

The Contribution Made by African Musicians towards the Social, Economic and Political Upkeep of Africa through Their Communication of Political Messages: Case of Zimbabwean Musicians

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ABSTRACT The liberation struggle to liberate African countries from the yoke of the White monopoly was not one faced and the gun alone was not enough weapon for the emancipation of Africa because it does not offer any form of moral or motivation. That gap was filled by music for it offered relaxation away from the battle front and made people realize the cause for taking up arms against White cartel. Thus music brought more information to the general populace. This paper is concerned with the historical transformations of Zimbabwean music performance, particularly popular music as a communication tool in spreading political messages to the general populace and as morale booster for those involved or in preparation for the battle front. This paper looks at the colonial period and the journey throughout the social, economic and political independence. The paper analyses music-making and performance as cultural production. The paper examines the progression that led to the fame of musicians who made a living from their music carrier. Findings of this author are that liberation struggle was not going to be won through fighting only without the dedication of musicians who also put their lives on the line to communicate the very much important political messages to the general populace and the war combatants.

INTRODUCTION

In other parts of the world, April is synonymous with Fools Day tomfooleries, however in Zimbabwe that is not the case. It bears a more significant political, economic and social connotation. Zimbabweans remember this day as the day that the country gained her independence from the oppressive White government that pursued continuous manipulation of mineral resources and suppression of Zimbabweans. As Zimbabwe looks back at her history it is imperative to reiterate that freedom fighters does not mean those buried at the national Heroes Acre in Harare only as reflected in the history of the country.

Zimbabwe's struggle to attain its independence was discernible by self-fortitude and aspiration to bring equality to the general populace. The liberation struggle *also known as the Chimurenga* brought together the Zimbabwean people to fight against White monopoly. Liberation war was fought on numerous battle fronts by the military extensions of ZAPU and ZANU.

The Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) was formed soon after the disbanding of the National Democratic Party (NDP) and was led by Joshua Nkomo. The Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), founded and led by the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, separated from ZAPU in 1963 when a group of nationalists were dissatisfied with Nkomo's leadership and policies. In 1975, Sithole was replaced by Robert Mugabe as the leader of ZANU. These two armies fought separately for some time until 1976 when they decided to join armies and fight against the Rhodesian Front as one. The amalgamated party was called Patriotic Front (PF). This united front transformed its attacks with potency and, for the first time, their determination instigated a palpable effect in Rhodesia.

The greatest challenge for the freedom fighters was how to sufficiently arm, feed, clothe and offer health amenities to thousands of would-be freedom fighters ailing in exile in neighbouring countries. The only solution was to take advantage of the bi-polar struggle and request for military support from those who were willing to

assist in the war of liberation. This, as Mandaza (1978) noted, did not come cheap for they had to decline some military offers which had underlying conditions. Some countries like Mozambique, Angola, and Tanzania to name but a few offered troops to fight side by side with the Zimbabwean freedom fighters but such offers were declined in fear of internationalizing the conflict. More so, the political leadership efficaciously eluded plunging colonial masters by adopting the slogan 'we are our own liberators'.

The help from other countries was not enough without the contribution of musicians who some of them were liberation war heroes. Musicians were part of the forces that were fighting against oppression but were doing so in a unique way that is of providing morale through rendering musical pieces as their weapons.

Literature Review

It is noteworthy that, the Rhodesian war was fought against a background that African was part of the two World Wars that defeated British, Belgian and French independence against German domination. The Second World War had a predominantly important bearing on the colonized Africans for they partook in some of the bloodiest campaigns where they countersigned for the first time White colonialists in a state of shock and fear. Witnessing a substantial number of White soldiers dying was hitherto indescribable to the colonized Africans. The long-term implication of this experience was that the Africans also wanted independence from their colonial masters. Where this was not granted, the only feasible alternative was armed liberation struggle which they resorted to. This was in line with Clausewitzian thought which stated that:

"Armed conflict is adopted as a means to impose our will on the enemy" (Mandaza 1978).

