-interpretations of the relationship of race, ethnicity and national identity. It would seem that Muzorewa has the least popular appeal because he is historically identified as the colonist’s
(Ian Smith’s) puppet and a colonially strait-jacketed Prime Minister of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. Nkomo and Mugabe, by contrast, have a significantly higher number of followers because their nationalist ideology (like the Third Chimurenga’s) envisions the complete overhaul of white power. The ‘greatness’ of Mugabe and Nkomo starkly contrasting with Muzorewa’s ‘smallness’ can be seen to add symbolically to Simon’s constant hint at the imperative of total disentanglement from white influence – the crux of the Third Chimurenga’s notion of “100% total independence” and national sovereignty. Read against the backdrop of post-2000 hegemonic demands for hindsight approaches to the present, the glowing representation of Mugabe in *Coming Home* not only situates his depicted popularity and pro-black people political orientation in the past transitional period, but more importantly within ‘chosen’, ‘indispensable’ versions of that past that have been frozen and ‘insulated’ from non-hegemonic interpretations. In the framework of this state-delineated past (which dictates the present), Simon’s picture of the revolutionary Mugabe begins to occupy a past that is very much part of the present. Mugabe, then, is exhibited as retaining his anti-colonial struggle relevance and heroism in the Third Chimurenga struggle epoch.

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6 ZANU (PF)’s 2008 Presidential run-off shibboleth.


Mediation as Conflict Resolution in Traditional Ndebele Society

Sambulo Ndlovu and Lindiwe Ndlovu

Key Terms:
Ndebele people
Nguni group of people in Zimbabwe closely related to the Zulu of South Africa
Traditional Ndebele society
The Ndebele society outside the influence of colonialism
Mediation
The process of minimizing/stopping conflict or potential conflict

Introduction

Traditional Ndebele society operated as a state before the advent of colonialism in Zimbabwe. There were political institutions that started with the family and the village, up to the king. In all these institutions conflict was part of life and it had to be resolved in an amicable fashion, often by means of mediation. Some institutions of mediation are still found in present day Ndebele society. Mediation in Ndebele is not employed when conflicts occur. However it is an institution in anticipation and mediators for various types of conflicts are known and are in place to resolve any conflict that may occur.

A mediator is respected and cannot be part of the conflict. Mediators are found in all forums of conflict in Ndebele. When two people are in conflict there is always a third person ready to go between them to stop and resolve the conflict. Interests, marriage, generation gap, families, power and resources are sources of conflict in Ndebele society; in all these instances mediation can be employed as a means to resolve existing conflicts.
The Concept of Mediation in Ndebele Society

Ndebele society has social, political, and religious systems where people have conflicts with each other and with the gods. In anticipation of conflict, the society has developed institutions of mediation in all sectors of life. There are people who are best suited to mediate in certain conflict situations, which make the mediation effort effective and respected by both parties.

Contemporary African politics employs mediation as a strategy in conflict resolution, however peace is seldom achieved, as the mediation process is not based on African traditional mediation as found in Ndebele society. Sometimes conflict entails physical confrontation that can result in a fight or even war. There can also be conflicts of interest, or differences of opinion or principle. In a physical fight, the mediator physically intervenes to stop the fighting, by getting between the warring parties strategically so as not to take sides. People can offend each other and engage in a war of words and even insult each other. In such conflicts the mediator is expected to use language to calm them down and resolve their differences. Conflict and its resolution have always been crucial to Ndebele society.

Doing wrong, conflict and offending each other originated with men. However conflicts are related to a people’s way of life. Therefore the types of offences and their resolution are based on the way of life of the people.
Cultural borrowing has introduced problems that are alien to the Ndebele way of life, making it difficult for the traditional mediation strategies to cope. Mediation in Ndebele society develops with the intensity of the conflict. It develops because it is always there even before the conflict. A conflict and a crisis are perceived through experiences of a community.

A crisis is a critical time, the decisive moment or turning point in a situation. Your perception of a crisis situation is influenced by all your past experiences (Westlake and Westlake (eds), 1992: 444).

Mediation in Ndebele society is part of life. It occurs in two forms: passive and active mediation. To every potential conflict, there is a passive mediator or passive mediation. Ndebele social, political and religious structure includes a mediator in all possible points of conflict. The Ndebele use oratory to train people from early age, on how to be good and peaceful citizens. Such knowledge becomes inert and acts as a form of passive mediation between adversaries. If the conflict is not deterred by passive mediation, an active mediator steps in usually using diplomacy and oratory to resolve the conflict.

The Ndebele perform verbal genres to avoid or to resolve conflict; these genres are partly designed to ‘save faces.’ Most mediators are born in Ndebele culture and they establish relations that are best suited for their job of mediation. Political leaders are arbitrators and mediators, heirs to the throne are trained and conditioned for the task of mediation. The imbongi (praise poet) is also born and trained from youth as a mediator between the people and the king. Royal paternal aunts and the king’s wives also become mediators, while on the social front mothers, aunts, uncles and friends mediate many conflicts. Conflicts are also prevalent in the religious
realm where spirit mediums, ancestral spirits and rain makers are mediators in Ndebele traditional society.

Mediation is not a preserve of Ndebele society only, but a phenomenon common to most African societies.

Intermediaries in African cultures employ linguistic codes such as metaphors, proverbs and circumlocutions to address literal or delicate issues. The linguistic codes are used artistically and as a face saving strategy in dealing with delicate matters in the culture.

Western cultures have their ways of solving problems that are culture specific; however Western strategies have been applied to African conflicts yielding no results or, at times, even exacerbating the conflict. Fig 1 is a model of how Westerners often perceive conflict and its resolution.

Ndebele traditional crisis resolution and phases follow more or less the same developments, conflict is precipitated by a conflict of interest, if one party to the conflict challenges and the other resists a conflict or crisis ensue. The intensity of the challenge and counter resistance can raise the conflict to confrontation; active mediation is employed by the Ndebele at this stage to avoid fighting.
Institutionalization of mediation in Ndebele traditional society derives a slightly different model from the one on fig 1. Mediation, be it passive or active follows the conflict development from the precipitant to the resolution stage. Ndebele society has mediation in peace and conflict time as in the model in fig 2:
Peace time is monitored to prevent conflicts; all people in Ndebele society are trained from an early age through orature and religion to avoid conflict. All conflict situations have a known mediator who advises them even during peace time, the education and the presence of a known mediator forms passive mediation in the
above model. When tensions rise to confrontational levels the mediator actively steps in to resolve the conflict, when resolved the situation goes back to passive mediation.

**Political Mediation in Ndebele Traditional Society**

Ndebele traditional society has lost some of its political systems, like the king and his armies, the *imbongi* culture is now known as oral art, not an arm of government. This paper looks at mediation as it obtained in past political systems and in present ones. Conflict was prevalent between the king and his people, and between individuals in the kingdom, all this called for passive and active mediation to resolve the conflicts and maintain peace. The *imbongi* is now known as the praise poet which is not proper as the *imbongi* was more of a critic and advisor to the king and the people through poetry.

In Ndebele traditional society the *imbongi* was a known mediator between the king and the people, the duty of the *imbongi* was to advise both the king and the people to iron out differences. The *imbongi* created praise poetry that people could recite and through these poems he would advise the people on how to avoid conflicts with the king, and in turn advise the king on how to avoid conflict with the people. He was not biased but rather balanced issues diplomatically so as to remain a trusted mediator. The Ndebele *imbongi* was not employed by the king as in other cultures.

*Phakathi kwezinye izizwe, ikakhulu ezentshonalanga yeAfrica imbongi yawinjengesisebenzi ngoba yayiholiswa inzuzo ekupheleni kwenyanga loba umnyaka. Kakukhanyi ukuthi kwakunjalo phakathi kwabeNguni laBesuthu (Ndhlukula 1980: 83)*
Among other nations especially in West Africa it is said the *imbongi* was a servant of the king, because he was given a salary at the end of the month or year. It appears that was not the case among the Nguni and the Sotho.

The fact that the Ndebele *imbongis* were not employed by the king made them trusted mediators; they were respected people that were born *imbongis*. There was a family of *imbongis*, it was passed from father to son, which meant that the *imbongi* was trained from birth to be a good mediator between the people and the king; he was given all the skills for passive and active mediation. The Ndebele believe that a king is a king on account of the people (*inkosi yinkosi ngabantu*). The people had institutionalized ways of approaching, and admonishing the king through the *imbongi* to avoid or resolve conflict.

The *imbongi* enjoyed diplomatic immunity so as to handle fairly the conflicts of interests between the king and the people. Conflicts were maintained below the crisis threshold by the mediating *imbongi*, when confrontation ensued he would actively engage the king and people to resolve the conflict. Praise poetry is not an appropriate name for the *imbongi*’s recitations as they are not praises only but admonishes too. The *imbongi* did his poetry in front of the king and the people, the poetry was mediation, telling people and the king where and how to compromise and capitulate to save face or restore peace. The people would agree to mediation by responding to points of agreement with a shout ‘*mu.....tsho!*’ or *y….tsho!* (say his praises), these words were said to affirm compromise or resolution.

Conflict between the king and the people resulted in assassinations and at times the break up of kingdoms. The *imbongi* then was an important mediator to avoid this catastrophe. King Lobengula Khumalo who ruled after the death of his father Mzilikazi, the founder of the Ndebele state, conflicted with the people by killing
his brothers to ascend to the throne. The imbongi stepped in to mediate the conflict and told the king to compromise and stop the purge so that the conflict to be resolved. At the time, the Ndebele poet

enjoyed immunity from royal retribution during his recital. When king Lobengula was referred to as Ngqungqul’ emadol’ abomvu / Ngokuguq’ engazini zabafowenu! (Eagle with bloodied knees, Through kneeling on the blood of thine brothers). (Here Lobhengula) was not being praised; his attention was being drawn to his excesses which were worrying a lot of people (Nyathi, 2000: 27).

After the death of Mzilikazi people were divided over Lobengula and Nkulumane, there was a conflict of interest. The imbongi praised Lobengula to persuade the people into accepting him and at the same time admonishing his excesses to strike a mediation balance.

Conflict resolution between the king and his people went beyond the imbongi, there were other mediators in Ndebele traditional society. Ndebele society had umndlunkulu culture, this was a situation whereby the king had a wife in all villages of his kingdom. The wives of the king in all villages were called umndlunkulu, these were also mediators between the king and the people. The umndlunkulu would have a soft spot for the king to make him compromise in mediation and was also trusted by the village as she was their daughter. Some of the villages where Mzilikazi had umndlunkulu are koGodlwayo, emaKhandeni, eNqameni and eMzinyathini.

Umndlunkulu was a meeting point for the king and peoples interests. Where there was a conflict of interest the umndlunkulu fitted best for the task of mediation to resolve the conflict. The umndlunkulu had a duty beyond being wife to the king:
Ummsebenzi womndlunkulu okusigaba sinye ngasinye wawunngowokuhlanganisa isizwe usisondeze eduze kwenkosi (Ndlovu et al 1995: 124-125). The job of the umndlunkulu in each village was to unite the nation and draw it closer to the king.

Unity in the kingdom could only be achieved through management of conflict and its resolution; the umndlunkulu had the national duty of mediation to achieve this unity.

The umndlumkulu were not the only female mediators between the king and the people, the royal paternal aunts also played the role of mediators. The aunts were particularly important mediators within the royal family because conflict within the royal family could split or even destroy the nation. Most Nguni kings had sisters who were very influential in their reign, by way of resolving conflicts within and without the royal family. Women by their compassionate nature were used as mediators in political conflict in Ndebele traditional society to achieve conflict resolution.

Ndebele traditional stratum was made up of village heads, chiefs and then the king. Conflicts of interests among individuals and families were resolved by these political leaders who doubled up as arbitrators too. The leaders had to be fair to both parties to resolve and not worsen the conflict.

The central problem of statesmanship is how to achieve an optimum blend of coercion and accommodation in one’s strategy, a blend that would both avoid war and maximize one’s gains or minimize one’s losses (Snyder and Diesing, 1977: 10)

A good mediator in Ndebele is one who can keep secrets, the people are not supposed to know about the matter. Contemporary
mediation borrows from this strategy and the media are sometimes barred from covering the mediation talks, but the fact that people know that there are talks, works against the strategy of secrecy in mediation. In a situation whereby the conflict is known by conflicting parties and the mediator only, it is easy to save face and compromise to resolve a conflict as people do not know about the capitulation which could embarrass a party to the conflict and make them more confrontational. Secrecy limited the influence of other people on the resolution of the conflict; people can side with one party and influence the mediator to be subjective, which is not good mediation.

Ndebele chiefs had about ten villages under them and each village had a headman, and the chiefs were under the king. When conflict ensued between two people they were supposed to use passive mediation and talk to each other. When *ukuxolisana* (reconciliation) was not achieved at this stage the matter was taken to the village headmen who had two or three elders to help him mediate fairly. The intended goal of the headman’s mediation is for the two to do what is called *ukugezelana induma* (to wash each other’s scars) this is to forgive and live together again.

The village headman sometimes failed to resolve the conflict; it was at this stage that the conflict was referred to the chief for further mediation. All parties to the mediation went to the chief who had his elders as well. The use of elders to help a mediator is also used today in international crisis resolution, where former heads of states and icons are drafted into mediation teams as elders. The chief demanded that conflicting parties both bring a goat that is to be eaten by the mediators; this was a sign of neutrality.

*Kukuleli ibanga lapho amadoda la alengqxabano azakhutshiswa
khonalmbuzi ezizadliwa ngamadoda nxa eseqede ukulingisa*

It is at this stage that the conflicting men paid each a goat that was eaten by them and the mediating team after resolving the conflict. There were no other payments except these goats.

The chiefs were the last part of mediation in such conflicts; this is why he had the power to separate the two if he was not satisfied with the resolution. It was believed that if they live apart they will forget and forgive each other. In such a case the chief would have employed separation as a resolution strategy.

Religious Mediation in Ndebele Traditional Society

Ndebele traditional society is a monotheistic society believing in uNKulunkulu (God), the conduct of religious life is through mediums. There are conflicts between people and the gods while some conflicts between individuals are religious in nature. Resolution of such conflicts is done through mediation that can be passive or active like social and political conflicts. In religious conflicts mediation is done mostly by religious practitioners and the spirits.

    Traditional Ndebele society believes in the duality of life; that is in the physical world and the spiritual world. Certain physical conditions are caused by the spirit world. Confrontation between the people and the spirit can cause misfortune and resolution of the conflict is the resolution of the misfortune. Rain is the source of life in Ndebele society. The falling of rain or lack of it indicates a relationship between the people and the spiritual world. When there is conflict between the people and the spirits, the spirits can cause
drought, this situation calls for immediate mediation to resolve the conflict and bring back the rain.

When normal rains did not materialize the people interpreted this to mean that god or the living dead were angry. Here was a case of the citizens in the physical world conducting themselves in a manner that angers the citizens of the spirit world (Nyathi, 2000: 86).

There is a mediator specifically for the conflict between the gods and the people that results in drought. The *iwosana* (rain maker) mediates between the people and spirit world to bring about a resolution that would see the rain falling again. The king also acted as part of spiritual mediation for rainfall alongside the *iwosana*. *Iwosana lidlozi eligidela izulu* (the *wosana* is a spirit that dances and makes the rain) (Ndlovu et al, 1995: 160). The mediation of the *iwosana* entails appeasing the gods and admonishing the people to strike a balance that brings rain back to the land.

While the *iwosana* mediates between the people and the gods to bring the rain, there are other religious practitioners in Ndebele tradition that use religious mediation to resolve civil conflicts. The *isangoma* and *isanusi* are spiritual diviners that mediate conflicts by using information they get from the gods. It is easier for these diviners to settle conflicts because they are religiously respected by both parties and use the spirits to see what an ordinary mediator cannot see. People in conflicts go to these mediators who advise them on what the gods want as resolution to the conflict, such cases are usually successful as everyone knows that one cannot go against the gods. Spiritual mediation thrives through the fear of the unknown, it is in this type of mediation that:

Diplomacy becomes more actively coercive and the emotional climate shifts toward greater hostility and fear.
Aims center on winning the conflict rather than realizing common interests (Snyder and Diesing, 1977: 10)

Mediation that involves the spirits does not need to balance interests, as the gods cannot be wrong, it is more of enticing the wrong to repent to resolve the conflict.

The *inyanga* (medicine man) is a very important spiritual mediator in Ndebele, mediating over conflicts that draw in even evil spirits. When people have a conflict they can use witchcraft on the confrontation phase of the conflict, when conflict gets to this stage it is only the *inyanga* who can mediate and the resolution entails wadding off the witchcraft.

*Nxa ubuthakathi sebungenile ekhaya sekumele kubizwe inyanga izoxotshana labo ize ibukhuphe ngemithi* (Ndhlukula, 1980: 155).

When witchcraft has entered the home, an *inyanga* is called to fight it until he removes it with his medicine.

The *inyanga* mediates between the witch and the bewitched to resolve the conflict and enable them to live together without fear or suspicion. The medicine of an *inyanga* removes the misfortune brought about by the witchcraft while at the same time helping the witch to leave witchcraft. Mediation in witchcraft conflict can only be spiritual; this is so because for a conflict to be resolved there should be confidence that the mediator can resolve the conflict. Anyone who tries to mediate in witchcraft conflict without the spiritual power is in danger of being a victim of witchcraft.

Ndebele spiritual practitioners are not ordinary people, they are spirit mediums, a spirit possesses them and it is the spirit that talks to god not them. The spirits that possess the living are spirits of
the dead, to talk to these spirits people organize mediation ceremonies like *ukubuyisa* (bringing the spirit of the dead home) and *ukuthethela* (appeasing the spirits). When the mediation ceremonies are performed, the spirits take their place as mediators between the people and *Unkulunkulu* (God). Ndebele traditional mediation in spiritual conflicts includes mediation ceremonies that are performed to resolve conflicts with God because people cannot speak to God directly.

Ndebele religion posits that God never speaks to men of flesh. God, who is spiritual, speaks to the spiritual, the living dead. The living dead who once lived can speak to men and vice versa. The philosophy tallies well with biblical teachings. God wanted to communicate with man, he sent Jesus Christ, who had a material component, to the world. By assuming the composite nature, Jesus stands as the bridge, the way and the truth between man and god (Nyathi, 2000: 134).

The spirits are also passive and active mediators in social conflicts. Spiritual mediation is mostly damage mitigation because the gods are powerful and cannot be confronted by man. Spiritual mediation therefore balances appeasement and repentance to resolve conflicts.

**Social Mediation in Ndebele Traditional Society**

A culture of a people can be an agent in the resolution of conflict. Culture is the philosophy of life of a people, their beliefs, shared values and norms. It is these shared values within a society that govern social relationships. The basic unit of a society is the family. The Ndebele traditional society was organized around an extended
family and the extended family in Ndebele had mechanisms for conflict resolution. Marriage which is a highly respected institution among the Ndebele was not a contract between two individuals but a contract involving many relatives who had a role to play in that marriage. In almost all families there are strains and tensions which sometimes affect its existence. As the family is the basic unit of a society, anything that threatens the well-being of a family also threatens the stability of that society.

In Ndebele society there were individuals within the family whose responsibility was to mediate between members of the family to resolve conflicts. In traditional Ndebele society there are values which are applied to different members of a family and such values go with duties and obligations which individuals are expected to fulfill in various social circumstances. In contemporary society some of these duties have been taken over by various institutions like the school, the church, health institutions and welfare organizations. These institutions have to a greater extent taken over the responsibility and role of the family in conflict resolution. However the effectiveness of such institutions in solving conflicts is still questionable.

Problems within our society which include among others, a high divorce rate, increase in suicide cases, domestic violence, abortion, baby dumping and gruesome murder cases resulting from family quarrels all seem to confirm the failure or ineffectiveness of these western institutions in resolving conflicts. The process of conflict resolution that does not take into account the culture of a people is not likely to be successful. Conflict resolution should not be an alienating process. The so called professional counselors are often isolated or cut off from the community. As such it is difficult for them to establish the source of the problem; they can only deal with the symptoms of the problem without addressing the cause. Such conflict resolutions tend
to be artificial and the motivation behind is often materialistic. A mediator should possess certain qualities necessary for the process of mediation. Such qualities include among others, honesty, reliability, prudence responsibility as well as confidentiality.

A society that fails to resolve its conflicts cannot develop because development can only be successful in a peaceful and orderly environment. Development cannot take place in an atmosphere marred with conflicts. In every society there are morals which govern the welfare of its members. Such morals in Ndebele are contained in orature which forms passive mediation in Ndebele society. Entrenched in folklore are the rules and laws which give meaning to a society and govern human conduct. Human conduct has two dimensions, the personal and social conduct. Mbiti (1975: 179) notes that most African societies put emphasis on the social conduct. For an individual to avoid being in conflict with the society, he or she must follow that society’s rules and customs. The Ndebele were aware that it was eminent that some people would violate the rules of society and knew that infringement of the social norms would sometimes result in conflict. It was therefore the duty of the mediator to resolve such conflict.

Mediators play a vital role in every society and without them there will be chaos and confusion. Mediators protect family and society as a whole from disintegration. Among the Ndebele people who held the office of mediators within the family include among others, *ugogo* or *umakhulu* (grandmother), *ubabakazi* (paternal aunt) *umalume* (maternal uncle), *ubabamkhulu* (grandfather), *umkhongi* (marriage go between), and *umzukulu* (nephew). Kinship positions that these members found themselves in made them qualify as mediators. It was because of the appreciation of the status of these mediators that Ndebele society was successful in resolving its conflicts.
Among the mediators is the paternal aunt *ubabakazi*. The paternal aunt holds a respectable position within the family. She is the sister of the father of the family; literally she is a ‘female father’. *Ubabakazi* is highly valued and holds a powerful position within the extended family. She is involved in passive as well as active mediation, passive mediation by way of advising her brother’s daughters and prepares them for marital life. She is responsible for the socialization of girls in the family into adult life. It is at puberty stage that the girls need support as they experience interpersonal conflicts and also conflict with the society. Puberty presents traumatic experiences to adolescents and without proper guidance the youth cannot cope with the challenges.

In Ndebele culture individual freedom is not supposed to clash with the interests and welfare of the society. The paternal aunt prepared the girls to cope with household chores and difficulties in marriage. In a way *ubabakazi* mediates between her brother’s daughters and the family and even society at large. If some conflict arose between the parents and the daughter, it was the duty of *ubabakazi* to resolve the conflict. Conflicts within the family that arose out of sensitive or emotive issues were resolved by *ubabakazi*. Most problems in marriage often stem from sensitive issues that cannot be discussed with some members of the family. Issues to do with the subject of sex and sexuality can only be effectively handled by *ubabakazi* without causing embarrassment or discomfort to the people involved.

A lot of married people have a wide range of sexual problems which they encounter. What tends to make problems of this nature difficult to resolve is that they are considered to be private and confidential. Such problems can range from sexual dissatisfaction or deprivation to sexual frustration. *Ubabakazi* because of her position is at liberty to discuss uncomfortable issues. She is also thought to be
prudent and cautious with such issues. Most conflicts which occur outside the bedroom often result in conflicts in the bedroom. Conflict is common in all marriages; the difference is how to handle the conflict.

One can also argue that conflict is like dynamite, it can be positive or negative depending on how it is dealt with. If handled properly conflict can result in strengthening of the relationship of the affected people, but if handled wrongly it has devastating effects. Nowadays most marital conflicts are destructive because they are not handled well. Some mediators because of lack of the qualities essential for mediation often fail or take long to resolve a conflict. Prolonged conflict can have destructive effects. Most suicide cases are a result of such prolonged conflicts.

