

Zimbabwe Dialogue: Unity, Freedom, and Work

Welcome to this special edition of *The Journal of Pan African Studies* on the Republic of Zimbabwe, an exciting nation in constant engagement with the past, present and future. The content herein echoes the motto of the nation (unity, freedom and work), and articulates the issues of politics, land, education, ideology, and national development.

We begin with a profile of the nation and move into the controversial 2002 speech by President Mugabe at the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg (a.k.a. Egoli), South Africa wherein he told the audience that British Prime Minister Tony Blair could keep his England a let Mugabe keep his Zimbabwe and that economically, Zimbabwe is still an occupied country, 22 years after Independence, however, the government has decided to do the only right and just thing by taking back land and giving it to its rightful indigenous, Black owners who lost it in circumstances of colonial pillage.

In a response to Maugabe's presentation, Obert Bernard Mlambo and Ezra Chitando in "Blair, Keep Your England, and Let Me Keep My Zimbabwe": Examining the Relationship of Physical Space and Political Order in Zimbabwe's Land Redistribution Programme (2000-2008)" examine the politics of space in Zimbabwe's land reform programme, which saw the expropriation of white-owned commercial farms by veterans of Zimbabwe's war of liberation, and discusses the various strategies and subtle arguments appropriated by President Mugabe to reconfigure the structures of power, and thus, explore the possibility of arguing that land reform was driven by political imperatives.

Next, Mapindani Aleck in "Elite Ideological Advocacy: Perspectives on Neo-Marxian Theory on Education in Zimbabwe" argues that the educational system in Zimbabwe is shaped and defined by the neo-Marxist principle of viewing the education system as an extension of the bourgeoisie ethics and morals in line with their definition of pedagogic relevance. Hence, the curriculum is designed to suit and communicate the intents and purposes of the bourgeoisie for the subjugation of the struggling proletariat.

And thus, we continue as “Teaching Chishona in Zimbabwe: A Curriculum Analysis Approach” by Tafara Mufanechiya and Albert Mufanechiya outlines the history of the language Chishona and the justification for teaching it as a part of the Zimbabwean school curriculum via a focus on language standardization and harmonisation, and the challenges in the teaching the language; Jephias Andrew Dzimbanhete in “Sexuality in the War Zones During Zimbabwe's War of Liberation: The Case of the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army” argues that contrary to some, sexual abuse during the liberation struggle were sporadic rather than frequent, because the sexuality of ZANLA forces were controlled and guided by codes of conduct and regulations; “The Education of Traditional Healers in Zimbabwe: A Pedagogy of Conflicting Paradigms” by Chrispen Matsika explores the possibility of extending the concept of pedagogy and argues that the current idea of teaching and learning with the main players as the teacher, the student and the subject matter is limited. Thus, in an African context, the education of traditional healers, spirits or ancestors should be integral to the pedagogical process.

Not shy in our selection of topics, we also have Dube Bekithemba, Albert Mufanechiya and Tafara Mufanechiya via “Religious Studies and Indigenous Knowledge in Secondary Schools in Zimbabwe: Bubi District Case Study, Matebeleland North” based on a study comprised of four secondary schools in the Bubi district in Matebeleland North in Zimbabwe with four teachers teaching Religious Studies purposively selected and ten students randomly selected to ascertain the level of understanding of Indigenous Knowledge as contained in the current syllabus to find that both teachers and students had a weak understanding of Indigenous Knowledge issues and were more at home with Bible stories which enjoy the major focus in the Religious Studies curriculum.

And notwithstanding, our last paper by Artwell Nhemachena titled “Sensing Presences: Health, Illness and Resilience in Contemporary Rural Zimbabwe” reports on fifteen months of ethnographic fieldwork in rural Zimbabwe as it discusses theoretical conceptual frameworks on representation and the notion of *haontology* to suggest that there is a need for African scholars not merely to apply theoretical conceptual frameworks that are Eurocentric in relationship to Africa, but to also appraise the shortcomings of such frameworks and theories which completes our formal papers, and thus, we conclude the edition with twelve “books of interest”, and two announcements.

I/we sincerely hope that you will enjoy reading the above contributions to new and old issues confronting Zimbabwe, and the African world community.

In unity and peace,

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