Zimbabwe gained her independence in 1980 and this proved to be a major turning point not only for the country but for other ruckuses in the region as well. During the armed struggle, many Zimbabweans lost their lives in the war for freedom and Zimbabwe's ongoing accord with the tussles in South Africa and Namibia claimed many lives and partly contributed to economic hardships. It is therefore, against this background that foreign aid was granted in Zimbabwe. The death of armed guerrillas was not easy

and had a negative contribution towards the zeal for the gallant sons and daughters of the soil to go on and fight for their motherland. It is at this point that musicians came in and provided them with the much needed morale.

Life and Contribution of Zimbabwean Musicians

The journey and work of Zimbabwean musicians' dead or alive has somehow not managed to catch the attention of many. The gallant sons and daughters of Zimbabwe did not only contribute or are not only contributing to the entertainment world. They did also and are still doing a great job in passing strong or vital communication messages to the general Zimbabwean populace through their music. One would see a guitar, mbira, and drum and hear wonderful voices of these musicians as a source of entertainment but the truth is their music has contributed to the liberation and continuous upkeep of the Zimbabwean political situation immeasurably.

In this paper, the author only selected a few musicians not in accordance to their order or rank of importance but based on his knowledge of their songs and his listenership. The author was a little biased towards those musicians whose music caught his attention now and then. Even though these artists sacrificed their time and lives to entertaining both the *povo* (general populace) and the liberation war heroes, it is yet to be proven whether the inspiration of musicians during the war to emancipate Zimbabwe from the yoke of the White regime will be renowned or they will forever be silent heroes. As armed forces were sent to countries like Tanzania, Mozambique, USSR and many others, musicians were at it composing liberation songs to fight White monopoly by way of artistic expression. Many singers put their lives on the line just like the gallant sons and daughters who took up arms to liberate Zimbabwe. Here are some of the artists who provided support to the 'guerrillas' as they were popularly known.

Dorothy Masuka

Dorothy Masuka was born in Zimbabwe in 1935 being a fourth born in a family of seven, born of a Zulu mother and Zambian father. Masuka attended a Catholic school ranked the best at that time in Black education. The Masuka household migrated to South Africa when Dor-

othy was twelve due to her wellbeing. Masuka started touring South Africa when she was only nineteen with the help of her long admired musicians of her lifetime. Her music was well received in South Africa in the 1950s, though it wasn't until her songs developed to be more serious politically that the apartheid regime started being inquisitive towards Masuka's commitment to the Black revolution. It is at that time that her song "Dr. Malan", which revealed repressive statutes was proscribed but that did not thwart her. However it was not until 1961 when she sang a song for Patrice Lumumba that she was exiled. She was exiled for thirty one years. Masuka sang many songs in the vernacular Ndebele language or IsiNdebele languages. (Zindi 2011; Dorothy Masuka's life to be captured in film 2011).

Simon Chimbetu

Simon Chimbetu born on the 23rd of September 1955 and passed on the 14th of August 2005 was a Zimbabwean guitarist, song writer and lead singer and founder of his popular 'Orchestra Dendera Kings' band. He was famous to his followers who gave him pseudo names, such as "Chopper", "Mr Viscose", "Cellular", "Simomo" and "Mukoma Sam". Chimbetu was a native from the Musengezi area of Mbire District in Mashonaland Province of Zimbabwe and was of the Samanyika tribe in Manicaland Province, the eastern region of Zimbabwe, bordering with Mozambique. He was born to a hard working father who was well known for his building expertise and Chopper would accompany him to work. Chopper attained his high school qualifications from a local school (Musengezi High) before trekking the capital Harare in search of regular employment. However he was not one sighted for by the time he reached Harare he got involved with the liberation struggle which prompted him to join ZANU PF which saw his deployment to Tanzania to receive liberation struggle training. Chimbetu did not get time to see the battle front but remained in the background supporting those who were fighting through his music and because of that he came back home before 1980. Chimbetu's musical alignment was intensely opinionated by his background understandings as a Black person living in a manipulating Rhodesia as well as a liberation fighter with Marxist philosophies.