Occupying almost the same position as the parental aunt is umalume (maternal uncle). Literally this is a ‘male mother’ to the head of the family, who is the father. Umalume is the most trusted and reliable person. It is given that he cannot disappoint or mislead his sister’s sons because he is like a mother to them. A mother’s love is supreme, it is not conditional. Whenever a conflict arises in the family, the father of the house consults his maternal uncle who mediates to resolve the conflict. Problems arising from issues such as impotence, adultery and other problems in marriage can best be handled by umalume.

In Ndebele society like other African societies wisdom comes with age. In African families there is a hierarchy based on age. Mbiti notes that the oldest members of the family have higher status than the youngest (1975:178). One quality necessary for mediation in Ndebele is maturity. Mature people often have the ability and capability to handle complicated cases. In Ndebele society old members of the community automatically qualify to be mediators by
virtue of their age. As such there are duties and responsibilities expected from such members.

*Ubabamkhulu* (grandfather) often acts as a mediator within the family. In the African worldview, the idea of a family includes the departed. In Ndebele it is the oldest members of the family who are thought to be closer to the ancestors. It is this aspect that makes mediation by old people very effective and fruitful. *Ubabamkhulu* is the one who presides over the custom of *ukuthethela* (appeasing of the ancestors in times of trouble) and in this position he also acts as a mediator. The success of mediation by *ubabamkhulu* can be explained on the experience he has as an old member of the family and also the respect he commands in the family. Going against the decision of *ubabamkhulu* is taboo and is tantamount to disobeying the ancestors, an action that can bring *umnyama* (bad luck) to the person concerned.

*Ubabamkhulu* is the backbone of the family (*insika yomuzi*). He is the primary adviser and occupies a privileged position in the family as he is the most respected member of the family. He mediates in conflicts that threaten the well-being of the family. *Ubabamkhulu* also mediates in serious matters where for instance members of the family cannot see each other eye to eye. These would have gone through the process known as *ukufungelana ijoyi* (an oath of enemity) which often calls for the performance of some rituals to reconcile the affected members. The ritual is known as *ukukhumisana umlotha* (licking of ashes). After partaking in such a ritual the members affected are considered to have forgiven each other.

The grandmother also holds a respectable position at home. Her role is to ensure that proper tradition is followed. She is often consulted by children on delicate matters affecting their lives. When children clash with parents, it is the role of the grandmother to settle the disputes. She has soft spot for all members of the family, and she
is often patient and fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of every member. She can also keep secrets hence is trustworthy and reliable. *Ugogo* also presided over *induduzelo*, girls’ puberty rites and it is here that she, together with other elderly women mediated passively as they prepared the girls for womanhood.

The girl was given lessons on a number of issues including how to become a good wife, how to care for children, acceptable behavior towards men, sex education, home economics and the regulation of one’s sexual desires (Nyathi, 2000: 100).

Premarital sex among the Ndebele was despised. The grandmother also partakes in marriage counseling which was seen as the cornerstone of all stable marriages. This is an element of passive mediation as the girl is counseled on how to handle conflict in her marriage.

*Umzukulu* (nephew) is another family member who often mediates in social conflicts. *Umzukulu* is the son to the sister of the head of the family. He has a special position and is expected to fulfill a number of duties and responsibilities. Death was sometimes the source of conflict between members in the family. It is during the death of his uncle that *umzukulu* often acted as a mediator. *Umzukulu* is supposed to take care of his uncles property and family before the custom of *ukubuyisa* (bringing home ceremony. He is also actively involved in the distribution of the deceased’s estate. He has a very close relationship with his uncle and because of this he somehow knows his uncle’s secrets and wishes. It is because of this familiarity that *umzukulu* is entrusted with all the above responsibilities. *umzukulu* has a soft spot for his uncle, as such he sometimes mediates over minor quarrels affecting the family.
Ndebele marriage is not contact between two individuals; it is a contract between two families. Sometimes conflict arose between two families and it was the responsibility of umkhongi (marriage go between) to mediate and resolve such conflict. Marriage is never easy and conflict between two families is inevitable. In Ndebele marriage is not an event but a long process stretching from courtship to death. Throughout the whole process umkhongi acts as a link between two families. Umkhongi is appointed by the elders of the family after considering a lot of issues. He had to be part of that community as well as an elder. He had to be a person familiar with the culture of the people, intelligent, courageous and trustworthy. The two families are introduced to each other in a process known as ukuvela.

Abakwabo kajaha bathuma indoda eyingcwethi ukuba iyevelela ijaha eselikhonjiwe. Indoda leyo (umkhongi) ifika njengomuntu wezini (Sibanda, 2002: 88). The family of the bridegroom send an intelligent and knowledgeable man to go and introduce them to the family of the bride the man goes there as a visitor.

Umkhongi had to be skillful and possess linguistic skill to win consent of the bride’s family. He also had to be creative and brave because the bride’s family could use intimidation as a strategy to test the seriousness of the groom and umkhongi represents the groom. Umkhongi also mediates during the payment of lobola (bride price). The payment of lobola could sometimes be a source of conflict especially if there are disagreements on the number of cattle to be paid for lobola. Other issues in which umkhongi helped the two families resolve conflict included inheritance disputes, alleged witchcraft, domestic violence and other issues which affected the two families.

It is clear therefore that the Ndebele social system had effective mechanisms for conflict resolution. The problem with the
contemporary society is that of borrowing western models of
resolving conflict which do not fit well into our setting, and these
have impacted negatively on peace building qualities necessary for
mediation. There is need therefore to learn from our indigenous
knowledge systems. This does not mean that we have to abandon the
modern systems of mediation and go back to the past. Principles
behind conflict resolution processes should emanate from within the
culture. It is the philosophy or ethos behind the traditional concept of
mediation that is important and that should form the basis for
mediation. For the process of conflict resolution to be relevant, it
should be linked to the culture of the people concerned. This is not to
imply that culture should be static. Every culture is subject to change
and changes in a people’s culture become positive if they come from
within.

Failure to realize that cultural change is only meaningful
when the source of such change is within, led to the
imposition of foreign cultures on indigenous African
cultures (Maphosa in Chiwone and Gambahaya (eds),

African societies therefore have a challenge to revisit their
conflict resolution strategies and make them relevant to the people.
That can be done by including the values enshrined in the cultures of
the people concerned.

Conclusion

The structure of Ndebele traditional society is sensitive to conflict;
everyone is taught oral literature and values that compliment
mediation in conflict resolution. All people are educated on how to
avoid or resolve conflicts; this education forms part of passive
mediation in Ndebele traditional society. All conflict situations and types are always anticipated. When the conflict becomes confrontational, the society knows that there is a mediator who should take care of it before it reaches war or fighting levels. The passive mediator harnesses passive mediation education and active mediation as a way of resolving the conflict and restoring peace. There is a passive mediator to every potential conflict. There are social, political and religious mediators because Ndebele traditional life is socio-political and religious. The purpose of mediation in Ndebele society is to restore peace and not to win conflicts because the society is a communal one where people need each other. Separation is a strategy of last resort in social and political mediation in traditional Ndebele society. It is believed that when parties to a conflict are separated they will forget and ultimately forgive, leading to the resolution of the conflict.

References


‘…NEITHER CAMEROON NOR NIGERIA; WE BELONG HERE…!’ THE BAKASSI KINGDOM AND THE DILEMMA OF ‘BOUNDARIES’ AND CO-EXISTENCE IN POST-COLONIAL AFRICA

NDU LIFE NJOKU

KEY TERMS: Bakassi Kingdom, Cameroon, Nigeria, Statehood, Post-colonial Africa

ABSTRACT:
Boundaries or border zones in Africa, and the inter-state and inter-community relations generated across them, have been major sites for the inter-play of various social, economic and political dynamics. This paper reflects on the dialectics of the state-society relations within the socio-economic prism in the context of the Nigeria/anglo-Cameroon border. Situating the analysis in the post-independence period, the paper examines critically the socio-economic challenges and paradoxes confronting the two independent states of Nigeria and Cameroon Republic in regard to the legitimacy of the Bakassi Peninsula border zone that divides an area despite its extremely high level of cultural homogeneity. The paper shows that, as a fluid cultural zone informed by strong historical ties, the Nigeria/anglo-Cameroon borderland area has not only been a site of intense inter-state relations, but also an arena of possibilities for the local communities. As the paper makes clear, Africans, in many ways, turn the boundaries of their modern states from rigid barriers between countries to flexible frontiers of mutual contact and cooperation. The implication of this for the need to establish local mechanisms to promote trans-border cooperation, and ensure that “the partitioned Africans” of the affected border communities do not suffer unduly, becomes obvious.
Introduction

Perceived as lines defined by man, boundaries which mark the geographical limits of a state, as well as the extent of its sovereignty (Imobighe 1987:120), are also a notable strategic feature of nations’ survival. This strategic relevance clearly explains why nations jealously protect and defend their political frontiers and boundaries. The implication of this protection in international relations is incessant territorial disputes among nations all over the continents of the world.

Territorial or boundary disputes are the most common sources of inter-state crisis in post-colonial Africa. Since 1961, more than half of the member-states of the continental body, the Organization for African Unity (O.A.U.), have been involved in at least one territorial dispute. On the part of Nigeria, for example, there have been various border disputes with the country’s neighbours. In 1976, for instance, the Republic of Benin claimed sovereignty over the village of Shanji in Sokoto state. Cameroon followed with her claim of sovereignty over eighteen villages in the Bakassi Peninsula (Akindele and Akinterinwa 1992: 243-44).

The difficulty in the search for peaceful and mutually acceptable solutions to border disputes in post-colonial Africa can be traced to the non-delineation of disputed areas by the colonialists, the existence of rich mineral resources in most disputed areas (Akindele and Akinterinwa, 1992), and probably the un-clarity of Western international law on territorial jurisdiction (Nwaka 2007).

Comparatively, the boundary crisis in post-colonial Africa has its roots in the hasty and haphazard partition of the continent by the imperial powers of Europe towards the end of the 19th century. Whereas the boundaries of the modern states in Europe itself evolved
over the centuries as a result of revision after wars and conquests---
and some are still being contested till date in some parts of Europe---
state boundaries in Africa were, willy-nilly, determined by imperial
fiat within a space of some two years or so, and subsequently
enforced with minor but recklessly executed adjustments in a couple
of decades under colonial hegemony. The consequence of this was
that, patterns of ethnic, linguistic, religious, cultural and commercial
affinities, which for centuries bridged different social, economic and
political contexts in Africa were suddenly and rudely terminated in
order to accommodate imperial desires and norms. To give legal
sanctity to this new boundary regime, new notions of national
sovereignty, territorial integrity and exclusive jurisdiction of states
were transposed from the post-1648 European international state
system (Ate 1992:3).

Nigeria’s national space and boundaries are as inherited from
Britain as per the terms of the exchange of notes of October 1, 1960,
between the incoming Nigerian sovereign state and the departing
British hegemonic power---an act which, from the perspective of
today’s Eurocentric international law, was what gave birth to Nigeria
as an independent state. Accordingly, the treaties, protocols and other
legal instruments which Britain had signed with other colonial
European powers (the most crucial ultimately turning out to be
France---the erstwhile colonial ruler of all but one of Nigeria’s
neighbours) to define Nigeria’s boundaries vis-à-vis these
neighbouring countries, became binding on the Nigerian government.
This was later reinforced by the Organization for African Unity’s
(OAU’s) resolution number 16 of 1964, which was accepted and

Indeed, boundaries constitute a very sensitive issue in inter-state
relations. It not only delimits the territorial jurisdiction of sovereign
states, but also constitutes (especially in the very case of Africa) a
major source of disputes in international relations (Dada 1992: 264). Unfortunately, both colonial and OAU resolutions have provided no absolute solution to boundary disputes in Africa. The same thing applies to the Nigeria/Cameroon case, even with the 2002 verdict of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in favour of Cameroon, which remained un-enforced until August of 2006. Yet, in spite of an age-long boundary dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon (Weladji 1978), there is abundant evidence to show that the Bakassi border is shaped as much by the everyday activities of the indigenous people of the affected border communities in ways that sometimes undergird, but at other times may bypass the formal structures of the states. Little wonder why most cross-border studies maintain that African boundaries are essentially permeable, constituting no significant barrier to the cross-border movement of labour and goods. Some of the studies even claim that African boundaries stimulate formal and informal cross-border trade, representing zones of opportunity for partitioned Africans (see, for instance, Asiwaju 1984; Chiabi 1986; Aderibigbe 1989; Niger-Thomas 2001; Christopher and Johnson-Ross 2007). This provides the justification for this paper. The paper attempts to examine the implications of the Nigeria/Cameroon artificial boundary within the context of considerations of cultural, social and economic activities across it, as well as diplomacy (especially international relations).

**Nigeria and Cameroon: Bakassi as a Source/Site of Intense Inter-State Relations**

Since independence, Nigeria’s relationship with Cameroon, as well as its other contiguous neighbours, has been marked essentially by mutual suspicions, distrust and outright alienation. Put differently, Nigeria’s relationship with Cameroon has historically been in conflict since both of them attained independent statehood.
The reason for this negative experience of age-long hostility is that in pre-colonial times, and even in the colonial era, a very high percentage of the people and territories that presently constitute Cameroon were part and parcel of administrative state units within the territory of present-day Nigeria. Indeed, as we shall point out later, many ethnic groups and peoples in Cameroon are ethnoculturally connected to populations in Nigeria. What, then, is the source of the negatively intense inter-state relations and structural disharmony between Nigeria and Cameroon?

It has been suggested (Ate 2000: 173) that the basic (or predisposing) factors responsible for this are related to:

(i) Nigeria’s unequal size (especially, in terms of territory and population) when compared with Cameroon;

(ii) The consequences of Nigeria’s colonial boundary with Cameroon;

(iii) The neo-colonial presence and role of France in Cameroon; and

(iv) The availability of vital resources in the maritime and land border areas of the Bakassi Peninsula zone.

Additionally, as is the case with most African border areas, the Bakassi Peninsula zone is an area notorious (that is, in the eyes of the state) for those clandestine trade activities that go by the names, ‘smuggling’ and ‘black marketeering’. Today, as available evidence show, various clandestine trade operations thrive despite the institutions of state control put in place to check smuggling activity; in fact, smuggling and black marketeering seem to have become normalized in this area. However, this additional source of worry and conflict for Nigeria and Cameroon is also a source of considerable
wealth to the local people of the Bakassi zone who have no other means of acquiring it.

**The Bakassi Zone: Historical Experiences/Ethno-Cultural Features that Bind**

One of the natural features which have stubbornly frustrated attempts by Nigeria and Cameroon to physically demarcate their borders is the permanent presence of a population with common historical experiences, and of the same ethno-cultural stock on both sides of the ostensibly international divide. The people of these ethnic groups continually insist on their right of interaction for historical and cultural reasons, and for socio-economic and commercial purposes, against artificial and unfair impositions by the (colonial and) post-colonial state.

The point to stress here is that, ethnic groups and sub-groups of Nigerian origin cut across the Nigerian international boundaries with Cameroon. They are located, at least, in that part of the Bakassi border region that fall under sub-national areas where the socio-economic lives and well-being of the people are directly and significantly affected by proximity to international boundaries (Hansen 1981).

Historically, these ethnic groups separated by artificial boundaries possess community characteristics and common experiences which make them inherently disrespectful of the concept of borders as ‘barriers’. As a result, their socio-cultural (and also, socio-economic) perception of borders is wider than the statutory or administrative dimension.
Most of these ethnic groupings share deities and totems, ancestral shrines, major rites having to do with birth, manhood, maidenhood, womanhood, marriage, child-bearing, and death. Some of them, as oral evidence confirms, still share annual festivals and rituals, which all members of the ethnic groups across boundaries have traditional obligation to participate in.¹ As one well-informant informant put it, “we do not discriminate here. Our problem of survival is neither Cameroon nor Nigeria; we belong here together and we all are struggling for a better life as individuals and as a group of people.”²

The Bakassi Peninsula, a territory of about 665 square kilometers, situated between the Cross River and the Rio del Rey River is specifically “located by the right side of the Cross River Estuary on the Atlantic sea board” (Nwaka 2007). It is also a sea route to Equatorial Guinea. To the Cameroonian, Bakassi flanks the entry route to the port of Rio Del Rey and most of their South West Province. Originally, there were four major ethnic groups that occupied the boundary area between Nigeria and Cameroon. These were the Ibibio, Efik, Ekoi, some semi-Bantu and Bantu people. However, the semi-Bantu people within the boundary, namely, the Ibibio/Efik, the Ekoi and the Boki, the north of the Cross River bend, are mostly confined to the west of the Cross River, and therefore would not constitute direct problem to the assessment of the international boundary. The Efik sub-group which moved into the estuaries of the Cross and Calabar Rivers also raises no ethnic problem, except in the neighbourhood of Rio-del-Rey, where Efik fishermen founded fishing towns. But, the two semi-Bantu groups---the Ekoi and the Boki---were greatly affected by the boundary arbitrarily imposed by the imperial masters; and the effects have continued to be a source of conflict. This problem was clearly manifested in the Nigerian first census of 1921 (as can be seen in the tables below)
Table 1.0

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Ethnic groups</th>
<th>Ethnic groups</th>
<th>Ethnic groups</th>
<th>Ethnic groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ibibio/Efik</td>
<td>Eko</td>
<td>Other semi-</td>
<td>Bantu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calabar ()</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bantu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogoja ()</td>
<td>918,217</td>
<td>7,215</td>
<td>11,662</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>44,255</td>
<td>24,877</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38,279</td>
<td>1,613</td>
<td>83,132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameroun</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Akaju</th>
<th>Nde</th>
<th>Nkumun</th>
<th>Eko</th>
<th>Assumbo</th>
<th>Keaka</th>
<th>Manta</th>
<th>Banyang</th>
<th>Obang</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calabar ()</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>7,046</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria ()</td>
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<td>9212</td>
<td>13894</td>
<td>10957</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogoja</td>
<td>1958</td>
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<td>7506</td>
<td>4343</td>
<td>19112</td>
<td>2,609</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Talbot 1926: 26, 60-61

Tables 1.0 and 1.1 above show the disruption in homogenous ethnic groups by the Anglo-German boundary division.

The two tables above which depict the disruption in homogenous ethnic groups by the Anglo-German boundary division of the colonial period, show clearly that the Ekoi group was the most affected by the boundary division.
The Cross River-Cameroon zone is an area where there exists no clear tribal division and claims. The complexity of linguistic pattern and the diversity of the historical origin are perhaps without parallel in any African territory. In a situation such as this area presents, any question of ethnic demarcation is both difficult and meaningless. In fact, this has been the major source of the Bakassi crisis. The tribal and cultural affinity between Nigeria and Cameroon in this area is so great that one could virtually believe one is in Nigeria in some part of Cameroon. There are groups that spread into each other, particularly the Eko, Efik and Mandara.

In southern Cameroon (in the areas around the Bakassi and Eniong Peninsulas situated on both west and east of the mouth of Rio del Rey and Calabar channel) are Nigerian fishermen of Efik origin who settled in the areas that are being contested between Nigeria and Cameroon. Prominent among such villages being contested are Abane, Ine, Eko, Ine Edem Ntong, Ine Odom, Anam Owong, Obuta, Okobo, Okobidi, Ikbeke, Afaha, Usaha, Ine Edet, Ine Akwa, Ine Attayo, Ine Inua Abasi and Ine Ikang (Alkali 1992). This is why it is difficult for the locals along the border area to understand border demarcations and delimitations as they see their kith and kin as part and parcel of their everyday life. In Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, there are Efik/Ibibio groups that spread from the Calabar area into the neighbouring littoral areas, just like the Fulani and Shuwa Arabs of Cameroon are common on both sides of Gongola and Borno states of Nigeria.

On the whole, the long Nigeria-Cameroon border inherited from the British and the Germans, and subsequently, the British and the French (when France came into the picture in colonial Cameroon), was not clearly and completely demarcated most especially from the Cross River rapids southward to the coastline area. The discovery of oil in the creeks around the Bakassi Peninsula has intensified the
ensuing conflict. Today, the “un-acceptable boundary”, even with the ruling of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in 2002 (that the Bakassi Peninsula belongs to Cameroon, and not to Nigeria), remains a source of border dispute, with the problems centering on human, economic, political and strategic interests to Nigeria and Cameroon.

The Bakassi Zone: Arena of Possibilities for the Local Communities

As far as pre-colonial ethnic relations among the various groups are concerned, it should be borne in mind that the Efik were primarily the chief medium through whom the demands of European trade, first in slaves and later in hinterland agricultural products, were met. It was also through the Efik that European goods reached the hinterland people (Ogundele 1985: 60). During this period, there were constant struggles to gain control over trade and trade routes, although without the existence of clearly delineated boundaries of state control, it is difficult to locate any instance of disruption in ethnic relations or even in the conduct of trade.

As from the twentieth century onwards, all these changed as the colonial state came into being, and European spheres of influence for trade were defined, extending even further into the areas in question. With the coming of European colonial state structures, artificial boundaries were created. These restrictions infringed on the “free trade” that had once existed between the various groups of the Bakassi area. Therefore, the roots of the Bakassi crisis date back to the colonial times. This is true, given that, “the development of the boundary between Nigeria and Cameroon cannot be traced in isolation of events in the entire African continent between 1830 and 1960” (Oyone 1982: 1).
Of course, artificial boundaries, once created, delimit trade. Unfortunately, these boundaries cut across native areas and split communities; for example, the Ejagham and Boki groups of Manyu Division were divided between Nigeria and Cameroon into Ejagham-Nigeria and Ejagham-Cameroon, Boki -Nigeria and Boki -Cameroon (Niger-Thomas 2001: 55). These have become current terms used locally by the people of the area. The division followed the boundary demarcation of 1912-13 by the German and British colonial states (Southern Cameroons Government, 1958). The illegal---that is, illegal in the eyes of the foreign authorities---transport of trade goods and persons across what now became official boundaries followed the institution of trade restrictions. Everything changed and what had been normal trade relations for the indigenous people suddenly became illegal. That is to say that, the erstwhile free traders of the Bakassi zone now became involved, willy-nilly, in trans-border clandestine trade as smugglers. But, as has rightly been stated, “while clandestine trade impoverishes the state, it brings considerable wealth to people who have no other means of acquiring it. It represents a local solution to a local problem” (MacGaffey 199: 67).

Taking the case of smuggling within this area as an example, it is easy to validate Nugent’s (2002) argument that borders are shaped as much by the everyday activities of ordinary people in ways that sometimes undergird but at other times may bypass the formal structures of the states. Although smuggling in the Bakassi zone of the Nigeria-Cameroon border may be due to age-long cross-border interactions that have their own distinctive features, its activities offer avenues for economic survival that combine elements of inter-state and trans-national regionalism.

Smuggling or informal cross-border trade is generally defined as the illegal transport of goods and/or persons in or out of a country to avoid taxation (Njoku 2010). Since it occurs across boundaries, it is
a type of international trade that avoids import duties and restrictive laws (Niger-Thomas 2001). Because of the weakness of the state in addressing the marginalized position of the Bakassi Peninsula border communities, and its inability to control this unorthodox form of trade, many people of these border communities and their families (though not without the challenges of cross-border trade) have benefited socially and economically through smuggling. It is an open secret that cross-border trade activity is a well organized business in which the indigenous people of the border communities collaborate even with highly placed state functionaries and other influential citizens within the two states. Within the Bakassi zone, the flow of goods illegally from Nigeria to Cameroon takes advantage of the price disparity of such goods and of the exchange rate disparity between the inconvertible Nigerian Naira and the convertible CFA franc while, in infiltrating goods into Nigeria, smugglers exploit the insatiable tastes of Nigerians especially after the prohibition by the Federal Government of Nigeria of clearly designated luxury (consumer) goods. Consumer goods, Aba-made goods at duty-free prices (Meagher 2010:76-7), petroleum products, stolen vehicles, spare parts, currency, agricultural produce and later hard drugs constitute the major items that move from Nigeria into Cameroon, while goods which suffer prohibition from time to time in Nigeria (like wheat flour, hard drinks and cigarettes, etc) are smuggled into the insatiable Nigerian market.

From the viewpoint of the Bakassi Peninsula zone, the general applicability of the concept of border-lands as areas in which the social and economic function of the state fades gently into that of its neighbours (Mills 1973), is borne out by incontrovertible pieces of evidence of the way the indigenous people of the zone take advantage of the national economic trends in Nigeria and Cameroon. For instance, Nigerians and Cameroonians in the border zone at all points freely exchange each other’s currency as legal tender. The Nigerian
Naira is acceptable in the neighbouring border-lands of Cameroon, just as the Cameroonian CFA franc is in the Nigerian area. Similarly shared across the bi-national lines are such national amenities as health and medical institutions, as well as agricultural services provided by government.

Thus, viewed from the perspective of the people of the border communities, though the state is deprived of resources that could be used to perform certain socioeconomic functions, there is the transfer of opportunities for profit from the state to the indigenous members of the communities. In this light, since individuals rather than the entire society seem to benefit, the border zone represents, for its immediate beneficiaries, an arena of possibilities.

**Summary and Conclusion**

This paper has shown that both the negative and positive aspects of border relations between Nigeria and Cameroon relate to the fact of the permanent presence of population of the same ethno-cultural stock on both sides of the international boundary, in addition to the fact that large portions of present-day Cameroon had constituted administrative domain of the separate political entities that make up modern Nigerian Federation. This aspect of history is perhaps the single most important source of the boundary crisis affecting Nigeria and Cameroon, while this crisis is itself the defining characteristic of Nigeria’s bilateral relations with her.

As a result of the existence of the ostensibly international divide between Nigeria and Cameroon, relations between the two countries are now defined structurally by some basic sets of conditions or features that continue to bind and also strain. Two of these features are spelt out as follows:
(a) Existing historical commercial interactions have been hampered as a result of prohibitive restrictions at the present border (the customs, immigration, military, police, Nigerian Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA, etc). These restrictions were unknown in pre-colonial and much of the colonial times; and

(b) The impact of smuggling and black marketeering activities extensively distort Nigeria’s economy, and *vice versa.*

With regard to the second feature mentioned above, it bears repeating that the porosity of the Bakassi border region has made informal and unrecorded trade more important than formal and recorded trade. As Akindele and Akinterinwa note, “the dilemma here is how to make the frontier less porous and more secure and how to curb illegal activities such as smuggling without hindering transnational movements…” (1992: 243). This calls for urgent action especially in the light of a shrinking world under the aegis of globalization, coupled with the ECOWAS freedom of movement of citizens within the region.

However, the paper submits, in the final analysis, that, though smuggling has a negative connotation especially from the point of view of the state, due to cross-border interactions that have their own distinctive features in the context of the Bakassi Peninsula zone, its activities offer (to the partitioned Africans of the affected border communities) avenues for economic survival that combine elements of inter-state and trans-national regionalism. This underscores the fact of the paradox of illegal trans-border commercial activities (like smuggling and black marketeering) as both
developmental and non-developmental, especially where the state is weak in addressing the marginalized position of the often neglected border communities, and also unable to control unorthodox forms of trans-border trade activities.

References


ARMS PROLIFERATION AND CONFLICTS IN AFRICA: THE SUDAN EXPERIENCE

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KEY TERMS: Arms proliferation, conflicts, arms and conflict.

ABSTRACT:
The Sudanese conflict has claimed so many lives and property not because its settlement would not have been achieved but because of the perceived role of small arms and light weapons. The paper argues that the availability of arms in the hands of the belligerents was responsible for the intensification and escalation of the conflict as the belligerents use them as a major support to maintain their ground. It adopts the Frustration-Aggression theory, explaining that the rebels in South Sudan went into the fighting as a result of frustration at achieving self-determination. The Sudanese government had ruled with Islamic policies without considering other segments that practice other religions. To rid the society of illicit arms, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes are carried out sincerely to avoid renewed war. Again, there should be enlightenment programme on the dangers of gun possession and peace education that advocates non-violent resolution of conflict.

1. INTRODUCTION

Arms proliferation on the African continent poses a threat to the security of lives and properties. The control of its spread by national, regional and international governments, the collection and destruction of surplus weapons, co-operation in effective intelligence, communication, etc has been carried out with less success. The paper therefore, seeks to unravel the sources and impact of small arms and light weapons on the intensification of the conflict in Sudan. The once peaceful country of Sudan has over the past four decades experienced armed struggle among groups and between groups and
governments. The conflict in Sudan became a problem of deep concern to international organizations, statesmen and scholars of international relations because it became a symbol of the problem threatening security of Africa. The use of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) has caused the death of over 300,000 people in the conflict and caused at least three times as many injuries and affect millions more indirectly. SALW have thus become the weapons of choice for combatants because they are cheap, durable and robust and their spread has continued to thrive in the face of disarmament processes by national, regional and international bodies.

The theoretical framework adopted for the paper is the Frustration – Aggression theory. This theory is relevant as the high conflict potential of the developing countries or areas is a function of frustration caused by economic deprivation.

The aggression theory earlier discussed by Feud, McDougal and others received its classic expression in the work of John Dollard (1939) and his colleagues (Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff 1981). Taking as its point of departure the assumption that “aggression is always a consequence of frustration” they defined frustration as “an interference with the occurrence of an instigated-goal response to its proper time in the behaviour sequence” (Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff 1981: 266). Whenever a barrier is interposed between persons and desired goals, an extra amount of energy is mobilized. Such energy mobilization if continued and unsuccessful tends to flow over into generalized destructive behaviour. The deprivation in this case is important as it relates to life goal of a people and therefore causes aggression.

The main explanation provided by the Frustration-Aggression theory is that aggression is the outcome of frustration and that in a situation where the legitimate desires of an individual is denied either
directly or by the indirect consequence of the way the society is structured, the feeling of disappointment may lead such a person to express his anger through violence that will be directed to them. According to Ogionwo & Eke (1999:87), an individual whose basic desires are thwarted and, who perceives the importance of the desire is likely to react to his condition by directing aggressive behaviour to perceived thwarting object. The Frustration-Aggression theory is therefore relevant in the paper, as the Southern Sudanese were dissatisfied and disappointed with the structural inequity, religious intolerance by the Muslim north and government, and the underdevelopment of the Southern part of the country. Their aggressive behaviour is informed by the actions of the government of Sudan and Muslim North in inhibiting or thwarting their efforts to realize their desired goal of self-determination and development. This situation results in the conflict that ravages Sudan.

Prior to independence, the colonial authorities failed to allow the people of the “closed District” to exercise their right to self-determination and when the Southern Sudan units of the Sudan forces learned of the impending independence of the Sudan as one country under the northern domination, they rebelled in August 1955, four months before independence in January 1, 1956. The southerners saw the independence as a replacement of one set of colonial masters with another and of a worst type, and thus demanded for full independence of the southern Sudan. Though, a truce was reached in Addis Ababa in 1972 granting the south regional autonomy, with its own legislature, executive and judiciary. The North however, worked to undermine the agreement, which the southerners saw as an effort to thwart their desires. The southerners were neither incorporated into the mainstream of power in parity with the north nor allowed the right to self-determination. At the same time, the north continued with its project of Islamization and Arabization of the country. These incidents led to the hostilities in the country spearheaded by the
Sudan People’s Liberation Movement. The conflict however, worsened with the eruption of armed struggle in the western region of Darfur on allegation of economic and political marginalization by the government.

2. ARMS PROLIFERATION

The issue of arms proliferation in the world and especially Africa has been the concern of scholars in the field of international relations. Musah (2006) who did a study on small arms and light weapons proliferation contends that a major source of its proliferation remains the stockpiles that were pumped into Africa in the 1970s and 1980s by the Soviet Union, the United States of America and their allies to fan proxy interstate wars. According to him, the small arms found their way into civilian hands from official sources due to a combination of factors including the breakdown of state structures, lax control over national armories and poor service conditions for security personnel. He contends that the advent of coup d’etat gradually emphasized the decisive role of weapons as the surest route to power and personal enrichment and their proliferation increased with the entry of junior officers in the political arena. He further contends that the proliferation of weapons is socially-oriented because the issues involved revolve around social relationship, values, beliefs, practices and identities.

Badmus (2005) maintains that small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) have become so wide spread that not only do they threaten security across the world but also undermine the peace and stability of civil society. He further contends that Africa has become attractive and profitable dumping ground for nations.

The spread of arms in Africa has continued, despite efforts to control it, due to the nature of African borders and the role of third
parties and the entry of new actors – the Transnational Corporations interested in the natural resources of countries in Africa. For example, National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) was able to finance its military campaign through the illegal sale of diamonds. UNITA controlled two-thirds of Angolan diamonds especially the diamond-rich Lunda Norte province and between 1992 and 1997, UNITA was estimated to have earned $3.7 billion from the sale of diamonds. UNITA received in return for the diamonds, a steady flow of small arms and light weapons (Badmus, 2005).

The proliferation of arms in the West African sub-region is made possible because these arms are “small” and are easy to transport or hide (Diarra, 2005; Yacubu, 2005). Diarra for instance, contends that it is not only a question of regulating arms in general but only a specific category of them – those that are liable to fuel civil wars or acts of banditry. He thus, states that arms are proliferated because of porous borders and unregulated movement of people from one country to another (Diarra, 2005; Akuyomo, 2006).

According to Okodolor (2005:5) arms race is the continuous competitive increase in the military power of two or more states based on the conviction that it is only retaining an advantage in such power-relation that can ensure their national security and maintain supremacy over their opponent. Arms continue to spread in Africa and the world over because countries would want to ensure their national security and of course, maintain supremacy over their opponents. There is thus, the belief that national security is best provided through arms acquisition, which constitutes a dilemma in the disarmament process. He argues that the proliferation of arms in West Africa [Africa] is assisted by plentiful supplies from law enforcement agents and military personnel selling their weapons, and from growing domestic artisan production, which passes down
established trade routes. Small arms also assist the expansion of transnational criminal networks (Okodolor, 2005:45).

Arms spread in Africa, it is argued, is possible through supplies from countries that are engaged in conflicts or full-blown war. Abalo (2006:2) asserts that there is widespread availability and rampant misuse by abusive state and non-state actors of small arms in West Africa. This situation according him, contributes to a pervasive climate of instability, humanitarian tragedy and wanton human rights violations in the region riddled with underdevelopment, poor health system and corrupt state leaders and government.

In his work, Pearson (1994:44) asserts that the problem of political control have more to do with weapon development, deployments and transfers than with theft or unauthorized access. In situations where states produce arms, it must produce weapons that it can use but that also appeal to potential foreign buyers in order to sustain the level of production needed to bring cost down. Thus, pure military priorities give way to commercial concerns and purely domestic arms production gives way to the global arms market (Pearson 1994:44). With these activities taking place, arms are likely to get into the hands of civilians and or authorized individuals in the society.

Kofi Annan (2003:3) while addressing the issue of illicit transfer of small arms asserts that uncontrolled proliferation of small arms, light weapons and the use of mercenaries, sustain conflicts, exacerbate violence, fuel crime and terrorism and promote a culture of violence (www.voa.com 2003; see also www.unog.ch). The conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone, Annan notes, have been fuelled in no small part by unregulated trade in small arms often paid for by the illicit exploitation of natural resources. These weapons have helped regionalize and prolong wars in the conflict cluster around the
continent – from the Mano River union in West Africa through Great Lakes region to the Greater Horn. The effects – a most insecure social environmental, spiraling violence, the mounting death toll and floods of refugees constitute a major development and human rights challenges.

Similarly, Farr (2006) has maintained that small arms are widely available, transportable and easy to use and as such play a significant role in accelerating violence, both in times of war and in degraded peace time environments. Farr asserts that easy access to small arms is central to perpetuating social dislocation, destabilization, insecurity and crime in the building up of war, in wartime and in the aftermath of conflicts. Again, gun ownership and misuse also worsen race and class tensions in violence-prone communities. Conflicts in Africa therefore, degenerate into bloody and uncontrolled proportions because of the easy accessibility of small arms (www.iansa/regions).

3. CONFLICT

Conflict represents part of the dynamics of inter-state relations. But when it becomes too frequent within a region (such as Africa) they divert attention from the more basic issues of development and the promotion of the aspirations of the people that are usually the primary concern of organized societies. In most cases, and especially where such conflicts escalate into open violence or wars, they actually consume substantial quantities of human and material development resources.

Alli (2006); Otite (2006) maintain that conflict occurs in Africa when two or more people engage in a struggle over values and claims to status, power and resources in which the aims of opponents are to
neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals. Alli further explains that conflict emerges whenever one party perceives that one or more goals or purposes of means of achieving a goal or preference is threatened or hindered by the activities of one or more parties. The parties may, however, be seeking to expand into the same field or physical sphere, or, more abstractly, into the same field of influence or behaviours (Alli 2006). Consequently, conflict result from interaction and contact among people when there is competition of interest to achieving a goal. Interaction according to Zartman as revealed by Alli is an unavoidable concomitant of choices and decisions and an expression of the basic fact of human interdependence. Conflict may also be caused by frustration in a relationship or interaction. The occurrence of aggressive behaviour always suggests the existence of frustration, which leads to some form of conflict.

Considering conflict as a social necessity and a normal and functional and inevitable aspect of all societies, Alli (2006) asserts that conflict becomes an obstacle to progress, political stability, economic prosperity and overall socio-economic development only when it is destructive in its impact. He notes that the spate of conflicts ravaging Africa can be attributed to the inadequacies of the African government as the structure and institutions of the state have remained relatively undeveloped. These governments in essence, have a focus on building those institutions that allow the exploitation and management of resources. Nigeria for example has been putting much effort on the management and exploitation of resources than on nation building. This attitude of government makes it possible for the people to be exploited and impoverished. Poverty caused by the activities of government in any state is bound to bring about conflict, as the people would be seeking to have a share of such exploited resources (the Niger Delta states of Nigeria). According to Alli this kind of conflict is caused by the desire to have access over natural resources.
Ibeanu (2003) identified three types of conflicts in Post Cold War Africa: conflicts that arise as a result of struggle for political participation or over political space; conflict caused by the contest for access to resources; conflict caused by struggle over identity.

Conflict is usually used for the range of arguments as tensions and violent conflicts that occur both within and between states. It is the pursuit of incompatible goals or interests by different groups or individuals (Bakut, 2006). Because of differences in views and opinions, conflicts are caused by several factors despite the enthronement of democracy in almost all the states in the region. Such factors according to Konteh (2006) are bad governance, ethnic intolerance, massive human rights abuses, poverty, and the failure of the state to carry out critical roles or functions of government and the eventual collapse of state. These however, vary from one country to the other.

Conflicts, however, may be caused by a combination of two or more of the factors mentioned above. Examples of conflicts, which result from struggle for political participation, are those of Somali, Rwanda, Chad, Uganda and Sudan. Those caused by the contest for access to resources are conflicts in Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Sierra Leone, Liberia and the Niger Delta Area of Nigeria. Identify and citizenship conflicts are typified by the many conflicts in Burundi, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Cote d’Ivoire, Nigeria and Sudan (Alli 2006; Egwu 2006). Identify conflicts are particularly pronounced because of the plural nature of Africa states. A major aspect of this ethnic dynamics is the massive mobilization of identifies as a basis for contesting hegemonic power, which is often used in igniting the violent conflict. Some of these conflicts like the ones in Burundi, Rwanda and Darfur region of Sudan, assumed genocidal proportion.
Oluyemi-Kusa (2006) posits that armed conflicts today are more likely to occur within states than across national borders. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the number of intrastate conflicts has proliferated and even more pronounced in Africa due to the level of poverty and weak democratic institutions as a result of the long period of military rule in most of these countries. Economic disintegration, political upheaval and competition for scarce resources according to Oluyemi, has opened a Pandora’s box long-suppressed ethnic, religious and regional tensions that have erupted into violent conflict.

In this study, Peace Support Operations in Africa, Galadima (2006) admit that Africa, since the eve of the 21st century, has been challenged by a variety of complex political, economic, environmental and social upheaval in degrees and intensity that is unprecedented in the continent. These challenges have launched the continent into a series of devastating intrastate conflicts ever experienced in a single continent anywhere in the world in the last decade and a half. Conflicts erupted into ethnic warfare in Central Africa, Zaire, Burundi and Rwanda. There was armed uprising in Northern Uganda, civil war in Sudan and border conflicts between Ethiopia and Eritrea. In fact, Sudan is encountering humanitarian catastrophe arising from a bitter intrastate conflict almost of a geographical proportion (Galadima 2006).

A major development in these conflicts is their militarization through the use of small arms and light weapons, the use of child soldiers and the struggle for control of mineral resources (Alli 2006). Countries like Ethiopia, Sudan, Liberia, Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, Angola, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Cote d’Ivoire have suffered greatly from widespread and intense internal conflicts. These conflicts exploded the myth of national solidarity, undermining the social fabric of these nations and destroying their fragile economies.
Conflict may be regarded as a characteristics feature of the political process Africa. There is scarcely any part of Africa without its share of major conflicts in the past four decades. African conflicts exhibit some features that seem particular to them. There are conflicts of secession, conflicts of ethnic sub-nationalism, conflicts of self-determination, conflicts of military intervention and political legitimacy, conflicts of national liberation, conflicts over religion and over territory or boundaries. These conflicts can be intractable lasting for up two decades resulting in loss of lives and property, slow pace of development and insecurity.

4. ARMS SPREAD AND THE CONFLICT IN SUDAN

The spread of arms in Sudan is made possible through several sources such as the government, military representatives, distributors, terrorists, multinational corporations, smugglers and covert government agencies engaging in secret deliveries. Direct sales from weapon manufacturers to foreign governments or private entities are a principal source of supply. Such sales are usually regulated by national government. For instance, the U.S. Departments licensed over $470 million of light military weapons for exports.

Cold war era surplus stock is another source of light weapons supply. In the past few years the U.S military has given away or sold at discount vast quantities of excess assault rifles, carbines, 45 caliber pistols, machine guns and grenade launchers (www.fas.org/asmp).

Covert gun-running by governments to foreign governments or more often, insurgent groups is another source of small arms and light weapons proliferation.
4.1 The Grey and Black Markets

The illegal or covert sales of arms have received increased attention because it involves larger shipments of more potent weapons. These sales of arms have been described as gray and black market.

4.1.1 The Gray Market

The Gray market refers to governmentally approved or covert arms shipments that skirt the letter of the law or evade international restrictions and embargoes. In most cases, government raises monies to finance and arrange the arms shipments. In 1996, the United States of America government sent nearly $20 million of equipment through “front-line” states of Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda to help the Sudanese opposition overthrow the Khartoum regime. The military aid includes radios, uniforms, boots and tents (www.militaryphotos.net). The involvement of the government of Sudan in the supply of arms to the Janjawid militia is made known by Abakora Abbo Sakhairoun, a Janjawid fighter who was captured by the Chadian forces when they invaded Chad. According to him,

The Sudanese government equipped us with light weapons-Kalachnikovs and bazookas-to fight the rebels in Darfur but we take advantage of this to steal cattle in Chad, though we perfectly know that it is not our mission (www.IRINNEWS.ORG) May, 2004.

Similarly, the government in Khartoum is said to have ordered Western Platforms to improve the military’s ability to fight in Swamps that dot the war-torn South. The battlefield heightened by the government’s purchase from Australia of airboats designed to travel in Swap environments and especially useful in the oil filed
areas of upper Nile (www.militaryphotos.net/forums). The government of Sudan sponsors the supply of arms to the Janjawid Arab-militias directly or through third parties or agents. It furnished this armed group with weapons, which included G-3s, Kalashnikovs, mortars, light machine guns and landmine. The danger in this trade made President Clinton in 1995 to urge states “to shut down the grey markets that outfit terrorists and criminals with firearms.”

4.1.2 The Black Market
The black market involves unlawful or unapproved transfer by private arms dealers and smugglers. The people involved in the black market usually deal on smaller arms because of difficulty of packaging and concealing major Weapons transfer without some government co-operation. There is a thriving global black market in small/light weapons. These arms are particularly attractive to smugglers as they are cheap, and easily concealed and transported. The secretive nature of arms smuggling makes it impossible to know with any certainty the magnitude of the traffic. Theft or capture of state security forces’ arms are a major source of black market supply around the world. These weapons are ideal for terrorists and rebels as they have access to them through the black market.

On August 18, 1955, the equatorial corps, a military unit composed of Southerners, mutinied at Torit. Rather than surrender to Sudanese government authorities, many mutineers disappeared into hiding with their weapons, marking the beginning of the first war in Sudan (www.Dismalworld.com).

By 1969 the rebels had developed foreign contacts to obtain weapons and supplies. Israel for example trained AnyaNya recruits and shipped weapons via Ethiopia and Uganda to the rebels. AnyaNya also purchased arms from Congolese rebels. By 1986, the SPLA was estimated to have been equipped with small arms and a
few mortars (www.Dismalworld.com). Other weapons obtained by the SPLA include T-55 tanks and mobile anti-aircraft guns (www.fas.org).

The Sudanese rebels obtain the majority of their weapons through purchases on the international arms market or in combat with forces of the government of Sudan. SPLA captured large quantities of Sudanese government arms in Southern Sudan in early 1997, including tanks and artillery. Arms also reached Sudanese opposition forces through an informal smuggling network within Africa that stretches as far south as Mozambique and Angola. Landlocked as they are, they are heavily dependent on the cooperation of one or another of the frontline states for the transshipment of such arms. Uganda is used as a transshipment route for arms meant for the SPLA on several occasions. In July 1997 more than one hundred wooden creates of ammunition in Morobo, Sudan (between Kaya and Yei) with shipping instructions marked “To Uganda, via Tanzania.” (www.hrw.org/reports). With this mark, the SPLA officials identified them as SPLA equipment. South Africa had in September 1997 supplied armored vehicles ammunition and anti-craft missiles to the rebels through Uganda.

4.1.3 Military Assistance/Aid
Sudan lacks a reliable source of military materials except for the production line for small caliber ammunition. Consequently, foreign sources for weapons, equipment, ammunition, and technical training have been indispensable. After independence, the British advisers helped train the Sudanese Army and Air force, and British equipment, predominated in the ground forces. (www.country-data.com).

The breach with the Western nations was followed by a period of close military cooperation with the Soviet Union between 1968 and 1971. Sudan benefited from the Soviet Union’s first
significant military assistance program in a sub-Saharan Africa country. By 1970, it was estimated that there were 2,000 Soviet and east European technical advisers in the country. About 350 Sudanese received training in the Soviet Union and other Communist countries.

Believing that neighbouring Ethiopia and Libyan forces are heavily armed by the Soviet Union threatened Sudan, Washington and Libyan forces heavily armed Sudan’s security. Between fiscal year 1979 and 1982 military sales credit rose from U.S$5 million to U.S$100 million. Subsequent aid was extended on a grant basis. In addition to aircraft, United States aid consisted of APCFs, M-60 tanks, and artillery and command armored cars. Its id reached a peak of U.S$101 million in 1982. Between the inception of the military assistance to sub-Saharan Africa in 1976 and its termination in 1986, military grants and sales credits to Sudan totaled U.S$154 million and U.S$161 million respectively (www.country-data.com).