Upon returning to Harare, Chimbetu secured a job at a tobacco company where he worked for some time before Zimbabwe attained her political freedom in 1980. Although employed as a tobacco packer, Chopper's desire for music did not wane but he would play now and again in public places after work or on weekends just to keep his followers happy. As he was performing in places like the famous Mushandirapamwe Hotel he was backed by John Chibadura's Sungura Boys since he did not have his own musical equipment. He recruited his younger brother Naison to be his backing vocalist and the two of them named their band "the Marxist Brothers", a name motivated by the then dominant political environment accountable for Simon's war involvement. The two brothers composed albums such as "Dr Nero" (Naison) and "Nherera" (Simon) the songs that attained them prominence on the Zimbabwean music arena. It was not until 1988 that the two decided to part ways then Simon started his peculiar band, 'The Orchestra Dendera Kings' while Naison formed his Gee (Great) 7 Commandos. After separating from his brother Simon recorded the hit album Nguva Yakaoma (Hard Times) with best hits such as "Spare Wheel", the soulful "Samatenga" (God), "Pasi Rapinduka" (The World has changed), and others. His prophetic song "Samatenga" topped the music charts for a long time. For Simon this song had foresight into his future for it described the suffering which was mirrored in Simon's own life soon after when he was found in possession of stolen property which led to his arrest. A charge which he was found guilty of and later incarcerated at Khami Prison in Bulawayo.

Escalation to Stardom

Simon reached his peak when he separated with his brother, releasing masterpieces like "Kuipa Chete", "Ngoma Yanditora Moyo", "Mwana Wedangwe" and "Southern Africa" among other albums. This he attained with his newly named band 'Dendera Kings', a name synonymous with a common tropical bird with a thriving bass sound symbolised by his deep, booming bass guitar. Chimbetu was more distinct from other musicians of his lifetime because of his political zeal which he demonstrated during bad and good political times. Thus as depicted by one of his renditions "Kuipa Chete" a song he sang in lamentation of the then prevailing situation where-

by 'free' Zimbabweans continued to wallow in poverty at the expense of White settlers who settled in Rhodesia, snubbing the call for reconciliation. Chimbetu recorded many hit albums and grew from strength to strength. Some of his then hit songs are still considered hot in the market that is, songs like "Samatenga", "One Way", "Dzandipedza Mafuta", "Southern Africa", "Kuipa Chete" and "Simba Nederere", "Mwana Wedangwe" (last born) and many others. Simon would compose and render his songs in Shona, Chewa, Ndebele and Swahili, fluently. Although he had a lot of achievements, Chimbetu's life faced an awkward curve necessitated by his 4-year incarceration from 1989 to 1994 subsequent to his being conviction after being found in possession of pilfered assets. Upon his release from prison he made waves by releasing another hit album "*Pachipamwe*" (Welcome Back). His track "Saina", from *Pachipamwe*, remains a darling to many and as such is played at weddings and social gatherings. Although a reputable lover of President RG Mugabe his albums *Survival* and *Lullaby* contained a denunciation undertone of the Mugabe led government. Upon his release from prison, Chimbetu shot back to the top of the music charts an achievement which was regarded as the best in his entire career. As if that was all, while in prison some of his fans were wooed away from him by another famous musician Leonard Zhakata for he had an almost similar style and well-articulated message. To make matters worse, Chopper's career took a dive for the worst after he made public his undying support for the ruling ZANU-PF party.

Although famous throughout his carrier, Chimbetu had his flaws as seen during his famous lifestyle; he was incarcerated for four years after which he was accused of worker exploitation for his refusal to pay them their monthly wages in 2002. Added to his bag of dissatisfactions was his direct link with the ruling party which led to aversion by his followers and subsequent disrespect. His unpopular publicity was in relation to his bias towards the controversial land redistribution program as well as ZANU-PF policies which were becoming ostracised by some Zimbabweans. During this time he released albums like "Pane Asipo", an album with high political undertone and *Hoko*, which was evidently out of tune with the masses. At this time his fan base dwindled although many remained

loyal to him. It is imperative to comprehend that though the land redistribution program was messy, numerous Zimbabweans realised the necessity to reclaim the land of their forefathers which was grabbed away from them by the White settlers for they recognized the prejudicial balance of land ownership. This ratio of fans remained faithful to Chimbetu and his political songs bearing in mind his songs like "Zuva Raenda" (the sun is setting) from the enormously flourishing album *Survival*. According to Chimbetu, "Zuva Raenda", symbolises the lamentations of many Zimbabweans on the delay in reallocating the land to the majority Black populace.

On the epoch of his passing, Chimbetu's career seemed to be on the rise again when he released the album 10 Million Pounds Reward. In this album, his Chewa song, "Governor Cornwell" was outstanding for he sang it in reflection of the skewed resource allocation at the deprivation of Blacks and in favour of the White minority. Upon his death Chimbetu was granted a heroes status; however his real interment was preserved as clandestine as per his Chewa religious interment belief. To date his band is managed by his son Sulumani Chimbetu (Ncube 2009).

Chimbetu produced many albums of great influence before and after the liberation struggle. Some of the albums he produced include:

Mwana Wedangwe (1983), *Kunjere Kunjere* (1984), *Dendera Resango* (1986), *Afrika* (1985), *Kuipa Chete* (1988), *Boterekwa* (1989), *Nguva Yakaoma* (1990), *Shura Regore Riya* (1991), *Ndouraiwa* (1991), *Karikoga* (1993), *Ruregerero* (1994) *Briam on vocals*, *Pachipamwe* (1994), *Survival* (1997), *Lullaby* (1998), *African Panorama - Chapter One* (1999), *2000 Blend* (2000), *African Panorama - Chapter Two* (2001), *Takabatana* (2003), *Hoko* (2002), *10 Million Pounds Reward* (2005).

Zuva Raenda (Time is Gone)

This is Simon Chimbetu's 1996 album which was composed during a time when land reform was beginning to be an issue in Zimbabwe. Here Chimbetu was lamenting the government's delay in delivering on one of the main causes of embarking on the armed struggle to liberate Zimbabwe from the hands of her colonisers.

This album set the tone for the land reform programme as was set forth by the Lancaster

house agreement. Chimbetu was passing the message that time has lapsed and there is need to redistribute land.

Ndarangarira Gamba (I Remember the Hero)

"I remember the day that the hero left us, mother your child is facing hard times

I will never forget. He called and called, comrade see I have blood on my chest now we are separated in life, be brace. He called and called. Remove all my ammunition and go on with the war. Remain vigilant chanting ZANU –ZANU. Children of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe ihee hee lets unite and defeat the enemy together with Comrade Mugabe and defeat the enemy..."

Simon Chimbetu composed this song in memory of all those gallant sons and daughters of Zimbabwe who died during the liberation struggle. This is one of the songs that continued to motivate the general populace to unite and fight against the White imperialism. When Zimbabwe attained its independence, it embarked on country wide musical galas in remembrance of the fallen heroes and it was not deemed to be a gala without Simon Chimbetu and more specifically the performance of this particular song.

Pane Asipo (There is someone who is not there)

"...The gathering that you are having, there are others who are not there. The feast we are having here, there are others who are not here. The satisfaction you have, there are others who are not there. We have failed to forget; forgetting is what we have failed to do. Jojo remained in the bush, Moli remained there. Love remained in the war, Jonah remained there. The spirit is wondering the spirit wonders. Did you tell his mother that your child passed, he died in the jungle in wilderness where there is no-one. Did you request his ancestors to welcome their child and give him a place to rest for he is a war hero? The soul is wondering the soul is wondering....."

This song was composed in lamentation and remembrance of all the fallen heroes of Zimbabwe. It was a song to console all those who had lost their relatives during the liberation struggle for the emancipation of the country. Here Chimbetu is trying to tell the people of Zimbabwe that no matter the celebrations we have today there is someone who is not around and that person perished in faraway places where there

is no-one to take care of them, it only remains with the ancestors to welcome them and give them a resting.

Dare Rakaronga –Ku State House Kure (The Gathering Planned- The State House is Far)

"There was a journey a journey to travel, a long journey without transport, and a long journey that was tiresome. For sure it is too far, state house is far. The gathering planned to go ahead with the war, they asked for help from our friends, the socialists with good hearts. They said send your solders to come for training. Others were sent to Samora's country others to Kaunda, others to Nyerere others to Seretse. The war path needs the brave it needed the brave, it was via, via via, via Chimoyo via Tengwe via Morogoro, via nachimweya others to China, others to Yugoslavia, others to Libya others to Ethiopia. For sure it is too far, the state house is too far....."