On the other hand, the SPLM/A have received political, military and logistical support primarily from Ethiopia, Uganda and Eritrea. These states were firmly behind efforts to overthrow the Sudan Government and install in its place Sudanese opposition groups from the outset, the SPLM/A had the support of the government of Ethiopia. Uganda provided the SPLM/A with access to arms and permission to train its forces within its territory. Eritrea allowed the Sudan Alliance Forces (SAF) to use its territory for training, and support its activities.

They have received indirect support from the United States of America, (U.S.A) when it allocated $20 million in “non-lethal” military assistance to SPLA supporters (Uganda, Eritrea and Ethiopia) in February 1998 for defense against opposition groups in their countries backed by Sudan. Sudan has long accused Eritrea, which has a hostile relationship with Khartoum, of providing training
facilities and arms to SPLM/A in the South, to rebel forces in Darfur, and another rebel group called Beja congress in the east (www.globalsecurity.org). Several operational detachments – Alpha (also called A-Teams) of the United States of America were operating in support of the SPLA.

5. SECURITY DILEMMA

The security dilemmas as revealed in the work of Pearson (1994) are the reasons why arms proliferation is a continuous thing despite attempts to curb its spread.

5.1 The Political Dilemma
This requires that the issue of armament does not only relate simply to security or economic objectives but politics as well since arms serve as a means to political power. Mao Tsetung points out that “power (political power) stems from the barrel of a gun” (Pearson 1994:4). Some leaders shoot their ways into office or depend on armed force to stay in power for a longer period. Arms are therefore required by states during the process of state-making and state-building to sustain the hegemonic power of the ruling class. According to Pearson (1994:4), even if all the other ingredients for arms reduction are in place, there is still the potential, and for some the irresistible temptation, to use arms to bolster political power.

A government that holds political power acquires it to bolster such power and to have supremacy over its opponents. In fact, the coming to power President Omar El-Bashir was through a coup d’état aided by the use of gun; arms in general. The desire of the government of Sudan to bolster political power with the use of arms contributes to the spread of arms in that country. It uses arms to maintain its strong hold in power and to fight the rebels. On the other hand, the rebels capture some of these arms from the government
forces, for example when they killed 10,000 government troops in a battle on Ashwa front in 1996. The rebels in turn use these captured military equipment and others acquired through the black market to maintain their stand on their demand for self-determination and continue to fight. The government acquires arms from the United States of America, Soviet Union, Egypt and Saudi Arabia among others. In other to maintain its control over the people and country, Iran had supplied Sudan with G-3 rifles, and Kalashnikov assault rifles. Sudan purchased medium-range artillery from Iran, which include Mortars (60mm and 82mm) and ammunition. (www.hrw.org/reports).

5.2 The Dilemma of Access
This entails the uncertainty of trying to eliminate arms since those mostly interested in obtaining the banned item would still find a way to do so and that illicit business would grow up to supply these consumers. The most violent would still find a way to obtain weapons, through contraband or black markets if necessary. According to Pearson (1994:2) “if guns are outlawed, outlaws will still have guns”. Sudan for instance turned to China and Libya for arms supplies when its relations with Soviet Union chilled in 1971. Most of its weaponry of Soviet designs was more than twenty years old and could not be kept operational except with the help of China and Libya. As at the Mid 1980s, about fifty Chinese advisers provided maintenance support for tanks and aircraft, including Soviet equipment previously supplied, and trained Sudanese pilots and aircraft mechanics. Iraq also provided some military items to Sudan in the form of munitions, but ended it in August 1990 (www.country-data.com/egi).

The Numeiri government (1969-85) bought weapons from China. But these purchases rose in the 1990s due to Sudan’s internal war and the promise of improved finance and enhanced international
credit derived from its oil potential. Weapons deliveries from China to Sudan since 1995 have included ammunition, tanks, helicopters, and fighter aircraft. China also became a major supplier of anti-personnel and anti-tank mines after 1980. According to a human right watch report, eight Chinese 122mm towed howitzers, five Chinese-made T-59 tanks, and one Chinese 37mm anti-aircraft gun were abandoned by the government army in Yei when in 1997, the SPLA overran government garrison towns in the South. It also supplied fifty Z-6 helicopters, a hundred 82mm and 120mm mortars. Six Chinese Chengdu F-7s (MIG-21s) financed by Iran was supplied to Sudan as well (www.hrw.org/reports).

Sudan also received military equipment such as tanks, MIGs combat aircraft and munitions from Britain, ten light helicopters and 4,000 vehicles from West Germany and when relation was not favourable any more, she turned to the Soviet Union for military equipment coincidentally at a period when their relation improved. Military agreements with the Soviet Union remained in force until 1977, but Sudan began to pursue a policy of diversifying its arms sources. South Africa delivered two shipments of arms to Sudan in 1995 and a third shipment in 1997 using Yemen as a transit point to disguise the origin. These shipments included light artillery, heavy machine guns and spare parts for Sudanese navy (www.hrw.org/reports).

5.3 Dilemma of Alternatives
This dilemma implies that finding alternatives to armament to promote security or trade (imports or exports) can be difficult, a mainly economic dilemma facing those interested in disarmament or peace (Pearson 1994:3). The lesser of two evils would be to continue selling guns and tanks to foreign market, even at the risk of fueling wars. In essence, they had no alternative than to sell guns to keep their economy growing. Sudan does not actually produce high caliber
military equipment, but in a bid to secure her territory, citizens and property, turns elsewhere to acquire arms. Yugoslavia assisted in founding the Sudanese navy and for more than a decade provided all of the vessels and the bulk of officers and technical training. In 1989 four river craft were acquired from Yugoslavia. Again, Saudi Arabia was instrumental in the purchase of six C-130 Hercules transport aircraft from United States of America estimated to cost U.S$74 million and two Buffalo transports from Canada in ‘97.

To further have an alternative source of getting arms; Sudan maintained its closest military ties with Egypt under a twenty-five years defense agreement signed in 1976. The two countries established a joint defense council, a joint general staff organization, and a permanent military committee to implement decisions of the joint council and the staff organization. Since 1986 Egypt has provided Egyptian – manufactured swing fire antitank missiles, Walid armored personnel carriers, ammunition and other equipment tom Sudan. (www.coutry-data.com/egi).

5.4 Dilemma of Adequacy
The dilemma of adequacy relates to how much armament would be enough for a country. In this light, how would a country feel secure against attack by its neighbours? Theoretically, in a system of independent states, government decides for themselves how much arms are enough. However, their decisions can play havoc neighbour’s security and regional balances of power (Pearson 1994:3). The extent to which a country is armed would make other countries, especially neighbours to continue to arm. It is unreasonable that an unarmed man should remain safe and secure when the other is armed. So it is to countries. No one country will feel safe and secure if her neighbour is armed. There will be suspicion and in order to feel safe and secure, militarily, the country will arm.
In Sudan, the warring factions, SPLA, JEM and especially the Sudan government need to continue to arm, as they do not know the strength of each other. While the government gets its supply of arms from other countries through direct buying and the grey market, the rebels get theirs from the black market. Sudan obtained about U.S$350 million in military arms and equipment between 1983 and 1988. The United States of America was the largest supplier, accounting for US$120 million. About US$160 million came largely from Egypt and Libya, and purchases from other Western suppliers financed by Arab countries (www.country-data.com/egi). The rebel groups have continued to arm so as to withstand the pro-government Janjaweed militias and government forces. It receives arms from Congolese rebels, Eritrea, Uganda, Ethiopia and indirect support from the United States of America in non-lethal military equipment. This attitude leads to arms proliferation. For instance, while the government imports, the rebel factions also import or buy through the black market in order to secure their own territory.

Arms in the hands of militants and or rebels seem to cause more havoc in a conflict situation. Misol (2006) has argued that the problem of small arms and conflict in West Africa are interwoven. The spread and misuse of small arms helps to fuel conflict, and combatants who have a history of indifference for the principle of civilian immunity, lead to violations against innocent people.

6. THE IMPACT OF ARMS ON THE SUDAN CONFLICT

The irresponsible transfer of arms to Sudan and its neighbours are a significant factor in the massive human rights catastrophe in Sudan and its spread into Eastern Chad. Arms availability in the hands of the government forces, Janjaweed Arab militia and the rebels made the conflict more intense and escalating. The weapons are cheap, durable, easily transferred and made available through government official
purchase, military assistance/aid to Sudan by governments of other countries - The United States of America, China, Libya, and Soviet Union - and the grey market through which the Arab militia is supplied arms. The black market is the Chief source of arms supply to the rebels. The rebels received arms from Israel through Ethiopia and Uganda. The SPLA also purchased arms from the United States of America, China, South Africa and Iran. It served as a support to the warring to enable them maintain their grounds.

The government of Sudan bears the primary responsibility of protecting civilians in Darfur yet continued to divert and deploy important attack and other military aircraft, “dual use” and domestically made military equipment, as well as firearms and ammunition to target civilians directly, launch indiscriminate attacks involving civilian casualties and to arm and support the Janjaweed militias (www.amnesty.org).

The conflict has destroyed so many lives and property, internally displaced about three million people with another 670,000 forced to become refugees in other countries. The negative humanitarian situation has been worsened by drought, famine and ecological devastation as a direct result of the war (Okereke 2005). According to him, between 1984 and 1985, more than 100,000 Sudanese suffered severe starvation in the drought-stricken western region while an estimated 250,000-500,000 perished in the war-torn South between 1987 and 1988. The United States Secretary of State Colin Powell (2004) classified the Sudan situation as genocide.

More than 200,000 people have died in the four and half years of conflict in Darfur, and more than 2.5 million have been displaced from their homes. During March 2011, there was no decrease in human right violations and abuses against internally displaced people, including sexual and gender based violence. There were
40,000 new displaced civilians as a result of the ongoing violence and armed banditry has continued unabated.

According to James (2006) the militia and the Government soldiers raided communities of Nuba Mountains, resulting in the killing of many Nuba people, including women and children. The government burned and destroyed houses and crops; abducted women and children and took entire families against their will. In the camps, family members are separated; men taken for military training and conscripted into the National Armed forces, young boys are taken to the Arabic Islamic schools were they are to study the Qur’an. The fate of women and girls are the worst of all, they are forced into domestic work and for some unluckily ones, are sexually abused by the men.

Civilians in Darfur are bearing the brunt of escalating fighting between the government and rebel factions. Thousands of civilians were displaced following recent attacks between October 4th – 8th 2007 on the towns of Haskanita and Muhajaria, weeks before the warring parties were scheduled to meet in Tripoli, Libya for a new round of peace talks. On September 29, 2007 rebel forces killed 10 African Union Peacekeepers in Haskanita in North Darfur (www.hrw.org). Government forces quickly took control of the area and on October 4, the entire town was burned to the ground and at least 10 civilians were killed (www.hrw.org).

Despite several attempts to end the conflict through peace talks, arms, ammunitions and related equipment such as T-55, aircraft, uniforms, boots, tents airboats, and grenade launchers are still being transferred to the country especially the Darfur region for military operations. This causes serious violations and abuse of human rights and international humanitarian laws that are committed by the Sudanese government, the government-backed Janjaweed militia and
armed opposition groups (www.amnesty.org). These arms amount to continued fighting and thereby escalating and or intensifying the conflict.

In a nutshell, millions of people are caught in the crossfire as victims of the warfare. Many are women and children. Children are recruited or compelled to be soldiers. Child soldiers are exploited in the recent war in Sudan. Also affected are political dissidents, Union organizers, land rights activists, journalists, foreign relief and development workers, local and foreign business people, and tourists (www.fas.org/asmp).

7. CONCLUSION

The Sudan conflict is rooted in religious intolerance and the structural inequality between the Centre (North) dominated by Arab Muslims and the ‘peripheral’ areas such as Darfur, Fung, Nuba Mountains and Southern Blue Nile dominated by non-Arabs – Christians and Animists. These ‘peripheral’ areas have been excluded from the centre of State affairs since independence and are relatively underdeveloped. The rebels accused the government of oppressing non-Arabs in favour of Arabs and neglecting the Southern region. This neglect, exclusion from state affairs and underdevelopment necessitated a call by the Southern Sudanese for self-determination. The conflict became destructive and devastating in its impact when arms, especially Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) are used. The direct impact of these arms in Sudan is the high rate of violent crimes. The most negatively impacted people are women, children, humanitarian workers, peacekeepers and properties. It proves Camille, Annan and others right when they posit that the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons affects the intensity and duration of violence and encourages militancy, a vicious circle in which insecurity leads to a higher demand for weapons (www.international-alert.org). Pearson
(1994:62) was right when he asserts that more weapons clearly tend to make conflicts longer and bloodier.

The government of Sudan and South Sudan in particular should sincerely embark on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes that will offer armed groups a benefit package as an incentive for them to report to authorities and disarm. Such programmes include collection and destruction of weapons and creation of employment opportunities for armed groups. This process will considerably reduce the risk of renewed civil war.

Other than allowing conflicts to degenerate into full-blown war that will destroy lives and property, it should be nipped in the buds through a peaceful settlement. By so doing, weapon manufacturers and producers will not have a booming market for arms supply. By and large there will be reduction in arms demand and supply.

Generally, public enlightenment programmes on the dangers of gun possession and peace education programmes that advocates non-violent resolution of disputes be carried out to guarantee public safety. Reducing demand for Small Arms and Light Weapons will eliminate citizens' perception that they need a weapon and also change the culture of gun possession and gun violence in the citizens into a culture of peace.

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**Fabricating Unease: Intertextuality, the Nation and Intellectual Leadership Crisis in Achebe’s No Longer at Ease**

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Key Terms: Achebe, intellectualism, intertextuality, leadership crisis, Nigeria.

**Abstract:**
The subject matter of the nation is a usual staple on the menu of postcolonial Nigerian fiction. In this sense, the repertoire of Chinua Achebe’s art echoes an incurable preoccupation with Nigeria’s postcolonial condition as a nation. Also, this paper explores the centrality of intertextuality in the production of Achebe’s fiction, primarily his political novel about crisis plaguing intellectual leadership, *No Longer at Ease* (1960). Intellectual leadership deals with championing the espousal of intellectual development for societal alchemy; it also deals with mental or intellectual engagement capable of raising awareness as well as educating people about societal issues for change. Intertextuality focuses on the relations among texts: no text is an island. The departure from author-centred theory of literary criticism to unhindered, fluid mode of criticism, following the pressures of poststructuralist contention, precipitated intertextuality. The significance of intertextuality to the creation of postcolonial Nigerian fiction establishes the fact that social facts that are being refracted are real societal issues. These artistic productions are “truthful chronicle”; they are relational in textual make-up. Thus, layers of artistic works after the Boehmerian “after Achebe” thesis orchestrate the body of texts that sing from the same songbook as *No Longer at Ease*. This paper therefore attempts to demonstrate that Achebe’s *No Longer at Ease* is a derivative of the corpus of “verifiable”, realistic literature on intellectual leadership crisis in Nigeria.
Introduction: Intellectuals, Leadership, and the Nation

*The greatest threat to freedom is the absence of criticism.*


As history illustrates, at least since Plato, intellectuals have made manifest their place in society as oracles, critics, educators, illuminators, historians, sages and conscience of age and epoch. In making their role manifest, intellectuals have taken issues that plague humanity upon themselves as the representatives of the people (in the Saidian argot), spokesmen for the powerless, guardians of truth and conscience of the community. This has been the tradition intellectuals have ensconced since the history of organised state. In his acclaimed work, *Orientalism* (1978), Edward Said, the ace literary theorist and cultural critic of the left, surmised the place of intellectuals in the society:

we are of the connections, not outside and beyond them. And it behooves us as intellectuals and humanists and secular critics to understand ... the world of nations and powers from within the actuality, as participants in it, not detached outside observers who, like Oliver Goldsmith, in Yeats’ perfect phrase, deliberately sip at the honey pots of our mind. (xxiii)

Noam Chomsky shares similar view about intellectuals as he admitted in his 1967 fiery essay in *The New York Review of Books* titled “The Responsibility of Intellectuals”. In the essay, Chomsky admonished the American intellectuals to oppose the war that America was fighting in Vietnam or be accused of “hypocritical moralism” (Asprey, 1994). He sees the role of intellectuals as more of engagement to upturn equitable social order as well as directing
society towards the right direction it should go rather than passivity or complicity. This is also true of Jean-Paul Sartre’s position; in his *Dirty Hands* (1948), he adumbrated that intellectuals’ position and duty in society should amount to counter-hegemony against the excesses of the state. This could be done by intellectuals being politically engaged with their works as public intellectuals for the humanising of society.

Nevertheless, the term intellectual as a lexicon did not actually appear on the radar of public knowledge until the controversial *Dreyfus Affair* in France in late 1890s; before this period, different words such as the intelligentsia, scholars and other terms were essentially used to describe intellectuals. The French naturalist and writer, Emile Zola, was the person that popularised the term intellectuals in contemporary time. Zola’s criticism of the Dreyfus Affair, which basically deals with the treason conviction of Alfred Dreyfus by the French authorities, who alleged that he had communicated French military secret to the German embassy in Paris, was instrumental to the rise of intellectuals in recent history. Through the acerbic criticism of the powers that be by the French intellectuals, Dreyfus, was re-instated into the army and promoted to major in French Army. In his 1993 Reith Lecture titled “Representations of the Intellectuals”, Edward Said brought alive again the notion of intellectuals and what they represent in society. Said sees the role of intellectuals as public critics; this perception dovetails with Achebe’s:

In Chinua Achebe’s view, the African writer of our time must be accountable to his society; if he fails to respond to the social and political issues of his age, to espouse the ‘right and just causes’ of his people, he is no better than the absurd man in the proverb who deserts his burning house to pursue a rat fleeing from the flame. (Rogers 1976: 1)
Strong words though, the import of the above resonates with the social functions of intellectuals (writers) in society.

One of the greatest intellectuals of black race, Frantz Fanon, in his piece “Towards the African Revolution” averred that the major role of African intellectuals is that of revolution in order to counter the West’s supremacist ideology and leadership. Fanon takes a swipe at African intellectuals who do nothing to change the status quo; he urged them to help galvanise support for the transformation of Africa – liberating the continent from colonial domination and imperial pillage – in order for African nations and their people to be independent as well as economically self-sufficient. Similarly, in Chidi Maduka’s view, African intellectuals should be contributors to the debate to change the continent for better leadership and continental bliss (1986: 11). In Achebe’s own words, the duties of intellectuals are assayed here: “the writer cannot expect to be excused from the task of re-education and regeneration that must be done. In fact he should march right in front” (1976: 45). Although Achebe is talking of writers, he is also referring to the body of intellectuals called the intelligentsia, who should be the conscience of their age and society.

The type of intellectuals, who possess what Hegel (1977: 243) called “unhappy consciousness”, that is being disgruntled because of inept social order are at the opposite pole from the powers that be; they speak truth to power. Gramsci in his Selections from the Prison Notes (1971) called this group “traditional intellectuals”; he differentiated them from another group he called the “organic intellectuals”, who rather assist the elite political groups in furthering inept leadership as well as perpetuation of injustice in society through their exalted position and knowledge. Michel Foucault’s terms for these types of intellectuals are “universal intellectuals” and “specific intellectuals” respectively. The traditional intellectuals, which Foucault considers as specific intellectuals, have cultural, political and
social roles to play in society as purveyors of what Chongyi (2005: 3) identified as “cultural capital” that has the potency to change societal values and mores for the betterment of humanity. This conception of intellectuals is in sync with Alvin Gouldner’s take on intellectuals: the purveyors of “culture of critical discourse”, which has the quality (in Julien Brenda’s verbiage) of “romanticism of harshness and contempt”.

However, the inability of intellectuals to use their intellectual prowess to leverage modes of power relations between the state and the people as a consequence of inhibitions posed by the ruling elite as well as pressures of mainstream power blocs restrict their role as change agents. This is the situation Achebe’s Obi Okonkwo in No Longer at Ease finds himself. Said’s indication that intellectuals are “morally endowed philosopher-kings” (1993: 5) does not apply to Obi Okonkwo, as he allows himself to be consumed by the quicksand of societal pressures. In Obi Okonkwo’s discussion with his friend, Joseph, concerning his engagement plans with Clara that he thinks is a moral thing to do: to marry someone he truly loves and cares for, Joseph vehemently opposed it. Obi Okonwko’s response calibrates clash of civilization as well as his listless disposition as he cannot change the way people think in society as an educated person, who has imbibed Western values as well as “a pioneer” (68) – an intellectual – that ought to show people the way to do things right and morally. Joseph’s abrasive remark here is worth noting:

Remember you are the one and only Umuofia son to be educated Overseas. We do not want to be the unfortunate child who grows his first tooth and grows a decayed one. What sort of encouragement will your action give to the poor men and women …? (68)
Obi’s disposition following Joseph’s statement shows he is an embattled man, whose mission to change the social landscape is running aground: “Obi was getting a little angry” (68). The above altercation between Obi Okonkwo and his bosom friend, Joseph, shows that Obi is in leadership catastrophe; his position to lead as an intellectual, who has better insights into how society should function is rather in doubt, as seen from the exchange above. Joseph’s statement and abject disapproval of Obi’s intended engagement to his fiancée, Clara, shows that the new way that Obi is championing, which should replace the old order, is elusive.

In extending the contours of the above, before Obi Okonkwo eventually made up his mind to marry Clara, whom he knows full well his parents would not approve of because she is an “osu”, an outcast, who is being treated as a pariah as custom and folklore allows, he poured out his mind about this state of things:

It was scandalous that in the middle of the twentieth century a man could be barred from marrying a girl simply because her great-great-great-great-grandfather had been dedicated to serve a god, thereby setting himself apart and tuning his descendants into a forbidden caste to the end of Time. Quite unbelievable. And here was an educated man telling Obi he did not understand. ‘Not even my mother can stop me’. (65)

Obi’s bewilderment that Joseph, his friend, who is also educated and lives in the city, Lagos, which is a metropolis, could think so retrogressively, made him think the society might not be changed.
Thus, not even the corporeality of what Tejumola Olaniyan (2011: 46) called “the vexed origins of a new kind of elite and its ‘strange’ tongue, the emergence of a new spatial hierarchy in the rural-urban divide” could bring the ideals of intellectual leadership to fruition, as Obi contends. Eustace Palmer’s statement below supports the idea that Obi is really in leadership dilemma:

First, the hero is weak and insufficiently realized… for a central consciousness he is too uninteresting and vaguely portrayed rather than determining the course of events, Obi allows events to overtake him, and is merely, borne along by the fore of circumstances. Since Obi Okonkwo merely succumbs to the forces against him, he falls short … he is crushed for betraying his principles, not for championing them. (72: 68)

The epochal “falling apart”, Achebe’s overriding contention in his tour de force, *Things Fall Apart* (1958), finds continuation in the foregoing.

Since Nigeria’s political independence in 1960, it has been beleaguered with tormented history that is being precipitated by shadow of inept leadership. The issue of leadership in the nation – be it political or intellectual has come under intense criticism as the people are discontent with what has become of the nation. Echoing similar perspective, in his foreword to Richard Dowden’s recent book on Africa titled *Africa: Altered States, Ordinary Miracles* (2008), Chinua Achebe says:

Africa, as most people are aware, has endured a tortured history, and continues to persevere under the burden of political instability... Many chroniclers of the African condition often find Africa overwhelming. (Dowden, 2008: xv)
The above quote offers a new perspective to Achebe’s observation about Africa’s burden, which he foreshadowed in his chapbook, *The Trouble with Nigeria* (1983), rests largely on the scaffold of failed (intellectual) leadership precipitated by “a tortured history”, a synecdoche for the negative corollaries of colonialism, slavery and postcolonial disenchantment project.