This song was sung to communicate the decision taken by the congregation to take up arms against the British army. In this song, Chimbetu was telling the general populace how difficult the war path was. How far they had to walk on foot for there was no transport to take them to different stations where they will gather and strategize on their deployment. He went as far as narrating how other socialists with good hearts helped Zimbabweans with both places to hide and training. He highlighted how Comrades like Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, Sir Seretse Khama from Botswana, Julius Kambarame Nyerere of Tanzania, Samora Machel of Mozambique among others helped. He even narrated how they had to go different ways and places passing through dangerous places and crossing rivers beset with crocodiles. Other solders had to go as far as China, Yugoslavia, Libya and Ethiopia among other countries to take up training.

Thomas Mapfumo

Thomas 'Tafirenyika' Mapfumo a Zimbabwean musician prevalently eminent to many by the name "The Lion of Zimbabwe" and "Mukanya" for his enormous reputation and for the political inspiration he exerts through his music, including his sharp condemnation of the government

of President Robert Mugabe. He both fashioned and popularised Chimurenga music and his slow-moving style and unique voice is instantaneously comprehensible to Zimbabweans (World Music Central 2016).

Mapfumo was born on the 3rd of July 1945 in Marondera, Mashonaland East, in South East of Harare the then Salisbury, the capital of Zimbabwe. He was born and bred in a rural Shona setup up to the age of ten when his family decided to trek to the Capital Harare where they settled in the high density Mbare Township. It was at this point that the guitars and the traditional music of the Shona caught his attention. He found the inspiration which instigated his music to integrate the sounds of the Ngoma (drum) and the mbira, a metal-pronged instrument with spiritual importance (World Music Central 2016). He was at one point charged with politically influencing the armed forces through his political songs which led to his incarceration without charges under the Rhodesian White monopoly. Mapfumo was not just exiled by the White regime but went on to self-imposed exile in the United States, where he continues to live since 2005 (World Music Central 2016).

Early Career

Mapfumo's first professional band was the Zutu Brothers which he joined as their lead singer at the age of sixteen. Since then he never turned back, he moved from band to band coupled with his poultry hoppy. His love for chicken farming influenced his naming of his solo band in 1972 which he named the 'Hallelujah Chicken Run Band'. He used to be a cover up artist to the other famous musicians until the time he formed the 'Hallelujah Chicken Run Band'. It was during this time that Mapfumo started the initiation of fusing traditional Shona music with modern rock instrumentation. Coupled with that was his decision to sing in his mother tongue (Shona) instead of the then White man's language (English).

Political Undertones

The datum that Mapfumo ditched English in preference of his native language together with his tradition native musical sound was on its own a political statement. It is noteworthy that Zimbabwe was under the minority rule of White individuals who looked down upon the native

Black population and their culture. The prevailing political situation prompted Mapfumo's decision to compose lyrics which were blatantly political. This he did in support of the revolution that was developing in the rural areas, which he called "the communal lands". He decided to call his newly founded style of music Chimurenga a Shona name meaning "struggle", also a name of the 19th century revolutionary movement. His songs amenably instigated the vehement rebellion against the White government, songs such as *Tumira vana kuhondo* "Mothers, send your sons to war." However this did not raise any suspicion from the White minority for they did not understand the native Shona language and the radical undertone of the song.

They finally realised the radical political message when Mapfumo's message was at its climax when he released the hit song "Hokoyo!" (Watch out). In 1979, the government decided to ban the song from the national broadcasting and incarcerate Mapfumo. However, the government could not censor Mapfumo's music from outside radio stations such as the Voice of Mozambique and at other political gatherings. Throughout his arrest, his fans and other sympathisers held protests in support of his release and dropping of all charges against him prompting the government to set him free. This saw his release three months after his arrest for the government could not deal with the protests.