The failure of Nigerian leaders to bring to fruition the hope and aspiration of the people at Nigeria’s political independence in 1960 spawned the emergence of literary creativity as well as aesthetic commitment that refracts remarkable shift from the dreams people had during the anti-colonial struggle, which culminated to political independence in 1960. The literary tradition that responds to this spirit of time is what Emmanuel Obiechina described as “literature of disillusionment” (197: 56). This is the type of literature that responds to the texture of leadership in society. The repertoire of Achebe’s fiction is an aesthetic response to Nigeria’s mode of governance and leadership. Apart from Achebe’s historical novels, which are his fiction primer, *Things Fall Apart* (1958) as well as *Arrow of God* (1962), all his fiction is an aesthetic response to the actualities in Nigeria on the heels of bungling political leadership. Beginning with *No Longer at Ease* (1960), Achebe’s preoccupation has been a commitment to unearthing the diverse twists and turns in Nigeria’s political leadership. This artistic consciousness permeates the texture of other political novels by Achebe: *A Man of the People* (1966) and *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987).

African leaders have been blamed for the colour of leadership on the continent; this is also the case in Nigeria, where politics has been reduced to mere zero-sum game, the winner-takes-it-all kind of enterprise. Achebe’s contemplation of how to navigate out of the murky waters of Nigeria’s political leadership finds resonance in creating Obi Okonkwo to serve as a foil to the nation’s breed of brute,
uncultured leaders, whose stock in trade is to use the instrument of politics to further undemocratic, elite-salving governance. Thus, following people’s disillusionment at what politics has made of governance and leadership, Achebe created the protagonist of *No Longer at Ease*, Obi Okonkwo, who is seemingly a purveyor of wholesome cultural and intellectual capital, to effect change. But unfortunately, Obi Okonkwo’s ideals run into a deadlock with the mainstream views in the nation. From the account in *No Longer at Ease*, Obi Okonkwo, Okonkwo’s grandson (Okonkwo of *Things Fall Apart*, the father of Nwoye), could not bring this to fruition owing to the pressures on him by mainstream ideological ethos precipitated by warped social values and morbid traditional caste system. The production of a representational relation of coincidence between *No Longer* and *Ease* and the structure of the narrative of disempowered, dysfunctional intellectuals can be extended to the life of Chinua Achebe himself. Achebe has often caught the personality of an embattled man or writer, who is in unease – this is also true of the nation he writes about. This unease is redoubled by Achebe’s vexed commitment to confront the material and the discursive in advocating alternative order in Nigeria.

The process of using literature to interrogate the zeitgeist is what Onyemaechi Udumukwu in the introduction to his edited volume, *Nigerian Literature in English: Emerging Critical Perspectives* sees as ability of “… the narrative of the nation to [to] engage[s] itself in a conscious interrogation of the forces of alienation” (2007: 16). In continuing this debate, in another book by Udumukwu, he asserted that the subject matter of the nation in Nigerian literature is a function of re/imagining a “panoply of voices and ideological interests” (2006: 146) at the cusp of contestation for power as well as hegemony. Similarly, Andre Brink’s writing bears much in common with other politically committed writers such as Achebe. Brink (1983) considers the role of a writer in a state of siege to be tantamount to condemning
leaders’ dereliction by using art as a conduit to fire his darts of criticism. J. M Coetzee’s statement in *Doubling the Point* (1992), urges writers to transcend social malaise as well as leadership ineptitude in this manner:

> For the writer the deeper problem is not to allow himself to be impaled on the dilemma proposed by the state, namely, either to ignore its obscenities or else to produce representations of them. The true change is: how not to play the game by the rules of the state, how to establish one’s own authority. (Attwell 1992: 364)

Ngugi’s opinion in *Penpoints, Gunpoints, and Dreams* (1998) is subsumed in what he dubbed “absolute art”, that is committed literature, which brings about “absolute motion” (Rodrigus 2004: 165) that is capable of moving the centre – the energies to change mainstream views of the society.

**Part of a Whole: No Longer at Ease as Epiphenomenon of Social Facts, Culture Conflict and Intertextuality**

Intertextuality is a movement in response to poststructuralist conceptualization to envision the demise of author-centered criticism, which limited the gamut of apprehending wide-ranging, different meanings and multidimensionality of textual readings. Intertextuality as a literary movement is committed to widening the space of meaning as well as de-centering the origin of meaning thereby providing a scaffold for inclusivity and heterogeneity of textual relations and meanings for diachronic textual interpretation. This process is antithetical to Ferdinand de Saussure’s notion of synchronising textual meanings – which limits the historical dimensions to understanding texts and interpretation. In moving
against the structuralist conception of ascertaining meaning, the Derridian deconstructionist movement brought the structuralist, unilateral and monolithic idea of giving meaning and essence to words or texts to a cul-de-sac.

Roland Barthes’ seminal piece, “The Death of the Author” (1967), is one of the pioneering works in this regard to engender multiplicities of meanings to texts and words as opposed to unilateral, constraining method that structuralism made possible. As Barthes coherently puts it:

...a text is not a line of words releasing a single ‘theological’ meaning (the message of the Author-God) but a multidimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture. (1967: 146)

The concept of intertextuality does bring to the fore that every text is a continuum of older texts; no text is an island. Thus, in the poststructuralist model, older texts can be filtered through to later texts – thereby foregrounding the endless stream of interconnectivity of textual tissues, cultures, values, ideologies and worldview, among others. In challenging interpretive tyranny through enlarging textual meanings gained from semantic influence of antecedent texts, the tyranny of author-centered approach to textual meanings was brought to a halt.

In addition, intertextuality is a literary criticism movement championed by the French philosopher Julia Kristeva. The Derridian philosophy as well as neo-Marxism and Lacanian psychoanalysis suffuse Kristeva’s theory of intertextuality. Besides, Kristeva’s radical critical tool had a prehistoric indebtedness to Ferdinand de Saussure’s
structuralist semiotics and Bakhtin’s idea of dialogism. In Bakhtin’s concept of dialogism or dialogicity, a word (in text or language) is no longer a construal of determined meaning, rather a concourse of textual networks and surfaces (Kristeva 1969: 144). Thus, “any text is a new tissue of past citations” (Barthes 1981: 39). According to Kristeva, every text is constituted “by a mosaic of citations, every text is absorption and transformation of another text” (Kristeva 1986: 37). Terry Eagleton sees this process as texts being essentially “re-written” (1983: 192) in literature.

In the process of re-writing literary works as Eagleton points out, each text directly or indirectly makes reference to other texts. In a similar mode of thought, Peter Barry sees this literary pattern as “a major degree of reference between one text and another” (1995: 91). This is actually in sync with Barthes’ contention here:

any text is an intertext; other texts are present in it, at varying levels, in more or less recognizable forms: the text of the previous and surrounding culture. Any text is a new tissue of past citations. Bits of codes, formulae, rhythmic models, fragments of social languages, etc. pass into the text and are redistributed within it. [...] Epistemologically, the concept of intertext is what brings to the theory of the text the volume of sociality. (Young 1981: 39)

The relationship amongst texts and the dialogue such texts address brings to the fore the ideological coloration of a particular epoch. In fleshing this out, every of Achebe’s fiction has a trace of earlier ones (at least indirectly). This literary motif pervades his political novels: No Longer at Ease addresses in a slightly disparate way the issues and concerns in the nation of Nigeria that other political fiction of his deals with. Simply put, No Longer at Ease is a continuation of Achebe’s aesthetic preoccupation with the Nigerian
nation – later novels by other writers that are cast in the mold of political engagement feed from this.

In demonstrating how Achebe’s works draw from one another as well as influence other artistic works on the African continent, it is pertinent to quote at length here Elleke Boehmer’s remarks about what she describes as the intertextual make-up of Achebe’s fiction as well as his influence in other works – personal and impersonal:

... the subject of Achebe’s influence, ... posits ... number of connections and contiguities, at local, regional and international levels. The transmission of his influence reminds us, as Partha Mitter has commented, of how diffuse as well as direct, heterogeneous and uneven as well as smooth, cross-fertilised as well as copied, the transmission of influence can be... Standing at the height of a tradition or genealogy of writing as Achebe does, he has become a dominant point of origin, a hyper-precursor one might say, in whose aftermath virtually every African author self-consciously writes. (Boehmer 2011: 142)

Deductively, a tradition of “complicated clusters of motifs”, which Achebe’s works establish paint in a bold relief the intertextual nature of his works – a “replication of narrative voice in Achebe’s literary ‘followers’” (Boehmer 2011: 143).

Published in 1960, Chinua Achebe’s No Longer at Ease adroitly refracts postcolonial Nigerian state buckling under the pressures and inanities of the new-fangled administrative class (the elite). This class cannot chart the course of history in order to showcase the strength of their intellectual leadership, which is capable of rescuing the nation from prebendal pillage as well as corruption. Obi Okonkwo, the
protagonist of the novel, *No Longer at Ease*, epitomises this class, whose major task should have been to "systematise popularly-produced notions and ideas into the language of contemporary revolutionary thought and politics" (Obi 1997: 9). In the novel, the nature of inability that the educated elite orchestrate resonates with personal failure, loss of ideals and possible crash of dreams in pursuit of change as well as societal renaissance. The protagonist of the novel Obi Okonkwo is in crisis. The wellspring of his crisis is that he is in a society whose societal values and mores are completely out of sync with his personal values and aspiration. This situation in Obi’s world pushes him to the margin and cultural transition thereby constituting psychological violence as well as emotional trauma, which in the final analysis threatens his wellbeing and survival. Thus, “Whilst Obi is an alienated, confused protagonist, the world he inhabits is shown as threateningly empty” (Morrison 2007: 90).

Representation of intellectuals in fiction is an established motif in African (Nigerian) literature. From Chinua Achebe’s *No Longer at Ease* to *A Man of the People* (1966); from Wole Soyinka’s *The Interpreters* (1965) to Ayi Kwei Armah’s *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) and *Fragments* (1970); and from Robert Serumuga’s *Return to the Shadows* (1969) to Kofi Awoonor’s *This Earth, My Brother* (1971), there is an aesthetic consciousness to portray African intellectuals in contest with the society to effect change. Accordingly,

the conflict between African intellectuals and political leaders, and the inadequacy of the latter to exert power in a democratic way is the subject of an increasing corpus of fiction and scholarly criticism [in Africa] (my parenthesis, Zapata 1993: 220).

Intertextually, the craft of *No Longer at Ease* finds continuation in similar works of fiction that calibrate crises that beleaguer African
(Nigerian) intellectuals in their efforts to change the society. Achebe is broadly known for his deft appropriation of precursory imaginative elements in his art. Thus “Achebe is able to retrieve fascinating antecedent works to espouse his philosophical outlook, i.e., his belief in the cyclical theory of history” (Kehinde 2003: 377). This major feature of African literature has been underscored by Ruth Finnegan in her landmark study on African oratory. In the study, Oral Literature in Africa (1970), Ruth Finnegan exemplified the communality of African oratory, which mediates a sense of artistic investigation into common identity and way of thinking. Charles Bodunde’s observation on the intertextuality of Nigerian literature, shows that “each literature or text has the capacity to influence and extend the meaning of the other” (1994: 72) in a manner reflective of previous social facts and happenings that the present essentially refurbishes. Therefore, African (Nigerian) literature is prima facie intertextual in composition.

In his A Dictionary of Literary Terms (1992: 241), Martin Gray acknowledged that the realist tradition is a literary and aesthetic method utilised by writers “who show clear commitment and concern to convey an authentic portraiture of actualities in the nation through their narrative style, method of characterization, creation of locale, manner of handling language and the nature of the subject matter presented. This method of refracting social facts is equated with “literary aesthetic of truth-telling” (Lodge 1986: 4), which according to Dwivedi is the trademark of Achebe’s literary engagement:

Chinua Achebe has been particularly successful in creating a realistic representation of an African environment. He is one of the major writers from the African subcontinent who have given a new direction to English-language African literature by representing, realistically, an African environment and giving expression to a sense of increasing disgust and unrest within its population. (2008: 2)
Political leadership is one of the sources of the “disgust”, “unrest” and contradictions on the African continent that should be transcended for better society and for the overall good of the populace.

In transcending Nigeria’s political leadership malaise, Obi Okonkwo was created to serve this purpose, but his story in the novel smacks of failure on his part to engender change of gear in the polity. Obi Okonkwo has been portrayed as not being heroic; he is basically ignoble and a failure in bringing the needed change that his foreign education as well as estimable values could have afforded; he is a man caught in between two different civilisations, which he fails to reconcile. Despite Achebe’s background to the state of things in postcolonial Nigeria, which could serve as an alibi for Obi’s destiny in the novel, there is no gainsaying the fact that Obi’s characterisation mediates a lapse in Achebe’s original intention to build a character that could lead the way for national transformation as well as “collective mobilisation” (Kurzman & Leahey, 2004: 938) of the masses that might animate social alchemy (Ola, 1986).

Obi Okonkwo’s dilemma reminds us intertextually of characters in some other African novels that cannot change the order. In Gabriel Okara’s The Voice (1970), Okolo, who is the protagonist is educated and supposedly has the façade of change agent; but he is seen tumbling down at the cusp of the whirlwind of naiveté that overshadows his intellectual disposition and leadership; in Ayi Kwei Armah’s Two Thousand Seasons (1972), we are presented with Isanusi, whose commitment to question venal social order as well as corrupt system rather brings him to a sad end; in Fragments (1971), Baako, the “been-to” as Armah describes him is consumed by his self-ideal to reform Ghana’s corrupt civil service; he eventually got retarded mentally as his ideals were stifled by choking presence of societal
norm; Modin, the protagonist of Armah’s *Why Are We So Blest* (1972), sees his “death” as the system makes him turn from a revolutionary to an insurrectionist as his ideals fade; in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968), Armah’s nameless protagonist, “the man”, is consumed by guilt and frustration as he could not change a society that threatens his moral and intellectual leadership; and in Kofi Awoonor’s *This Earth, My Brother* (1971), which has been described as a bridge between poetry and novel, reads more like Achebe’s *No Longer at Ease*. As a threnodic versification with vignettes of fiction, the cosmos of this piece is centered on the central character, Amamu; and the atmosphere that the poetic evocation conjures up is sickening: sick society, Ewe dirge of death that loneliness brings and perverse society, which Amamu could not change until the system drove him mad – and dead eventually.

Obi Okonkwo’s portraiture by Achebe as a man with good education; a man who has a good job; and a man who should be on top of events do not materialise. As his personal life begins to spiral out of control given the hard times he has been having marrying Clara, so does his finances. His mother’s death and his eventual descent into taking bribery – “the use of improper influence” (110), which he forbade initially (70) as an intellectual who wanted to change the status quo as well as reform the civil service in Nigeria leave us with the futility of ideals, aspirations and conscience. Lumped together, the intertextual nature of Achebe’s craft finds resonance in being able to let antecedent works that have similar themes, timbre and texture to find expression in his work. In *A Man of the People* (1966), characters such as Odili and Chief Nanga are seen to be cast in this mold; this is also the case with Chris and Ikem in *Anthills of the Savannah*, whose portraiture in the novel orchestrates the failure of intellectuals to lead change in postcolonial Nigerian nation (Ojinmah 1991; Ola 1986; Nwagbara 2009). Beatrice’s role in *Anthills of the Savannah* to change the patriarchal ethos of women
domination in society, which she espoused via the logic of feminism, is commendable, but more needs to be done to radically change the values system as well as total leadership structure in postcolonial Nigeria.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, it is deducible that Chinua Achebe’s *No Longer at Ease* is steeped in intellectual leadership malaise, which is archetypal of postcolonial Nigerian nation. From the mode of arguments framed in this paper and the textual insights made available as well as the intertextual debates offered, it is appreciable that the other pieces of political fiction that were written by Achebe as well as other Nigerian authors point towards the same message that *No Longer at Ease* espouses: the failure of Nigerian intellectuals, the new-fangled elite after Nigeria’s political independence, to bring change after the mantle of leadership was bequeathed to them by the colonial masters. As Umelo Ojimah contends in his oft-quoted work on Achebe titled: *Chinua Achebe: New Perspectives* (1991),

In *No Longer at Ease*, therefore, Achebe through Obi Okonkwo illustrates the lack of responsibility, among other things, exhibited by the inheritors of the new nations of Africa, whose primary functions should have been to lay the concrete foundations for postcolonial developments...

(60)

The above quote is crucial for the re-invention of postcolonial Nigerian nation that is at present embroiled in crisis of leadership failure and inept mode of governance. Thus, as Achebe’s original intention that did not materialize in the text suggests, intellectual leadership is one of the platforms to bring national transformation as
well as developmental bliss in Africa – particularly Nigeria – if this is sought by appropriating the insights and lessons gained from the perspectives offered in this paper as instantiated in the text, *No Longer at Ease*. Basically, in rising above the realm of fictiveness, the lessons gained in this novel could be appropriated in healing Nigeria’s leadership wounds.

**Works Cited**


THE GEBIRA ROLE IN THE ANCIENT ISRAELITE ROYAL CULT AND WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN ILE-IFE ZONE OF CHERUBIM AND SERAPHIM CHURCHES

ABIOLA AYODEJI OLANIYI

KEY TERMS: Gebira, Ancient Israelite Royal Cult, Ife-Ife, Nigeria

ABSTRACT:
Leadership roles have long been mistaken to encumber special rights of the male gender. This paper engages in a descriptive analysis of Inter-cultural Hermeneutics on the role of women in Ancient Israel and the Cherubim and Seraphim churches (C&S) at Ile-Ife, Nigeria. Ancient Israelite society was organized according to a patriarchal social order. Masculine presence dominated every framework of the nation. The Gebira role of the Canaanite and Syrian-Phoenician cult provided every queen mother the leadership role of the royal cult and prominence in the monarchical succession of any deceased king. Equally, Africa is organized after the patriarchal social system. Feminine presence in the leadership of her social framework is infinitesimally low. However, the promotion of charismatic demonstration of spiritual gifts has woven women into the public glare in Ile-Ife, especially among the C&S. Women leadership has continued to be celebrated in the C&S since 1925 till date.

Introduction
Jewish patriarchal culture has greatly influenced the interpretation of both the Old and New Testaments. It has also rubbed its influence on the perception and relevance of both genders (feminine and masculine) in socialization, social development and the family as the smallest unit/system of ordering human community. Margaret Crook notes that
in all three of the great religious groups stemming from the
land and books of Israel – Judaism, Christianity, and Islam
– men have formulated doctrine and established systems of
worship offering only meager opportunity for expression of
the religious genius of womankind.1

This is because “people see things or are oblivious to them in
part because of how they have been formed through their
experiences.” Consequently, there are “different ways in which
women’s experience is shaped by culture, class, ethnicity, religious
community, and other aspects of social identity.” 2 Hence, biblical texts
on family sustenance and social ordering of the community have
received diverse views and some suspicion about gender equality and
gender balance. However, Dorcas A. Akintunde rightly avers that

the Bible has a prophetic or liberating tradition embodied in
its prophetic messianic message… contains good news to
and for women in the church, but those who interpret the
message make it oppressive… it affirms the equality of both
sexes and the involvement of women in ministry, thus
debunking the claim that the Bible contains oppressive texts
…the Bible, rather than suppressing women, has been a
source of women’s emancipation. Women generally, and
Nigerian women in particular, have found in the Bible role
models, who are prototypes of leadership positions.3

Newsom and Ringe also acknowledge that

Perspective.” in S. O. Abogunrin (ed.) *Decolonization of Biblical Interpretation in
Africa Biblical Studies Series* No. 4, Ibadan: Nigerian Association for Biblical
Studies, p. 100.
because of its religious and cultural authority, the Bible has been one of the most important means by which woman’s place in society has been defined. Throughout the centuries, of course, the Bible has been invoked to justify women’s subordination to men. But it has also played a role, sometimes in surprising ways, in empowering women.4

Babalola therefore adds that “in the early Christian community, men and women were properly recognized.” Yet, in the church, there was “perhaps a stronger tension than one might have expected between a progressive and a Jewish reactionary tendency.” The suspicion and tension was about the consideration of every woman as a complement of a man owing to an assumption that a “woman is still subject to man in spite of her equality in divine sonship.”5 Thus, J. Enuwosa asserts that even, “the New Testament increased the tempo of hierarchical patriarchy.”6

In the view of C. U. Manus, “male chauvinistic group” litter through the Bible which describes the necessity of “reciprocity between man and wife” in family and social ordering. However, he re-affirmed “the necessity of unity between incomplete man and incomplete woman” in order “to constitute one human unit” in the

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worship of the church.\(^\text{7}\) J. H. Mamman also averred that the practice of headship and leadership by men at the exclusion of women is to argue “for the subordination of women on the basis of the order of creation and the fall.” In other words, “women are complementary to men—they bring their own riches, not equality, to the up-building of the church.”\(^\text{8}\) So, Chris Obi avowed that Jewish rabbinic interpretation was appealed to with “the law in the absolute way as binding on Christian behaviour” in the subjugation of women in the society. But, “what is more surprising is the fact that the law does not say any such thing.” Where women are to remain passive, seen but not heard, silent and adoptive rather than being responsive, several questions may necessarily be asked.

Such issues that bother a radical mind about the subordination of women to men include: how were those who were spinsters or those who were married to non-Christians going to find answers and clarification to what was not clear about Christianity; if women were only allowed to ask questions from their husbands and fathers who were not Christians at home? How did some women greeted in Pauline Epistles become proprietresses and sponsors of building facilities that were used as house-churches and matrices of early church growth and development of missions? How did a woman in the early church become a female Apostle Junias and rise to become “outstanding among the apostles” (Rom. 16:7 NIV)? Why would Paul mention female co-worker Pricilla/Prisca first before mentioning her husband, Aquila in Acts 18:18,26; Rom. 16:3; I Cor.