Eventually Zimbabwe saw her independence in 1980 and a new government was installed as a result of free and fair elections. At the time the nation was celebrating her freedom Mapfumo was invited to perform at the independence celebrations sharing the stage with the legend Bob Marley. However after independence, Mapfumo decided to critique the same government he, in a way, helped bring to power (World Music Bio). Nonetheless music remained political, touching on poverty and other social disquiets. When asked about his choice of political songs over love songs he had this to say:

"All you need if you wanna get into the bedroom... You've got a wife. You do it. You don't have to sing a song about it."

One of the journalists who were questioning him observed that Mapfumo could not sing anything he wants:

"Clearly he can't sing 'Down with President Mugabe' but he wouldn't want to. He sup-

ports the present government.” However, that would soon change.”

In 1989, Mapfumo released his controversial album ‘Corruption’ which took a swipe at President RG Mugabe’s administration, resulting in him becoming more and more embittered to it. This album did not seat well with President Mugabe making him incensed with Mapfumo, resulting in Mapfumo becoming the target of government persecution. Later on Mapfumo was accused of running a syndicate of stolen vehicles. The hostility between Mapfumo and the government prompted his migration to United Kingdom in the late 1990s, a place that has become his new home to date.

Thomas Mapfumo continues to tour the world still singing and speaking out about the snags of Zimbabwe and her inhabitants. Mapfumo’s Chimurenga flair of music swayed other Zimbabwean musicians, such as the Bhundu Boys and Stella Chiweshe to follow suit.

Mapfumo Compilations and Their Contribution to the Liberation of Zimbabwe

When the armed forces were busy preparing for the war to liberate Zimbabwe, musicians like Thomas Tafirenyika Mapfumo were also on the side-line trying to provide morale for these forces. Mapfumo is well known for his artfully barbed lyrics which he sang mainly targeting the discriminatory system of Ian Smith and the fraudulent one of Robert Mugabe with equal determination and valour. This remained the quintessence of Chimurenga the music of struggle past, present and future. Here are some of the Mapfumo compilations

Ngoma Yarira (The Drums are sounding)

Mapfumo’s first adaptation of a traditional Shona mbira song. This 1974 track by The Hallelujah Chicken Run Band launched a central initiative in Mapfumo’s artistic career. His is the quieter, answering voice. The song’s lyrics suggest that war is coming to Zimbabwe, which indeed it was. Mapfumo created this song with lead guitarist Joshua Dube and the original single was credited to both of them.

This is one of the songs that gave people power to arrange and some even cross dangerous rivers, walk in thick jungles and some went as far as crossing the borders to different coun-

tries for training and to take up arms in their quest to liberate Zimbabwe

Pamuromo Chete (It’s Only Talk)

This 1977 hit from Mapfumo with the Acid Band talks back to the then Prime Minister of Rhodesia Ian Smith, who had recently proclaimed that the country would not see Black majority rule “in a thousand years.” He had to backtrack on that and accept the inevitable within mere months. Mapfumo re-recorded this song in 1999 for the album *Manhungetunge*. The original master tape of the 1977 single has been lost and it has appeared on no other compilation. Thanks to Samy Ben Redjeb of Analog Africa for providing this version, straight off the vinyl!

This song gave the armed forces and the povo (general populace) as it was called, power to fight the British. Zimbabweans identified themselves with the song and could see light in their plan to fight against the Smith regime. The song was a response to what Smith had earlier own said: “.....Zimbabwe will never be ruled by Black majority rule in thousand years to come.....” The song *Pamuromo Chete* was directed to the Smith regime for the liberation armed forces were becoming strong as each day passes and were determined to fight and defeat the British.

Pfumvu Pa Ruzevha (Hardship in the Reserves)

One of the legendary “Chimurenga singles,” this brooding adaptation of an mbira song is a classic, and a song that Mapfumo has continued to perform over the years. This is also from the Acid Band in 1977, and it expresses the suffering of people on the land during the liberation struggle. They were deprived of basic goods, terrorized by both sides in the war, and generally made powerless victims. This song tugged hard at the hearts of their relatives in the city. The lead guitar on this and “Pamuromo Chete” is played by Leonard “Picket” Chiyangwa.

It is one of the songs that made the general populace of Zimbabwe to realise that they need to take up arms and fight against oppression. They realised that the rural hardship were unbearable and there was need to challenge the Smith regime.

Butsu Mutandrika (Oversized Boots)

Soon after their formation in 1978, the Blacks Unlimited created this version of an older song that refers to the uniformly sized boots mine workers were forced to wear while working. Mapfumo's boisterous performance, complete with whistling and brisk guitar work from Jonah Sithole, made this a big hit for his new band. In fact, it became so well loved that Archbishop Abel Muzorewa adapted the song as a theme for his ill-fated political campaign in 1979. Muzorewa won that election, but could not rule the country and was soon out of politics. Mapfumo's association with that misadventure took some time to overcome. But the song lives on, still performed by Mapfumo today.

The fact that Muzorewa used the song as a campaigning tool shows how political and touching the song was. Zimbabweans identified themselves with the song for it was directly talking about the troubles they were going through in the mines. They were underpaid mine labourers trying to fend for their families down in the rural areas while the Whites were enjoying as Blacks continued to wallow in poverty.

Shumba (The Lion)

This 1981 mbira adaptation is a fine example of the mbira guitar sound that was becoming a staple in the Blacks Unlimited repertoire. The guitarists here are Jonah Sithole and Leonard "Picket" Chiyangwa, picking at their furious best. The lion stands for the spiritually guided guerrilla fighters who won the liberation war.

This was a song to appreciate the armed forces for their job to emancipate Zimbabwe. Here Mapfumo was thanking the bravery of the armed forces and the general populace for their resilience against the Smith regime. The song was sung in celebration of the hard fought liberation struggle. In this song, Mapfumo praised the gallant sons and daughters of Zimbabwe for their courageous and undying love for the liberation of Zimbabwe. It can be seen that music played a vital role in communicating the importance of liberation and it was a tool used by many to fight and keep the general populace focused.

Chauya Chirizevha (Rural Life is back)

A celebratory 1980 song sung at the end of the liberation war noting a return to peaceful

life in the war-ravaged countryside. The final moments of the song mark include a name check for Zimbabwe's new president, Robert Mugabe—a rarity for any politician in the Mapfumo canon.

Mapfumo sang this song in a celebratory mood; he was informing the general populace that the old Zimbabwe before colonisation is back. He went as far as thanking and praising the brevity of President Robert Mugabe and all the other gallant sons and daughters of Zimbabwe.

Nyoka Musango (Snake in the Forest)

This 1983 adaptation of a hunting song builds on the metaphor of "snakes in the forest" to suggest that the recently ended war has left dangerous forces behind, "dissidents" intent on reviving conflict rather than moving ahead with peaceful nation building. This also happens to be one of Mapfumo's most resonant dance songs. Joshua Dube and Emmanuel Jera deliver the tangling guitars, with Washington Kavhai on bass in this new formation of the Blacks Unlimited.

When Zimbabwe won her independence from Britain through liberation struggle and the lowering of the union jack took place, there were some amongst the liberation struggle fighters who were not sure if the war had really ended. These were called dissidents and they remained in the bush only to the disliking of the Zimbabwe leadership. These were the dangerous forces that were a threat to democracy and Mapfumo's song was lamenting their ignorance of peace in favour of fighting.

Magariro (Tradition)

This moody mbira composition, created by Mapfumo and his musicians in 1993, with Bezil Makombe and Chartwell Dutiro now on mbiras, and Ephraim Karimaura on lead guitar. The song asks what Zimbabweans will leave to their children and descendants now that they have abandoned so many of their traditional beliefs and practices. This fundamental message in Mapfumo's work has rarely been so soulfully expressed as it is here.

Even though musicians were busy with motivating armed forces, they did not forgo the role of reminding the general populace of their tradition. Mapfumo composed Magariro in ques-

tion of the way many Zimbabweans were abandoning their culture for the sake of foreign culture.

Dickson Chingaira Makoni

He is generally recognised in the music circles as *Cde Chinx*, a radical musician and composer. Chingaira is one of the vivacious musicians Zimbabwe has ever seen. Renowned for his revolutionary songs comprising albums like “Africa”, “Hondo Yeminda” and “Mabhunu” among others.