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16:19 and 2 Tim. 4:19 since whoever was mentioned first had greater respect in Roman world view? How could Priscilla be allowed to “explain the way of God more adequately” to Apollos, a male church itinerant preacher if women were to be passive and remain silent (Acts. 18:26 NIV)? The complementary role of Christian women as “co-workers” with the apostle was a master stroke that established female leadership role in early churches of the saints and gave success to missionary exploits of the itinerant apostles. How could this be, if women were to be seen and enjoyed like a product rather than being responsive?9

Intercultural Hermeneutics of Women Leadership Role in Ile-Ife

Olanisebe and Olaniyi acknowledged that in Nigeria, there is “the lack of balanced preachment among many Christian leaders and inability to use scriptural passages to confront new challenges and to correct social dislocation in the society.”10 Manus also identified that “in contemporary African Christianity, there are, in fact, pluriform methodologies being adopted in biblical interpretation.” Yet, every methodology comes out of and bears the imprint of a definite socio-cultural milieu of its consideration as a lasting and outstanding characteristic. So, in purveying theologically approved doctrines,

some biblical exegetes adopt a “deductive method” of biblical interpretation known as “the historical critical method.” They start hermeneutics from “the texts of the Bible” as “universal principles” and discern the application of their meaning to particular African contexts. Other interpreters commence hermeneutics from “contextual experience” and afterwards draw out universal principles of such an experience. However, there is a pervasive “veracity of the preachment” that demeans “the historicity of the texts” in New Religious Movements (NRMs) like Aladura churches, African Independent Churches (AICs) and contemporary Pentecostal and Evangelical churches in Africa. Consequently, there is a need “for contextualized hermeneutic approaches” in assisting the religious faithful and churches in Africa “to tell and re-tell the sacred stories.” These approaches are known as “Folkloristic and Intercultural Hermeneutics” that devise “methods that are culturally informed and yet faithful to biblical tradition.”\(^{11}\) It uses resources and happenings in Africa as subject of exegesis and makes African social environment the determinant of meaningful consideration of biblical texts. As a “Folkloristic Approach,” it retrieves the values found in worldviews that are provided by customs and “traditions handed down to posterity through folktales, poems, hymns, proverbs, riddles and art” for communal education and development of succeeding generation. Its essential procedures include: (a) employing the message of a biblical text as a heart-felt address of God within cultural values of the audience of the biblical author that can be compared with traditional practice of the readers of contemporary African exegete (as both audiences are different peoples of God living in separate ages and context). (b) delimiting and decoding the main message of a text which had previously been composed in the Bible to speak to and make certain contexts meaningful and re-addressing it to present

circumstance. (c) re-casting the narrative pattern of a story/viewpoint of the narrator in the Bible as initial message of a previous audience in a form that is identical to African model to discuss and reach agreement on a new situation. (d) systematically interpreting the symbols that are involved in African folklore. (e) making the context in which the text is read or interpreted as the subject of interpretation, thereby urging the text to speak from the perspective of the exegete that aims at providing the lesson meant to be drawn by the African reader in line with the implicit interests of the audience of the exegete.12

In this paper, a Yoruba adage that describes efforts of women at redeeming/solving a social stress but mistaken for a deviation from customary practice is employed. The proverbial statement reads: “nitori atimoje ki omo padanu ogun-ibi ni abiamo fi di alatenumo-alagbata ti iso oja di owon (efforts at preventing loss of family inheritance to one’s ward turns motherhood to become aggressive retailer that inflates merchandise).” This adage assumes that customary expectation and traditional procedure of commercial and economic relations in a Yoruba community are geared towards providing for the wellbeing and development of the community at cheap price. This customary assumption is literally adhered to in every bid to address a crucial concern or social problem in Yoruba land. But, strict bureaucratic routine and administrative lock-jam often makes the social system excessive and complicated, while the community languish under the stress of the problem in which an old element and pattern is ineffective. Yet, tension and suspicion are bred when a caring mother/social nurturer adjusts, adapts and renegotiate the hosting tradition of her context for a pragmatic element and approach at solving the challenge. The wrath of the male authorities of cultural orthodoxies is also incurred as the saving mechanism gets

labeled or stigmatized as an aberration and the ‘messianic’ actor as the aberrant.

Women As Leaders In The Cherubim And Seraphim Churches (C&S) IleIfe, Osun State

Initially in Yoruba land, ownership of landed properties belonged to individual households/clans that constituted a community known for farming, rearing of animals and trading of cash-crop, processed produce of farming, cloth and textile woven from locally grown wool and mined mineral resources. Transference of ownership of landed properties rotated within same clan; from grandfather to father and to son or grandson. Landed properties were not private possessions of individuals. Assumption of leading role and nobility in the society required a reputation of proficiency and result producing feat in any of the bases of occupational mobility: farming, animal husbandry or trading. However, owing to western civilization, education, privatization and capitalism in business entrepreneurship and globalization of ideas in Yoruba land, amidst a cultural system of subordination of women to men, the Aladura as an arm of the NRMs and AICs “encourage women in the church ministry.” Today, amidst gender imbalance, there are many women who have become “founders, leaders and prophetesses in the Aladura.” 13 In view of these experiences, there is an ongoing transformation of patriarchal system of leadership of social and religious organizations in Ile-Ife, Osun State and Yoruba land. Distribution of heirloom and ownership of landed properties which initially wrested on the male gender and financial status for traditional chieftaincy award in Yoruba land are also being negotiated. Several women have been made traditional

chiefs in contemporary times. More women are becoming priestesses and in some cases high priests amidst male chauvinistic tension.

Mary Olaniyan was the founder and minister in charge of The Kingdom of Light Gospel C&S Church Aladura, Ifewara, Ile-Ife. She was born into the Christ Apostolic Church (C.A.C), Oke-Ibukun, Iloro, Ile-Ife. C.A.C is globally known for exclusion of women from ordination into shepherding ministry. She left Ile-Ife for Lagos State in search of lucrative means of living in the 1980s. She thrived successfully in food-stuff business, having a large ware-house as a wholesaler. Early 1990, she was intercepted by a strange and roaming prophet while monitoring some supplies of goods into her branches around Iyana-Ipaja, Lagos. An unsolicited prophecy was cast upon her that “Jehovah chose you to build an altar for him, where he would be healing drowning souls. Go and start the church to avoid incurring disaster and disgrace.” Mary ignored the prophecy for some months till when repeatedly she was having night-mares with a dream where she saw her daughter’s corpse. She sought several consultation with a church-prophet (name withheld), “for a year for prayers on immunity against forces of death.” But, the girl suddenly fell ill and died. After a while her business failed from yielding gains as she was repeatedly duped leading to the sale of the ware-house and its local branches. She became a fulltime housewife. Afterward, in mid-1990s she repeatedly dreamt of her ex-husband having sex with her best-lady. She challenged her husband and her best-friend who jointly denied it. In another dream, she was told to locate “The Kingdom of Light Gospel C&S Church.” She found it at Igado area after several attempts. The church-pastor gave her a revelation to “withdraw from giving your hair for local hair-plaiting or perm her hair and seek God with prayers to get the hidden enemy of your life.” She did and after several months her best-lady came to ask for forgiveness that she was told to beg for her forgiveness to avoid sudden death and that she was pregnant for her ex-husband and not to abort it. When she recovered
from the shock at a hospital, she was told that her pastor had called to visit her. She approached her pastor who told her that God was ready to ruin her if she would not become a shepherd. But, the C.A.C does not permit females as pastors. She prayed and was directed to return to Ile-Ife to plant and become the shepherd of the church. She got to Ile-Ife and a job with the National Museum, Ile-Ife after some months. She also remarried after two years at Ile-Ife. But she was severally rejected from two male shepherded churches before she was directed at C&S Itedo-Jesu, Road 7 lane to start the present church at Ifewara with her nuclear family in 2000. She led a mixed gender congregation of about sixty-two people.  

Another female church shepherd who suffered severally from misogynist is Durodola, Iya-Ijesha who use to regard “working in the church as shepherd as laziness and shortest means to poverty.” At about thirty years of age as a married woman and successful caterer, she had a dream that changed her destiny. She saw herself in a white long gown (soutana) in her eatery where some state government task force persuaded her to enroll with them as a civil servant. She rejected their offer and they packed away all her wares and impounded her certificate of incorporation. She woke-up to find that it was a dream. She sought for prayer and exorcism for about six months in early 1980 to no avail. She was later reminded by a C&S prophet that “you are despising the call of the Creator to be a shepherd as laziness. Until you yield in obedience, more disaster that cannot be averted awaits you.” Owing to her “Ijesha cultural ethos that females are to submit to their male counterparts,” she took refuge under the C&S prophet (name withheld) as a prayer-band leader (Iya Adura); attending to people with prayer of exorcism against various problems. She suffered set back in her catering enterprise and ran into debts after

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14 Snr. Rev. Mother Mary Olaniyan was interviewed at her vicarage on 04/11/2011.
about six months of being in the church. She formed a prayer group afterward with nineteen people but was suspected of and labeled a “sheep-thief stealing flock members of another shepherd.” She left the church and took refuge under Prophetess Adeboye, a female church founder of The Sacred C&S Church, Fajuyi, Ile-Ife in 1998. She worked within the new church’s scope and her eatery business was offered a contract which revived her catering enterprise again and paid off all her debts within ten months. Prophetess Adeboye fell ill and died in 1999 leaving the mantle of leadership of the church vacant. Some men who were with the deceased prior to the enrollment of Durodola chose a male prophet to lead to the dismay of many members who had been blessed by the prayer and healing ministry of Durodola. When the conflict erupted into schism, Durodola was left seven members of the prayer-band of the church. She organized seven night-vigils for divine direction and was told in a dream: “I am the Lord your Creator. I bring to live dead and forgotten matters and lives, only continue with me to lift you high.” She assumed the founder and shepherd of the present church since 2000 which had grown to about seventy mixed gender congregation.15

Pre-Monarchical Custom and Patriarchy in Ancient Israel

Several issues informed the patriarchal customary practices and distribution of heirloom among the Israelites from her nomadic state to sedentary settlement and post-exilic age. First issue is mixed origin of the Israelites. John Bright provided numerous evidences about the origin and constitution of the Israelites which are similar to biblical account. The patriarchs of Israel migrated around Upper Mesopotamia and Northern Syria, Semitic residents of the Upper

15 Snr. Prophetess Durodola was interviewed on 08/05/2011 at about 58 years of age.
Fertile Crescent in Amorite area and Hurrian settlement in East-Tigris region. These locations consist of Assyria, Babylonia, Haran and Palestine. This is consistent with Deut. 26:5-10 that Israelites were initially wandering Arameans/Syrians from Euphrates, beyond the Rivers between Asshur and Ur of Chaldeans (Josh. 24:2-3, 14-15). The Israelites also as seminomads and descendants of Shem, the father of all Eber relatives like Peleg, Serug, Nahor and Terah, the father of Abram who headed for Canaan but resided in Haran (Gen. 10:21-32; 11:10-32 cp. 22:20-24) moved through where water for their flock was available. They roamed from Assyria through Syria-Phoenicia into Canaan/Palestine in time of Jacob/Ya’qub-el and later to Egypt/Mizraim. At the Exodus, some mixed multitude escaped with them necessitating a national identity conference at Sinai, in the regions of Seir and Midian. There was a treaty of relationship among twelve regions/tribes in a covenant with Yahweh as the Jeshurun King who gave other gods to other nations to worship (Exo. 19:1-24:18; Deut. 33:2-5 cp. 4:19-20).16

Second issue is the institution of equality of tribal identity before Yahweh with a sanctuary poll; irrespective of status and gender. This practice owes to the mixed origin and constitution of the Israelites in view of other peoples who joined them but had a different god of worship prior to exodus from Egypt and the amalgamation at Sinai. The merger of the tribes involved a fusion of several traditions of the cultural and political milieu of the second millennium to have a relative egalitarian system of inter-tribal relations. Yahweh cult was used as a paradigm where every tribe was represented by a household leader in providing family identity rite at the shrine of Yahweh. A counting of individuals was required and “a census of some sort” was involved in the process which called for a “crossing

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over to the group and class of those whose recognition had God’s approval.” Both the poor and the rich were equally required to pay a half shekel “for sacred uses” as well as “for maintaining service of the sanctuary.” It was to emphasize a “sense of equality of all people regardless of wealth.” In making propitiation and atonement for sins and to pacify Yahweh, the half a shekel was “the standard prize of the Tent of meeting/Tabernacle tax of identification in the presence of God.” It was regarded as “the cost of ransom” and “intensive cover-over” for every Israelite “without sacrifice but by legal rites.” So, the half of a shekel became “the standard weight: implying value of atonement-money (Exo. 30:15)” as well as “the standard measure of equal recognition of those counted or identified in God’s presence.” It was a symbol of “equity of justice and treatment” and emphasis “that poverty was no reason for exclusion from atonement and worship.” In that measure of half a shekel, “God was approachable to every Israelite on equal basis, irrespective of personal and material state or less.”

Third issue is the sustenance of family identity by confinement of ownership of heirloom as inanimate, animate and human resources to families and clans. At sabbatical year, a bought male servant could be set free and disconnected from slavery and welfare of the household of his master/lord, but where women were married or bought through the material infrastructure of the household owner/master, and children were involved; the female servants, women and children were not allowed to be disconnected and dislocated from the household that was a mechanism of their sustenance for those years. While males were the household leaders, they were restricted from abusing and dehumanizing female servants

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and wives when displeased with them by sending them away, selling them to foreigners and dislocating them from the welfare scheme of the household master. Female servants, slaves and wives were to be ransomed by a kinsman household leader of the women, into the welfare scheme of his family (Exo. 21:1-11). In addition, “actual ownership of land was based on the household (extended family, fathers’ houses).” A census of tribal identity was taken with polls based on their generations, families; fathers’ house and males from twenty years old and upward. Every Israelite was recognized according to his tribal identity and family residence. Every family pedigree was made to have an emblem/ensign and a standard for recognition during tribal identity rite at the Tabernacle and to make community services including rallying fighters to protect the nation and their individual family. Landed properties were also distributed to all the tribal settlements with a tenancy edict that lands were not transferable between tribes and beyond the nation. Inheritance of every Israelite was situated within the landed property of his father under his tribal kin/siblings (Num. 1:20-45; 2:1-2; 7:1-5; 10:4; 13:1-3; 17:1-5; 24:2; 26:52-56; 27:1-11; 33:50-55; 34:13-19; 36:1-13; Deut. 19:14). So, the Israelites were “grouped by ancestral houses headed by an elder”

Monarchical-Age Custom and Women Participation in Politics in Israel

After settlement at Canaan, the Israelites were confronted with some challenges of adjusting from nomadic life and adapting to sedentary relations. There was a need to switch to farming among the little

agrarian space in the hill country. Canaan was a “narrow strip of fertility between the desert and the sea.” It was a land lying “right athwart the great highroads of the ancient world.” Canaan was also a trade route for commercial and economic politics of ancient Near East from Assyria through Syria-Phoenicia to Egypt. There were “rich argosies of products from the looms and shops of Egypt and Babylonia that bore also undeclared imports of spiritual treasures.”

But international invasions from her neighbouring states with the Philistines, Egyptians, Syrians and periodic incursions from the North-Eastern Tigris population continued to bedevil the Israelites. Israel experienced “rapid dynastic turnover” as she was “plagued by tension with neighbouring Aram.”

There was a transformation from village settlements with charismatic leadership of tribal frontiers that was a stooge of the Law of Yahweh as interpreted by Levitical priesthood to city life system under a municipal governor with absolute power to marshal diverse serving ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs). Rallying nonprofessional fighters from tribal representatives meant for rural community services had to drop-out for a development of formidable army for territorial defence. Wage-earning national army under a military warlord spurred the request for the enthronement of a military and priestly king who was expected to invade other nations to raise wages for the national army from the war booty; as done by absolute monarchical system of other

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superpower nations. Prophetic polemic arose against the new system.22 Gradually, tribal representative system with family inheritance of landed properties which initially was nontransferable beyond next of kin within a tribe dwindled and was eroded by ancient Near Eastern form of privatization and capitalism which depended on land ownership by purchase and exchange with imported goods and commercial exports. A social stratification developed among the royal court (with her serving army, priests and prophets and the MDAs), the middle class business caucus (driven by the system of exportation and importation along western trade route in Haran, Syria, Phoenicia, Damascus and Egypt) and the less privileged lower class (poor tenants in the city, stipend-earning farm workers, and slaves bought or got from war booty).23 The gap widened with pursuit of survival of the fittest in Northern Israel with the establishment of Omri dynasty, the predecessor of Ahab-Jezebel rule. Some “institutional moves” were made to co-opt prophets and nobles as local heroes that could foment troubles into the new system of “central structures.”24 But, the Yahwistic prophets opposed the reigns of kings Ahab and Joram and presented Ahab as the king who turned Israeliite peasants to expendable people of the society having lost their control of economic mobility.25 Commoners as women and powerless peasants throughout the monarchy suffered under the distressful condition as there were more “difficulties of women’s lives

under two kinds of patriarchy, the monarchy and the village clan.” 26 This was the situation that Jezebel, wife of Ahab from Sidon of Phoenician absolute monarchical dynasty confronted to function within. She employed the Gebira, Queen-Mother-of-Prince that many notable Israelite women were familiar with; like the role Bathsheba, wife of David and mother of Solomon towards the enthronement of her son as heir apparent to the throne (1Kgs. 1:1-53).

Jezebel introduced the Gebira role to consolidate and sustain the future of her children and the family as “Ahab seems the passive partner to Jezebel’s wanton use of royal power.” Efforts of Jezebel were in favour of securing Ahab’s wish at possessing Naboth’s vineyard as a behest of the monarch in a semblance of Near Eastern form of absolute monarchy/royal prerogative. The Gebira as Queen-King mother was also for the sustenance of Omri-Ahab dynasty by sponsoring 400 prophets of Asherah, persecuting “the exclusivistic nature of prophetic Yahwism” in Yahweh alone caucus that posed political threat and enforcing polytheism and syncretism.

Asherah cult which provided for majority female leadership in Phoenicia was emphasized in Israel by Jezebel having seen extant local shrines of “worship of the Canaanite goddess and her symbol, a pole or stylized tree” in Israel. Asherah cult supported Gebira role called “the queen mother formulas” of having the wife of an old, senile, dying or dead previous king; as a widow and mother of a prince or royal heir assuming certain position of power that made her a kingmaker in the choice of a succeeding king. “The queen mother served as both representative of and counselor to the king in political affairs and could represent the people before the king.” Jezebel therefore, staked the ideological influence and ritual power of

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Asherah as advocates of Yahweh cult celebrated patriarchy that appealed to pre-monarchical custom. This was the context of appreciating the monarchical age of “polemical vestiges” that placed “unprecedented emphasis on worshipping one god” while “Asherah was regarded as Yahweh’s consort and a legitimate part of the normative Yahweh cult” in Israel. Women involvement in “goddess worship in Israel” was thereby presented as “the Bible clearly attests, however, that more than one queen or queen mother staked her power on Asherah.” Suffice to say that

although the peasantry and its women lost power under the monarchy, the palace corridors occasionally gave issue to royal women exercising their own strategies of power. In fifteen out of eighteen cases, the succession notice of a Judean king includes the name of his mother.27

Internal evidence of the Bible also presents Jezebel as the Gebira in 2Kgs. 10:13. The account revealed that at Beth-Eked, Jehu killed forty-two men who were relatives of Ahaziah, King of Judah. They were intercepted while visiting Ahab and Jezebel haGGübîrâ.28 In addition, Asherah cult gave the Gebira, queen mother, some

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“sociopolitical functions that cannot be divorced from a cultic role.” This is because, “the queen mother’s devotions to Asherah stand behind and are fundamental to the role accorded her in matters of succession of a king.” Ackerman remarked that Jezebel as

the queen mother did have an official responsibility in Israelite religion. It was to devote herself to the cult of the mother goddess Asherah within the king’s court...This cultic role was primary among other obligations required of the gebira, the queen mother…particularly with regard to succession upon the old king’s death.

It may be deduced that biblical women participated in cultic rites partly for social and political opportunities that the religion afforded. Although, the influence of Yahweh alone party in Israel and its implication could have informed the demeaning description of efforts of Jezebel as Gebira during the time of conflict of influence and scope of religious space between Ahab and Elijah

at a minimum, then, Jezebel filled the role of gebira in the minds of the editors who included 2 Kgs. 10:13 in the biblical text...She was considered gebira by members of the Southern royal family. Jezebel, even when queen, worshipped Asherah in addition to her well-attested allegiance to Baal.29

Conclusion

This paper has traced the development of the Queen Mother role in ancient Israel amidst her patriarchal culture. It made inductive gleaning of scholarly studies on the rationale that informed the pre-

monarchical custom and patriarchy in ancient Israel, the monarchical-age custom and women participation in politics in Israel and its semblance in an intercultural hermeneutics of women leadership role at Ile-Ife. It suggests that in any patriarchal culture/system, influence of women in leadership role may partly not be unconnected with the identification of ‘messianic’ service that the society needs in addressing a social problem that defies previously existing custom. Efforts of women in leadership are not necessarily for a creation of female exclusivist world where males may be wooed, seduced, hired, or tricked to donate sperm for procreation and continuity of humankind. Rather, the progesterone and estrogen in women propel them to pursue acts of nursing and nurturing new and young ideas, seeds, societies and successors from infancy through adolescence into independent relevance and maturity. Women deserve to be celebrated in the aggressive pursuit of sustenance of family inheritance and socio-political heirloom of future generation beyond gender or class stratification.
ASSESSING NIGERIA’S AFRICAN-CENTERED FOREIGN POLICY AGAINST AN INSIDE-OUT PARADIGM: A PROPOSAL FOR AN ALTERNATIVE FOREIGN POLICY APPROACH

DR. FRANKLINS A. SANUBI


ABSTRACT:
The growing challenges of economic and social development in Nigeria provide impetus for policy makers to readdress some of the nation’s policies against the realities of a competitive global political economy. In this paper, Dr. Sanubi using the current policy focuses of the Yar’Adua/Goodluck administration, assesses the relevance of the country’s African-centred foreign policy and challenges its continuity against a new inside-out theoretical framework. It recommends to Nigerian policy makers to put the economic diplomacy at the forefront of its foreign policy to reflect the internal realities of the Nigerian developmental challenges rather than window-dressing them in a frivolous, yet expensive, big-brother African-centered foreign policy.

For Nigeria and majority of other African states, policymaking and governance in the 20th century had been a reflection of their external relations both during pre-and-post independence periods. The 20th century marked an era of decolonization and modern state-formation in which independent African states operated their “new found” governments along political, ideological, economic and social policy frameworks that were either implicitly suggested or technically commanded by their vacating colonial masters. This orientation thus placed most of African states on a platform where
their domestic and foreign policies were constructed only with significant, perhaps compelling acknowledgement of the desires and intents of these former masters and other very important external actors. Such acknowledgements were regarded as crucial.

Thus, during the early 1960’s through the 1970’s much of the contents of the Nigerian domestic and especially foreign policies were dictated by the need to find a proper external alignment. In the Anglo-Nigerian Defense Pact of 1961-62 for instance, as a nascent state, Nigeria sought British military cover in the event of any aggression from without. This was understandable against the background of her age with her explicitly very fragile economic and heterogeneous social structures. During this early stage of her nationhood, Nigeria would expectedly need “someone to lean on” in many spheres of her national development especially in national security matters. Yet despite its (Anglo-Nigerian Defense Pact) sporadic and violent criticism by the Nigerian peoples (especially the students’ union) and its subsequent abandonment, pro-British tendencies continued to define the country’s domestic and foreign policies. The nation’s 30-month civil war between 1967 and 1970 provided another proclivity to seek proper foreign re-alignment. The then Nigerian federal government under Yakubu Gowon characteristically fine-tuned Europe for a suitable alignment between “eastern” and “western” interests, especially according to Orobator (1986) between the Soviet Union and the British/American centers of power. External coloration has no doubt remained a major expression of the picture of the country’s foreign policy for the remaining part of the 20th century. In other words, the country has, for most part of its history as an independent nation, looked “outside-in”, in determining its foreign policy. It has often grappled with the national challenge of defining “what would be the direction of the external perception” or “how should fellow African states see a given policy as a nation?” The
pertinent questions at such instances centre on: How does Europe see it? How does the United States see it?

The African-centered foreign policy of the Nigerian government was chosen as a foreign policy thrust of the erstwhile military regimes, notably pursued by the Murtala/Obasanjo government apparently to immune the nation against the danger of falling prey to colossal alignment during the apogee of the bipolar cold war between United States and the Soviet polar epicenters. As a nation organized around geopolitical strange bed-fellows between the nationalistic North and the ethno-political South (Dinneya, 2006), compounded more so by an abhorred era of military dictatorship in the African regional political landscape, African-centeredness became a safety-net for “legalizing” a military de facto among “new nations” of the African region most of which were apparently in dire need of external economic and social support. African-centeredness became a vehicle for wooing external recognition through its megalomaniac spending of available national resources in the prosecution of seemingly unimportant African economic, social and political courses albeit without any recourse to the economic impact on the domestic sub-sector of the national interest. With an unspoken but tacit national approval, the African-centered foreign policy for decades became an economic and political negation under the frivolous guise of being a “big brother” to other Africa regional states in their time of need.

Against the current background of a realistic global economy, the relevance or not of the African centered foreign policy in Nigeria in the 21 century in her spectrum of national development, represents an implicit research problematic for the academic and policy makers alike.
A. INSIDE-OUT VS OUTSIDE-IN FOREIGN POLICY: A NEW THEORETICAL PARADIGM.

The “outside-in” foreign policy by definition is “creating internal/external policy on the basis of one’s perception of prevailing external disposition”. Conversely, the “inside-out” approach sees a nation creating internal/external policy on the basis of its internal realities without primary regards to prevailing external disposition towards it. The role of perception in our present definition of the “inside-out” framework is crucial. Perception as a tool for foreign policy refers to the outlook or visual positioning of other states or actors towards a people, state or concept. For example, the Third world perceives the advanced states as overtly exploitative in their relationships with it. It therefore sees no real good intention in all ramifications of the so-called North/South talks. This perception coheres with Wallerstein’s Core/Periphery cum Semi-periphery framework of Development Theory (Wallerstein, 1974). Perception theory was adapted from psychology and applied to the study of interstate relations. All aspects of a state’s Perception (including interstate relations) derive from human construction based on some facts. Fact has been seen as “a peculiar order of reality according to a theoretic interest” (Easton, 1965). In other words, facts are imposed upon reality by the observer rather than the other way round. Furthermore, the nature of facts depends upon the question the observer wants to ask yet, irrespective of the observer’s interpretation of domestic realities, his perception about the other states derives from his assessment of the “facts” of the domestic phenomenon and his level of “cognition” without prejudice to the possibility of falling into cognitive dissonance. The theory of cognitive dissonance holds that when a deeply held value or belief is contradicted by a new message from the environment, a dissonant cognition (message) will be rejected and the old values and beliefs retained (Aronson, 1969). This may result in not necessarily a total rejection of the discrepant message but
may actually take the form of interpreting information to make it consistent with old beliefs or values (Festinger, 1957). Due to human limitations and abilities for comprehensive rational examination of facts, actors often make selective perception of the available facts/cases and make their judgments on several issues including their national role conceptions. National role conceptions are closely related to orientations and roles too, reflect basic predispositions, fears, and attitudes towards the outside world as well as systematic, geographic and economic variables (Holsti, 1983).

The “outside in” / “inside-out” framework describes national predispositions in its conception of internal/external policies. By and large, this framework has influenced various policy outcomes in Nigeria and many other developing states of the “South”. Several expressions of this framework can be identified and diagnosed here. For example, the outside-in makes Nigerian academics seek external publications to gain local and institutional recognition, elevation (DELSU, 2007) Outside-in made Nigeria to drop further boundary contests with Cameroon even when it was obvious to her that she was ceding away what she considers rightly belongs to her. Outside-in made Nigerian policy makers to initially debilitate in considering the nationalization of certain foreign companies operating in their country even when it was most expedient economically and politically to do so in the 1980s - two of the typical cases include Standard Bank which was shown to have dealings with then-racist regime in Pretoria, South Africa and Shell ‘D’Archy Oil company. This was due to their foreign (British) origins. Currently, outside-in is weakening the implementation of the Nigerian government’s local-content policy especially in the oil exploration/exploitation industrial sub-sector. Outside-in is currently standing on the way of proper implementation of the country’s policies on environmental protection especially its legislation against gas flaring among oil companies operating in the state. Outside-in may make Nigeria drop its indictment of former top
US Government official accused recently of implicit involvement in a multi-million dollar fraud case involving staff officers of Halliburton International Limited (a US-based oil servicing company). At the international arena, it can be said that outside-in made Britain - now resigned to a medium power status in international polar configuration (Frankel, 1975) - to join the United States of America in prosecuting the now-seemingly moribund Iraqi campaign against perhaps, what at the time may be described as, “prevailing popular domestic” British economic preferences. Britain still seeks her lost international leadership glory perhaps in vain, as Edom in the Bible still seek his seniority in Israel.

Conversely, “inside-out” made Robert Mugabe to withstand the external media and political stress and sustain domestic power in Zimbabwe against outside threats and overtures, whether rightly or wrongly conceived. Inside-out, made Rwanda to wake up from the economic and social ravages of the 1994 genocide to become one of Africa’s front liners in contemporary economic, social and political development. Rwandan today, is one of Africa’s fast-growing economies currently attracting much acknowledgement in the international media. Also at the international arena, “inside-out” made Japan to look inwards to overcome the harsh economic and social impact of Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings in 1945 and today enjoys a favorable balance of trade with the United States of America. Japan’s current advancement in electronic technology has seemingly outclassed that of the West, at least in several economic (if not, technical) respects. In the current military tension between North Korea and South Korea (an ally of the United States of America) “Inside-out” is currently making North Korea to undertake military drills to also showcase her military capability in response to similar displays by the United States of America in that geopolitical hemisphere.
B. YAR’ADUA/JONATHAN AND COMMENCEMENT OF INSIDE-OUT FOREIGN POLICY

If anything, the President Yar’Adua civilian government in Nigeria, now being continued by current president Goodluck Jonathan (after the death of President Musa Yar’Adua in 2010), provides new policy thrust within the inside-out paradigm. By underscoring the significance of domestic economic and social realities as primary bases for determining the nation’s foreign policy, the Yar’Adua/Jonathan government has apparently situated the nation’s interest in the inside-out philosophy. National interest continues to remain a major determinant of a nation’s foreign engagement (Morgenthau, 1967). The foreign policy of major states is concerned both with the maintenance of a reasonably favourable international order and with the pursuit of individual national interests (Frankel, 1975). Thus, it is upon this national interest “base” are the “superstructures” of foreign economic, political or social engagements constructed. Current national diplomacy is centered on creating international understandings that will promote domestic nation-building. Towards this objective the administration has adopted development-orientated foreign policy outlook whereby mainly economy-boosting diplomacy is embarked upon. This however should not be interpreted to imply that we are equating international diplomacy with just economic diplomacy. A healthy diplomatic package should incorporate other spheres of national interest including security, politics and even culture (Chibundu, 2003). The administration has concentrated on strategic economic diplomacy as a prime tool for enhancing domestic economy. Its emphasis on the repatriation of Nigeria’s stolen wealth abroad through constructive legal and police relationship is apparently inside-out. Its recourse to seeking internal peace in the troubled Niger Delta through its constructive Amnesty policy and its post-Amnesty military campaign against criminal insurgents in that region are inherently “inside-out”. Its realistic fine-tuning of financial
administration especially in streamlining expenditure components of the national assembly including the trimming down of available international travels, coheres strictly with the “inside-out” policy. By maintaining a constructive presence in African security, economic and political courses as in its relationship with current trouble-spots like Sudan, Congo, Cote I’voire, Egypt and Madagascar and by not necessarily jumpstarting into expensive military intervention or recommending same, the Yar’Adua/Goodluck regime has continuously reviewed its international policy on African centeredness and has selected those alternatives that produce direct immediate positive impact on the nation’s economy. The country had no doubt wasted its hard-earned economic resources in prosecuting, some probably meaningless African courses and others which are based solely on illusive psychological objectives of a “big brother”. Most of these courses which were inherently “outside-in” in outlook provided an idealistic input for Nigeria and other African countries in forming such organizations as the Organization of African Unity (OAU), in 1963 (now renamed African Union), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 1975, and in most of her role conception about the now-well-romanticized African centered foreign policy projected by the Murtala Mohammed/Obasanjo military regimes of the late 1970s. Whether or not, if anything, the African centered foreign policy favored the nation’s immediate domestic interests, she plunged her resources headlong towards several African ventures including inter alia, her contributory role in the Angolan crisis of 1975, the Apartheid struggle in South Africa in the 1960s, 70s, 80s, the Congo crisis of 1990s, the Sierra Leone crisis 1990s, Liberian crisis of 1990s, the Namibian Solidarity Movement in 1991, the Rwanda Genocide of 1994, the central Sudanese mission in 2006 and even her attitude in the Nigerian-Cameroon (Bakassi) border conflict in which the nation took a posture of “big brother who ensures that the smaller one grew up well”. It is true in life that not all “small” brothers acknowledge a “big” brother’s effort(s) no matter the
magnitude of the assistance. Rather, most small brothers treat you not only with derision and cynicism but also, in some cases, with hatred. While heading to The Hague over her border issue with Nigeria, Cameroon for instance quickly forgot the financial and material aid she received from Nigeria during the former’s latest experience of the eruption of the Cameroon Mountains on 28th May, 2000 (Seach, 2010).

C. IMPLICATION FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

While not trying to jettison the whole philosophy of African centeredness, and also not ignoring the quantum of international acknowledgements and accolades which the country received in material and moral terms for her roles in these ventures, there is much proclivity here to appraise the outside-in outlook of the African centered foreign policy against the backdrop of current national, social and political realities. In current globalized market economy, international specialization/competition is the driving force of policymaking among modern states. This is the parlance in which we attempt to recommend the “inside-out” policy as an only realistic paradigm for national development in contemporary Nigeria.

For a nation with such national exigencies like poverty alleviation, the management and control of an exploding population, growing unemployment, challenges of internal security and social cohesion (especially with a massively-defined structural ethnic heterogeneity) and an undefined, perhaps dwindling, stock of economic resources, a preferred foreign policy option would be one directed at protecting these realities and hence seek “realistic” solutions for tackling such domestic challenges in its external engagements. The inside-out approach seeks to source primary external engagements that are entirely or significantly investment-driven and at improving domestic, economic, political and social structures. International diplomacy in an inside-out frame work is
directed primarily at expressing the realities of the national economy and not “window-dressing” it, as the African-centered foreign policy had been in Nigeria. Emphasis in an inside-out foreign policy framework is placed on stimulating domestic growth through foreign initiative to secure relevant foreign investors into the local economy and to expand domestic production and an accretion of the domestic capital as a relevant “engine” of economic and social growth (Stiglitz, 1996). International diplomacy should therefore attract the right type of foreign investors (irrespective of their regional or continental origins) who will “perceive” the local environment as safe and promising. This may be seen as a kind of economic weltpolitik for the nation. The engagement should seek to guarantee such investment safety at home with a resilient financial market structure and an encouraging social control mechanism accompanied by an honest and efficient judicial structure. For a nation with abundant human and material economic resources inside-out approach would attract, rather than scare foreign partners, in creating a healthy partnership in the building of the domestic economy.

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CHIRIKURE CHIRIKURE AS A WRITER IN POLITICS:
A STUDY OF SELECTED POEMS

WELLINGTON WASOSA

KEY TERMS:

ABSTRACT:
This study is an analysis of the relevance of Chirikure`s poetry in depicting the political realities obtaining in Zimbabwe stretching from the colonial period up to today. It proceeds from the realisation that literature cannot be separated from the politics of the society in which it is produced. The research reveals that Chirikure`s poetry is potent, liberative and life-affirming. He starts down memory lane exposing the ills of the diabolic colonial system before making a paradigm shift in the depiction of the liberation war by giving a more realistic version unlike the earlier Shona poets. Chirikure then makes a fearless and relentless attack on the post-independence Zimbabwean political leaders for betraying the people as they are failing to live contenting lives mainly because of the misguided rule of the leaders. He calls for change in political leadership as the solution to the problems making his poetry typical “pedagogy of the oppressed”.

INTRODUCTION

This research is an attempt to critically examine some of Chirikure Chirikure`s poems in his three anthologies Rukuvhute (The Umbilical Cord, 1989), Chamupupuri (The whirlwind, 1994) and Hakurarwi (We Shall Not Sleep, 1998) in the context of political developments in Zimbabwe. These developments stretch from the colonial period, the war of liberation, independence and post-independence periods. The main thrust of this paper is to analyse the relevance of the poetry in terms of depicting the political reality obtaining in the various periods as well as its influence in determining the direction political events
should take. A survey of the thematic concerns reveals that the poet devotes most of the space to politics particularly in *Hakurarwai* hence the quest to analyse the poetry’s relevance as far as advancing the nation’s interests and developments are concerned. Since the colonial period, the political terrain in Zimbabwe has never been stable and it is the interest if this paper to observe the manner in which the poet articulates the situation obtaining on the ground.

**COLONIAL POETRY**

This section focuses on the depiction of the political situation in colonial Zimbabwe, then known as Rhodesia. Just like other colonies, the society in Rhodesia was racist as the blacks were segregated as the other race, inferior to the whites, coloureds and Indians. The discrimination experienced by blacks was in all spheres of life be it politics, economic structures, social life and religion. In reality, the colonial world was characterized by violence against the blacks and it came in all its forms: physical violence, psychological violence and structural violence. Physical violence was mainly administered by state agents like the police and the army in which force was applied to pacify blacks. As for psychological violence, there were mechanisms put in place to ensure total control of the black people and this was administered mainly through the education system and the church. When it comes to structural violence, these were mechanisms the colonial maters put in place to ensure that blacks did not progress to the level of their white masters in political, social and economic spheres. The education system was also regulated through the bottle neck system that ensured that the number of blacks decreased as the level of education increased. Education regulates one’s access to certified skills and jobs therefore this became a systematic way of eliminating blacks from better paying jobs. Chirikure describes the ill-
treatment of blacks by the colonial masters in the poem ‘‘Hadzisi nhema’’ (It is not lies) in Rukuvhute where he says:

Kukuudza nhasi uno haunganzwisisi,
Kuti ini sekuru vako ndaiva imbwa yemumwe,
Mumwe murume mudiki pazera aindidaidza achiti ‘‘Boy!’’
(If I tell you today you may not understand
That I your grandfather was a dog to somebody
A young man calling me ‘‘Boy!’’)

The poet is showing the attitude the colonialists had towards the blacks when they often referred to in bestial terms to emphasise their inferiority. Achebe (1989:11) notes that this behavior towards the Africans has been immortalized among the whites and cites the declaration by Albert Schweitzer that; ‘‘ The African is indeed my brother, but my junior brother’’. He further notes that a British governor in Rhodesia in the 1950s defined the partnership between blacks and whites in his territory as one between the horse and its rider, the whites being the riders and the blacks the horses. This is what Chirikure captures in the above poem. Also, he notes that the blacks were subjected to draconian and extortionate taxation, which was meant only to improve the living conditions of the colonial masters whilst the blacks languished in abject poverty. The situation described by the poet is aptly summarised by Baldwin (1963:17) when he says:

...you should perish in the ghetto, perish by never being allowed to go beyond the white man`s definitions, by never allowed to spell your proper name.

This projection of colonial society is crucial as it will help on explaining the problems bedeviling post-independence Zimbabwe as
some of them can be best understood in the context of colonial history. Ansel Wang (2007:10) notes on the importance of history:

> Understanding where we came from the obstacles that were confronted and strategies that were adopted to overcome them are the “history” that will inform our futures. Learning from the past will enable us to build the bridges and form the alliances that will prepare us from meeting the unforeseen.

Therefore by starting down memory lane on colonialism, Chirikure is trying to link the current situation obtaining in the country to what transpired in the past.

**LIBERATION WAR POETRY**

The previous section dealt with the problems confronting blacks in Rhodesia and because of the injustices that the blacks decided to wage the war of liberation. Zimbabwe’s political leaders especially those belonging to the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) has distorted the events of the liberation struggle in their attempt to manipulate political events in the post-independence era. The sacrifice they made to liberate is used as defense to stick to power regardless of their failure to fulfill the expectations of independence. Most of the war literature especially indigenous languages give the official version of the struggle, which is full of distortions. The war has been presented as great soothing one and there has been recreation of guerrilla images in grand terms. As a result, the war has been romanticized with guerrillas portrayed as super human and always victorious whilst the settler forces were on the receiving end.
This is unexpected from writers who should be driven by the passion for the truth.

However, Chirikure makes a paradigm shift from the early literature of the liberation war as he gives a more realistic picture. The liberation struggle is an important phase and is a reference point in the discourse that relates to the nation or nationhood, patriotism national development. It is therefore important that a correct version of the liberation war be given. The extreme hurdles that the people had to overcome on daily basis characterised the war. There was nothing exciting in participating in the war as portrayed in the early literary works. In “Ndihwo Hupenyu Hwacho” (That is what Life is) in Rukuvhute Chirikure aptly describes the environment that characterized the war:

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Misodzi    Dikita    Ropa
Umhutu    Inda    Madari
Shungu    Hasha    Chinya
Ndihwo Hupenyu Hwamasango
(Tears    Sweat    Blood
Mosquitoes    Lice    Ticks
Determination    Anger
```
Chirikure is a performing artist and this is the reason that some his poems have slanting lines. Performing poetry makes it more accessible to the people than leaving it to the written text. As Chiwome (1996:113) notes, the fighters of the liberation struggle had to content with the starvation, thrust, desire, anger, and frustration. This contrasts with the official version of the war in which guerrillas are given larger than life characters. Apart from this, Chirikure deviates from the trend set by the earlier poets like those in Chakarira Chindundima who celebrate the lives of those heroes who were accorded national hero status. These were mainly high-ranking government officials. Instead, he focuses and celebrates the deeds of the unsung heroes whose death was witnessed by peasant community and were nearly forgotten after independence. These heroes were buried without dignity as there were no usual rites of rituals that accompanied the funerals. The poet envies the self-sacrifice of these guerrillas in Ndipo Patakamuviga Pano (That is Where We Buried Him/Her) found in the anthology Rukuvhute:

 Ndipo paari Comrade Kunozvarwa Vamwe
 Gamba rakaita muchato negidi,
 Mhare yakachererwa imba nebhayoneti,
 Ndokufukidzwa ivhu nemagaro epfuti

(Here lies Comrade Kunozvarwa Vamwe
 The hero who was buried the by the gun
 The illustrious one whose grave was dug by a bayonet
And was buried by a gun,  
And was mourned by wild animals.)

The practice of according hero status in Zimbabwe has been manned by controversy, as this has been the monopoly of the ZANU (PF) Politburo, the party’s highest decision making body. Those belonging to other political parties and perceived to be enemies of the party and therefore of the state are being exclude from receiving such recognition. Krigger (1995:156) notes that almost all national heroes have been high ranking officials and politicians and this has raised concern about the kind of national values that the government is creating. Apart from promoting the politics of exclusion, the exercise of according hero status, has been criticized because of the hierarchy created to the liberation war heroes within ZANU (PF). There are three kinds namely the district hero, the provincial hero, and the national hero. Brickhill cited in Krigger (ibid, 165) notes that this hierarchy of heroes mirrors the post-war dispensation as it symbolizes the politics of resource allocation in which the capital and government elite enjoy privileges that are denied the majority of the people. It is these issues that Chirikure castigates in the poem ‘‘Ndipo Patakamuviga Pano’’ (That is Where We Buried Him) as he celebrates the unsung heroes who do not even fit in the three categories created by the political elite. The poet is therefore calling for the correction of the distorted history as this is crucial and fundamental in nation building as the people’s future is rooted in their history. Baldwin (1967:73) warns of the dangers of distorting history when he argues that:

An invented past can never be used; it cracks and crumbles under the pressure of life like clay in a season of drought…For the sake of one’s children, in order to minimize the bill they must pay, one must be careful not to refuge in any delusion.
The condemnation of monopolising history is further reflected in “Donongodza Zvako” (Say it All) in the anthology Hakurarwi. In the poem, the author warns the political leaders against their participation in the liberation struggle as a means of pacifying the people who are protesting against their failure to fulfill the expectations that came with independence. The former freedom fighters who are at the top echelons of the government constantly remind the people about their sufferings which they endured and how bitter and protracted the liberation war was. However, this should not be used as justification to evade criticism and creating cultists;

*Donongodz a zvako nhorondo yako!*
*Hnadioni chakaipa apa mhare yedu,*
*Ndokunge chete chinangwa chako pamoyo,*
*Kusiri kuda kundiita chikuku vata-vata*
*Ndichizoswerwa ndokushumira saZame*
*Uku iwe uchimora wega uchi nemukaka...*(7)
(Tell us your history
There is nothing wrong, our hero
If it is not your aim to pacify me,
So that I praise like God,
Whilst you are looting the national cake...)

Fanon (1963:136) aptly describes this behavior of post-independence African leaders:

The leader, because he refuses to break up the national bourgeoisie, asks people to fall back into the past and to become drunk on the remembrance of the epoch which led up to independence... today he uses every means to put them to sleep and three or four times a year asks them to remember the colonial period and to look back a long way they have come since then.
Apart from celebrating the lives and achievements of the unsung heroes, Chirikure also salutes the peasants for their contributions and the hardships they endured during the protracted war of liberation. They occupied the most precarious position as supporting either the colonial forces or the freedom fighters could result in punitive action being taken against the especially death by either side of the warring parties. The poet describes the dangers peasants faced in the Pakamungoma (Gutu) in *Rukuvhute* in which they were massacred whilst attending a night meeting with the freedom fighters, referred to as *pungwe*. The incident is a real one recorded in national history. Therefore one can argue that Chirikure is putting ordinary men and women at the center of history, in fact and quite rightly, as the chief makers of history. He is actually rewriting history deconstructing the myth by the political leaders that they made the most sacrifices and their role was centripetal. In reality they were at the periphery of the struggle.

**INDEPENDENCE POETRY**

In the last section it has been shown that the poet deconstructs the official versions and myths about the liberation war and gives a sober and more correct version. The intention of this section is to examine how the poet views the attainment of political independence in 1980. Chiwome (ibid: 89) argues that Shona poetry published between 1980 and 1990 is characterised by euphoria as the writers joined in nation in the celebrations. The picture these writers created is that the problems the Africans faced during the colonial period had come to an end with the attainment of independence. Although Chirikure celebrates the coming of independence, he warns the leaders and the nation at large to be industrious and focused so as to ensure the development. This is reflected in the poem “Chava Chigondora Chava Chimombe” (You Have Now Grown Up) in the
anthology Rukuvhute written in remembrance of the independence commemorations in the year 1985. The first few years after independence were characterized by an economic and expansion of social services particularly in health and education in most of the parts of the country save for the Matabeleland and other parts of the Midlands provinces which were disturbed by the civil war between the ruling ZANU government and the dissidents belonging to the then opposition ZAPU. Also, the country had sound international relations which made the environment conducive for foreign investment aiding development in the country. Therefore, at independence everything was at the country’s disposal to ensure that it progresses well to meet the people’s expectations as the dawn of the colonial period passed away. The poet uses powerful imagery in the Shona proverbial lore in which the bullock which has developed horns should use them for its own defense. The poem shows that it was written by a reflective mind that refuses to be carried away by the excitement that characterized the independence days.

POST-INDEPENDENCE POETRY

This section is an analysis of the manner in which the poet depicts life in post-independence Zimbabwe. Chirikure’s poetry is largely satiric as he castigates the political leadership for failing to fulfill the goals of independence. As has been indicated earlier, he is a performing artist and combines his poetry with mbira (the thumb piano) music. Musiyiwa (2004) notes that this combination is significant taking into cognisance the role mbira music has among the Shona people. He notes that it played a conscientising role about their rights and freedoms in the colonial period. The in the second war of liberation, the mbira was an effective means of saying out anti-colonial sentiments. Therefore, Chirikure uses it in the post-independence era to raise the most sensitive issues particularly on politics. The picture
portrayed is typical of the Fanonian pitfalls of national consciousness as people battle to live a contenting life. The liberation struggle was mainly centered on the land issue as the Africans were forcibly removed from arable land by the white colonial masters. This was a major grievance as land to the Africans does not only have economic significance but also cultural ones as it links them to their ancestors buried in it hence people would refer to one another as *mwana wevhu* (son/daughter of the soil). The ZANU (PF) government was only forced to embark on a full scale programme after the emergence of the formidable opposition in form of the Movement of Democratic Change (MDC) formed in 1999. This has raised suspicion that this was a move to shake off the challenge from the popular party. The poem *Mhiko* (Promise) in *Chamupupuri* was written before the government embarked on the controversial fast-track redistribution programme and it shows that the leaders had betrayed the people;

*Makombo*
*Minda*
*Ivhu rababa*
*Ndiro raiva mbariro dzemhiko dzamagamba zvino*
*Tinoimbei*
*Tinodetembei*
*Tinonyorei,*
*Iyo mhiko isakazadziswa. (14)*
(Virgin land
Fields
Our farmers’ land
Was the key to the sacrifices of the heroes,
So what are we singing?
So what are we writing?
When the promise has not been fulfilled?
Failure by the government to provide land both for farming and accommodation has resulted in people becoming squatters especially in urban areas where the living conditions are shown to be horrible. This is reflected in *Tiri Pano (PaPorta Farm)* (We here (At Porta Farm) in Chamupupuri. Porta Farm was the largest squatter camp located just outside the capital city Harare. The government took several years to displace the people from the farm as they resisted since they had no alternative places to live in. The living conditions are shown to be squalid and unfit for human habitation;

Hongu hazvina musoro kubvunzana  
“Ko mavata sei?”  
Ungabvunza zviri pamhene akaita ngonono, dzihwa, dzivo?  
Handiti madziro ematumba edu anongova mapepa?

(Of course it does not make sense to ask  
“How was your sleep?”  
How can you ask when it is clear  
Who has slept well, who has flue and who had a fight?  
Is it not that the walls of our huts are made of paper?)

Apart from the failure to address the land issue and accommodation woes, the late 1980s saw the country facing shortages of basic commodities. The country’s economy is mainly based on agriculture and was referred to as the breadbasket of Southern Africa because if a viable agricultural system. The crisis had its culmination in 2008 when the country was virtually importing everything and people faced starvation. In *Hapana Kupindira (No to jumping of the Queue)* in
Rukuvhute, Chirikure show that people were spending a lot of time queuing for food and other basic commodities;

Ngatimire mumutarō
Atanga kusvika newatevera zvichidaro
Tozoona vanowana nevanoshaya
Tose tiri pano tinodawo chingwa chacho
Pamberi nekunzwisisa! (25)

(Let us observe the queue
Starting with the first to arrive and those who came later like that
Then we will see who will get it
Forward with understanding!)

The government is blamed for introducing policies and programmes that do not improve the welfare of the ordinary people. Chief among them was the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme which was supported by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The effects of the programme were both immediate and sustained. Hammer and Raftopoulos (2003:6) note that the effects include an unprecedented increase in interest rates and inflation, a 65% fall in stock market, deindustrialization precipitating a 40% decline in manufacturing causing company closure and massive job cut and u substantial decline in real wages and overall standards of living. Chirikure is bitter mainly on the lack of transparency, as the government did not explain to the public the rationale of adopting the programme. Everything was done clandestinely hence the poet’s use of the biblical allegory in which Abraham took his so Isaac to Mount Moria where he was supposed to
be offered as a sacrifice without his consent. He befittingly entitles the poem “Kunge Isaka naAbram” (Like Isaac and Abraham) in *Rukuvhute*. He says;

_Madii kujekesa ndepiko kwatakananga kwacho?
Kune chii chaita kuti muronge sedimikira kudai?
Ndianiko ambokurotsai kuti rwendo rwacho urwu?
Inga zvinenge zvalsaka naAbrama at Mount Moria! (20)

(Why can`t you be clear; where are we heading to?
What is the intention for doing your things secretly?
Who showed you the way?
It is like Isaac and Abraham at Mount Moria!

The government is castigated for adopting capricious and detrimental tendencies to the cause of national development. The ESAP project had deleterious consequences to the future of the country. Apart from introducing misguided programmes, government officials are also critised for attending conferences both nationally and internationally that, instead of being used for developing the nation, are meant for self-enrichment. They are shown to endlessly engage in conferences that bring virtually nothing to improve the people`s lives. This is captured in the poem “Kumusangano Zvakare” (Yet to Another Conference) in *Hakurarwi*;

_Rwendo runo takananga mhiri kuLondon
Kune musangano watchanogara
Tinenge tichironga mazano akadzam
Mazano atichanoshandisa pamusangano
Uchange uchizoteverwa nemumwezve_
(This time we are heading to London,
There is a big conference
Where we will make great plans
Plans we will use at another conference
Which will follow this one)

As Chiwome (ibid, 106) notes, Chirikure derides follies and vices, especially those that impede fulfillment of the society’s expectations.

Another issue raised by Chirikure is that of corruption and looting of national resources by the political leaders at the expense of the public. He warns of mass protests as the people will seek vengeance on the leaders. This is captured in “Pfumo Roruzhinji” in Rukuvhute;

Akamuka nerweseri vanwe vakarara
Ndokuvhovhnyora mudura chinyarire ngaubude pachena
Akanyahwaira vanwe vaenda kunhimbe
Ndokusara obata mwenga chibharo
Ngaasimuke timuone. (34)

(He who secretly stole in the granary
Should come out in the open
He who sneaked from the communal party
And raped the bride should come into the open)

In reality, there has been rampant looting of national resources by political leaders at the expense of the public. One of the most known scandals involving top cabinet ministers was the Willowvale Gate Scandal exposed by the Sandura Commission tasked to unearth the dirty dealings. The
commission’s 1989 report revealed incriminated five cabinet ministers and deputy ministers, three members of parliament and one senator of purchasing vehicles from Willowvale Motor Industry at low prices and selling them at exorbitant prices. Long ago the President Robert Mugabe acknowledged this and warned his party members that people will one day rise against the system. He is quoted in Chinyowa (1994:86) whilst addressing the ZANU (PF) Central Committee in 1989 to have said;

The people no longer appreciate empty and hollow speeches. The want us to talk about things that are meant to improve their lives.

Nzongola-Ntalaja (1992:13) describes the looting of national resources by African leaders as;

The state has been likened to a warehouse where each member of this class collects his or her loot. Corruption, together with the adoption of misguide policies, have seen the country’s economy deteriorating to a moribund one.

The fight for liberation of Zimbabwe, just like in other African, colonies had a cultural dimension as the colonial masters had put structures which ensured the African culture was denigrated to an extend that the Africans would lose believe in themselves making colonialism effective. Therefore the attainment of independence should have been accompanied by cultural renaissance by the African leaders. However, this is not so as in the case if post-independence Zimbabwe. In the poem ‘‘Inongova Yes, Yes’’ in Rukuvhute the poet laments the predominant use of the English language at
the expense of African languages. As Chiwome (ibid, 114) notes in neo-colonial Zimbabwe English is the language of mass media, private affairs, political rallies, elitist religion, formal discussion, business and recreation despite the fact that Shona and Ndebele, are spoken by about 90% of the population. He further notes that ironically the Shona people used their oral traditions to restore their humanity only to win the war and relegate them to peasant culture.

Post-independence Zimbabwe is also characterised by massive repression of opposition political parties and civic groups including student movements. Sithole (1998) notes that the violent relationship between the country’s political parties started during the struggle for independence from colonial rule. This was both intra and inter-party fighting. This became worse after independence when the ruling ZANU party launched a crackdown in Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands provinces against the Ndebele – speaking supporters of the Zimbabwe People’s Union (ZAPU) which was the opposition party. This was despite the fact that the two parties had fought alongside each other against colonial rule as the Patriotic Front. It was the same situation when the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) and the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) came into the political scene. This repression is described in the poem “Utsi Hunokachidza” (Teargas) in Hakurarwi;

Twuvana twukada kudziyirwa
Kubvunza mibvunzo isina mhinduro
Kuchemera chausina kuisa mudura
Kunan’anidza kwakaenda pfuma
Unovadira mvura yemupombi huru
Wozopedzisira neutsi hunokachidza
Kana ane shave unoona akupfungamira

(If the students have become too comfortable
Asking unnecessary questions
Asking for a share of the national cake
Scrutinising where the resources are channeled to
You hit them with water from pressure pumps
Then you follow with teargas
Even the most stubborn will succumb.)

The government has no respect for freedom of expression, which is one of the most fundamental rights for humanity. Feltoe (2003:5) states that;

Freedom of expression is one of the most precious of all freedoms and is a vitally important right and that it is an indispensable condition for a free and democratic society... Freedom of expression is universally recognized as a core value of society.

Political events in post-independence Zimbabwe have shown that the political leaders in ZANU (PF) would rather drive the country into ruin rather than tolerate the opposition. To ensure that the opposition remains stifled, the politicians have introduced a system of patronage in which those who do not support the party are excluded from accessing national resources and are denied other rights and privileges they should enjoy as bonafide citizens of the country. This is what Chirikure condemns in “‘Gwara’ (The Way) in Rukuvhute;

Aramba kutevedza gvara ngaaratidzwe
Basa achaita rekurota
Mari achaita yekuvhumuka
Mukadzi chichava chishuwo
Imba ichava manhenda
Zvemunda kana kutomborota!(37)
(One who does not follow the way, should be shown the way
He will not get employed
Will never have access to money
Will not get married
Even owning a house
Even land ownership will be a non-starter.)

In reality, this has happened to the members of the opposition political parties who have been left out in national programmes like the land redistribution and as noted earlier on being accorded national hero status.

THE WAY FORWARD
In the end, the poet urges the oppressed people to fight for their own liberation against the political leaders who have failed them to realize the expectations if independence. In the poem ‘Mbavha Ngaipondwe’ (Let the Thief Be Killed) in Hakurarwi, Chirikure is puzzled by the people who remain passive whilst the ruling elite is busy looting the national resources. He is making a calling that the plunderers be met with justice as is done to ordinary thieves;

Kana mbavha mbatwi dzichipondwa,
Kubva mbavha ngaiponwe zvayo!
Asi, ko uyo unoba makatarisa?
Munomusiireiko akadaro uyo?
Zvakare munotomunamata saMwari. (27)
(If an ordinary thief is killed,
Then all the thieves should be killed!
How about the one who steals in your presence?
Why do you leave him like that?
Above all, you worship him like God?

Chirikure is quite clear that it is the political leaders who have failed the people. In ‘Ndiiwe Uri Mberi’ (You Are The One Leading) in Chamupupuri, he urges the leaders not to mislead the people. This is vital in any struggle as one should be aware of his or her enemies. On this Achebe (1988:6-7) is quite clear;

To answer oppression with appropriate resistance requires knowledge of two kinds: self-knowledge by the victim means in the first place an awareness that oppression exists, that the victim has fallen from a great height of glory of promise to present depths. Secondly, the victim must know his oppressors’ name, not alias; not a pseudonym, not a nom de plume.

In Hakurarwi, the poet show that the people’s patience has been overstretched and it is now time fight oppression;

Gore rino hakuvatwi
Tisina kuzvigadzirisa
Riya zuva wakatengesa, pfuma tikazvinyarara.
Nezuro wakapisa dura, tikazvinyarara
Nhasi woisa tsvina mutsime?
(This year we will not sleep, until we have resolved it
That day you sold our property, we remained silent
Yesterday you burnt the granary, we remained silent
Today you mess the well?)
This is the type of political education that is necessary for people to free themselves as Fanon (1967:159) points out;

Political education means opening their minds (the oppressed) awakening them, and allowing them the birth of their intelligence as Cesaire said “to invent their souls...”. What this means is to try ruthlessly and passionately to teach the masses that everything starts depends on them, that if we stagnate it is their responsibility and that if we go it is due to them too...

Therefore Chirikure’s poetry is typical revolutionary pedagogy aimed at freeing the oppressed people. The self-aggrandizing leaders are warned that the people will rise against them. He is living to his role as writer who should fight oppression and all forms of injustices in his society. Lindfors (2002:318) quotes the Nigerian writer Kole Omotoso describing the role of the African writers in the contemporary society as;

...he should act as a conscience, a conscience that can keep on saying ”No! No! No!” to any evil that exists in society. Even if nobody listens he should be able to keep on saying ”No!” as long as he is alive...he must never get used to evil.

This is the stance that Chirikure adopts; an uncompromising and relentless attack on the political leaders who are failing to deliver to the people as expected with the attainment of independence.
CONCLUSION
This discussion has shown that Chirikure`s poetry is quite relevant and influential as far as Zimbabwe`s history and politics is concerned. He begins by exploring how diabolic and racist the colonial regime was before moving on to deconstruct the myths fabricated by the political leaders about how the liberation struggle was waged. He then makes a scathing attack on the post-independence leadership for adopting and implementing policies detrimental to national development. In the end, he urges people to fight for change of political leadership as the remedy to the problems they are facing.

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BOOK REVIEW: Reforming the Malawian Public Sector: Retrospectives and Perspectives - Codesria Book Series (Richard Tambulasi, ed.)

ADENIYI S. BASIRU

KEY TERMS: Malawi, public sector reform, decentralization.

If there is one scholar in Africa that devoted much time to the study of Africa’s public sector, it is Professor Guy Mhone. Hence, the edited book, under review, is dedicated to his memory. As the editor, Richard Tambulasi, states (p. 1): “This publication is a memorial to the late Professor Guy Mhone, whose rare academic stamina and rigour shaped the research subfield of public sector reforms and developmentalism in Africa.”
Against this background, the book focuses on public sector reforms in Malawi. Indeed, it is a compilation of well researched chapters across one hundred and ten pages, on various cases, which reflect the title of the book. In all, there are five chapters. Here, it is instructive to note, that while the first chapter laid the theoretical foundations, the remaining four chapters delve into various issues in the Malawian reform experience. Although, the editor does not provide any reason for the configuration, we reason that a work of this nature is best approached through such a method.

The first chapter titled “Critical Perspectives on Public Sector Reforms: An Introduction” by the editor, Richard C. Tambulasi, is a lucid attempt at providing the thesis that determines the direction of the arguments in the book. He presents the thesis thus: “the neoliberal New Public Management – based public sector reforms that Malawi, like most Africa countries, adopted under the influence of donor institutions have not led to the promised efficiency and effectiveness in the running of the public sector”.

 Having presented his thesis, the editor then presents the contextual background of the New Public Management (NPM) paradigm, which according to him, has shaped the neoliberal agenda in Malawi. Although, he admits that NPM, as a concept, is nebulous he does suggest, (3–4) that “it entails competitive government, injecting competition into service delivery, enterprising government, earning rather than spending: and market oriented government, leveraging change through the market.” In the remaining sections of the chapter, Tambulasi dissects the component parts of the NPM model as follows: disaggregation, decentralization, competition, public-private partnership, incentivisation, performance contracting. He then discusses factors responsible for the dismal performance of reform in Malawi (10–16). In the concluding part of the chapter, the editor undertakes two tasks. First, he summarizes the major contentions of
the contributors in the volume (16–20). Second, he elucidates ‘new institutionalism,’ a theoretical perspective, which he considers to be ideal for analyzing public sector reform in Africa (20–23).

If the first chapter of the book is theoretically coloured, the second chapter titled “Public Sector Reforms and Decentralisation of Public Services? Lessons from Malawi (1994 – 2006)” is an exercise in meta-narratives. In this chapter, Asiyati, L. Chiweza narrates the Malawian experience with public sector reform via decentralization. However, she is quick to state that the way decentralization is conceptualized and understood has bearing on the nature of reform. To this end, she identifies three perspectives to decentralization, viz, liberalism, monetarism and communitarism (democratic decentralization). At this juncture, she contends that liberalism and monetarism have influenced the contour of reform in Malawi but in the post-adjustment era, discourses on public sector reforms have been shaped by democratic and governance perspectives. Here (p. 35) she conceptualizes democratic centralization as “meaningful authority developed to local units of governance that are accessible and accountable to local citizenry, who enjoy full political rights and liberty.”

Having lain to rest the conceptual chaos surrounding decentralization, she now sets out to historicize Malawian efforts at decentralization since 1891. To this end, she identifies four historical epochs: 1891–1961; 1961–1965; 1965–1993; and 1994–2006. However, she is quick to aver that only during the last epoch (1994 – 2006) was any real effort, towards democratic decentralization, made. In fact, she opines (41): “Decentralisation, featured prominently in the 1994 Malawi constitution, and the language employed in this document in effect linked the agenda of decentralization with democratization, development and effective public management.” With the legal and institutional structures put in place, she contends that expectations were high and that the era
of fruitful decentralization beckoned but it was not too long before realities on the ground suggested otherwise.

In the concluding the chapter, she submits that although there have been efforts at implementing decentralization of public services in Malawi, genuine decentralization has not yet taken place. This is because decentralization has been employed to further the interests of the ruling elites and to consolidate the state (51).

Chapter three titled “Public Private Partnership in the Malawian Local Assemblies: A Failed Reform Package?” authored by Happy M. Kayuni is an attempt to critique public-private partnerships at the local level in Malawi. He begins his exploration with a definition of PPP. According to him: “public private partnership refers to a contractual agreement formed, between a public institution and private sector entity, to allow for greater private sector participation, in the delivery of public services” (57). However, he is quick to point out that the term ‘private sector’ refers not only to the MNCs but also to small businesses, local entrepreneurs, NGOs, CBOs and other civic bodies.

Having clarified the concept of public-private partnership, the author, before examining the challenges of PPP at the local level in Malawi, discusses the conditions for a successful PPP. Drawing on the work of Hlahla (2001: 165–166), he identifies six requirements: predictability in the legal and regulatory environment; open and competitive procurement processes; well researched and prepared transactions; government commitment; stakeholder support; and a matured financial sector (58). These requirements, according to him, are broadly lacking in the reform process at the local level in Malawi and this explains why the PPP agenda has not yet achieved the desired result at that level. In the concluding chapter, he submits (p. 66): “PPPs are vital for sustainable local development but the current
framework of local assemblies in Malawi cannot support viable partnerships either with NGOs and CBOs or with small business.”

Chapter four of the book, entitled “No Key Opens Every Door: The Failure of NPM – Based Performance Contracting in Malawi,” again written by the editor, Richard Tambulasi, is a lucid attempt at navigating the dimensions of public sector contracting in Malawi. However, before setting out on his navigation, he is quick to clarify the concept of performance based contracting. To achieve this, he draws on the works of notable authorities in the area, notably the duo of Turner and Hulmer, who he quotes (70) as stating: “performance contracting aims at giving management greater autonomy over the operation of the public sector and holding managers accountable by negotiating targets, monitoring and evaluating results and rewarding managers and staff on the basis of performance.” Further in the course of his navigation, he identifies the year when a performance subcontracting agenda took hold in Malawi, i.e. in the year 2000, following the publication of the Performance Management Handbook for the Malawi Civil Service.

However, from his evaluation of performance contracting, using the criteria spelled out in the Handbook (73–75), he does not waste much time in suggesting that it has proven to be a failed experiment. According to him, the agenda failed because of enormous problems which he identifies as: (1) hasty implementation; (2) lack of skilled personnel; (3) the sustainability of the performance – contract system; (4) political interest; and (5) public official resentment.

In the concluding chapter, the editor submits that the Malawian experience has shown that there is no such thing as a master key that opens every door in performance management.

Blessing Chinsinga’s contribution, in the concluding chapter, entitled “Resurrecting the Developmental State in Malawi: Reflections and
Lessons from the 2005/2006 Fertilizer Subsidy Programme,” is an attempt at examining two issues. First, revisiting the debate on the developmental state in Africa and second, the prospect of its resurrection. Thus, the first assignment by the author was to put the developmental state in Africa in a clearer perspective. Here, the author avers that many of the arguments against the institutionalization of the developmental state in Africa have been from market-oriented institutions, notably the World Bank, which in a desperate attempt to impose SAP on African countries, pushed for the policy of rolling back the state. However, with the admission of the apparent failure of the market oriented reforms, the debate about the development state was rekindled, contends, the author. As the debate was rekindled, Malawi became one of the countries that attempted to resurrect the state as an active participant in the development process.

But before narrating the Malawian experience in recent times through to the 2005/2006 fertilizer subsidy programme, Malawi’s experience with the developmental state in historical perspective is discussed. The verdict is that the regimes of Banda and Muluzi both failed in this regard. According to the author, it was President Mutharika who, after so much politicking and bickering, eventually succeeded in making the Malawian state a major actor in agricultural development. The author describes the situation as follows: “The donors’ change from their initial positions was inevitable when it became evident that the Malawian government was unwilling and politically unable to be compliant and accept their demands” (102).

At the end of the conclusion, the author asks a fundamental question: “Does the success of the fertilizer subsidy programme portend the re–emergence of a developmental state in Malawi?” (103). He submits that, compared to the subsidy programmes of the previous two regimes, it did succeed in bringing the state back. Thus,
the programme it initiated could serve as a useful starting point for resurrecting the developmental state in Malawi.

There is no doubt that the book, *Reforming the Malawian Public Sector*, is a valuable contribution to an increasing dearth of literature on public sector reforms in Africa. It has also enhanced our understanding of the subject. However, some lacunas were observed. Firstly, we believe that the first chapter should have been dedicated to presenting the positions of the contributors. Secondly, an appendix should have been provided for a list of abbreviations. Thirdly, in a book like this, there ought to have been a bibliography. These observations notwithstanding, the book is highly recommended to scholars and researchers of public administration, especially to those who are concerned with public sector reforms in Africa.
BOOK REVIEW: Youngest Recruits: Pre-War, War & Post-War Experiences in Western Côte d’Ivoire

Magali Chelpi-den Hamer (Amsterdam University Press, Pallas Publications, 2010)

Dr. Christopher LaMonica

Key Terms:

Based on data collection and first-hand experience in Man, Côte d’Ivoire, Youngest Recruits is a remarkably refreshing contribution to existing studies of armed conflict in this region of sub-Saharan Africa.
The author, Magali Chelpi-den Hamer, deftly surveys the literature on youths involved in conflict, as well as many of the debates taking place among international organizations. With great skill and respectful language she considers the various sides of the arguments in what is, inevitably, a very sensitive subject. Chelpi den-Hamer considers, for example, whether it is best to introduce new codified international law, to clarify texts where there remain challenges of interpretation, or to simply enforce existing laws on the rights of children and, in particular, children in armed conflict? (52-53)

With clear and concise writing, Chelpi den-Hamer considers the complex contexts within which youth are too often drawn into conflict, based on three time periods: pre-war, war, and post-war experiences. Her conclusions are thought-provoking as they counter the views of many that seem to suggest that youths are necessarily manipulated into conflicts as they have virtually no agency or any ability to make their own decisions. In a real sense, den-Hamer is giving more credit to the youths’ ability to make decisions, thereby humanizing them, more than most, and gives us a sense of the agency that youths do have. She also humanizes the groups involved in conflict by reminding us that international efforts to ban child soldiering was actually heard and acted upon by rebel officials. After UNICEF was able to establish a direct dialogue with the main belligerents in order to raise their awareness of child soldiering, she tells us, “an official declaration by FAFN officials on 15 September 2003 [stated] that the rebellion would put an end to the recruitment of children into its ranks; it also announced the release of 273 child soldiers” (13).

In many ways, Chelpi den-Hamer reminds us of the degree to which international actors tend to generalize their views on those involved in conflict and what the real motivations are on the ground. Even the youngest recruits have “some degree of reflection and agency when
enlisting into armed forces” and this simple fact, in her view, is not adequately reflected in the literature on in the actions of most international actors. Moreover, in conflict situations, short-term “band aid” approaches tend to dominate. A longer-term view is needed if patterns of recurring conflict, throughout the region, are to be effective. And, rather than be mysterious about the kind of “interview guide” Chelpi den-Hamer has in mind, she provides it as an appendix to the book, with contextual questions that she obviously believes to be helpful. Using what social science scholars might term a “social constructivist” approach, den-Hamer asks contextual questions such as: the number of siblings and where they reside, the professions of the parents, whether they are deceased, divorced, social status/condition, levels of education, and the like.

At the end of this short read (56 pages excluding notes and appendices) we are left with the impression that: 1) empirical work is need, with more attention to contextual issues; and 2) international efforts can and do make a difference, which is a remarkable message to hear in today’s intellectual and practical environments filled with so much despair.
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