Music Career before Independence

He was first introduced into music by his primary school principal who elated him to join the school choir. Although singing was not in his dreams Chinx did not look back as of the day he was involved in the choir. Upon his completion of high school he secured a place at an overseas University to study medicine overseas a dream which never materialised due to complications with his travel documents. This prompted him to look for another alternative, which resulted in him securing a job at an engineering plant in Msasa in Harare in 1974.

Music during the War

Owing to the fact that he could not go overseas and his revolutionary beliefs, Chingaira joined the Second Chimurenga war in Mozambique in 1975. While in Mozambique training as a full combat soldier he did not let go of his affection for music which saw him becoming a permanent coordinator of the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) People’s Choir. This choir was named ‘*Takawira*’ in honour of the late nationalist Leopold Takawira. Takawira Choir grew to be one of many other choirs which boosted freedom fighters’ morale during the war. It is however noteworthy that the sole reason for Chinx to join the guerrillas was to liberate Zimbabwe. Regardless of that fact he found himself being the leader of the Takawira choir which in no time changed its name to the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) Choir, which operated as a morale booster for the armed forces when Comrade Mhere Yaraira who led the group was redeployed (Guchu 2012).

Music Career after Independence

Chingaira’s musical abilities were later comprehended at independence in 1980 upon his return to Zimbabwe. It was after that period that Chingaira collaborated with Bennie Miller and Keith Farquharson to record his early Chimurenga hits “Ngorimba”, “Zvikomborero” and “Nerudo”. In no time the band developed and recruited Don Gumbo of Ilanga resulting in the release of more albums between 1982 and 1987. Chingaira chased a multitude of career options including farming writing stories and acting which saw him being involved in the film ‘Flame’, and the documentary Limpopo Line.

He left the Ilanga band after a short stint to pursue a solo career which saw him teaming up with Mazana Movement Band and then later with Mazana Black Spirits. There he released a hit song entitled “Vanhu Vose VemuAfrica” translated “People of Africa”, a song which appeals to the conscience of humanity and unity in the face of injustice and unfairness. One of his utmost exceptional hit, “Roger Confirm”, was top of the music charts for about twenty five weeks in 1989 and early 1990. Chinx’s liberation songs continued to be played since the attainment of independence in 1980s during the Heroes Day, Independence Day celebrations and Africa Day holidays and all Zimbabwean radio stations (Zindi 2012). In 2000 when the land reform started Chinx, with the late former band mate Andy ‘Muzukuru’ Brown supported by the Police Band, composed and recorded songs for the government which made them part of the Third Chimurenga (Guchu 2012).

Towards the Emancipation of Zimbabwe

History of the war in the then Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) can be traced to as far back as the occupation of Africa in the late 19th century, and the rebellion of Black African liberation heroes who put an end to White minority rule (Rogers 1998). Zimbabwe is a former British colony occupied from the 1890s and though never afforded State eminence, White Rhodesians effectually ruled Rhodesia after 1923. Wessels (2010) noted that during the then Prime Minister of Britain Harold Macmillan’s renowned “Wind of Change” speech address to South African parliament in 1960, he tabled Britain’s aim to decolonise all the British colonies in Africa and grant

them Black majority rule. Wood (2008) and Smith (1997) noted that, although Rhodesia managed to garner unsanctioned backing of neighbouring South Africa and Portugal, which ruled Mozambique, it was not granted official respect from any country. It is noteworthy that, most of the White Rhodesians were apprehensive that decolonisation and the dawn of Black government will be chaotic, gauging from what had transpired in the former Belgian Congo in 1960 (Wessels 2010). This anxiety ensued Britain's reluctance to abolish the doctrine of "No independence before majority rule" leading to Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence on 11 November 1965.

The war for the liberation of Zimbabwe was regarded by many White Rhodesian settlers as the war of resilience since the genocide undertakings which transpired in former Belgian Congo, the Mau-Mau rebellion movement in Kenya and other parts of Africa were still fresh in their minds. Numerous White settlers (a minority of Black Rhodesians) saw their life as being under attack, worth fighting for in order for them to be free and earn a decent standard of living than many other African countries. Harris (1969) bemoaned the neglect of many Blacks when he noted that, 'even though voting was technically open to all who live in Rhodesia, the minority White settlers refused to grant Blacks an equal voting status regardless of their neither numbers nor native status. The 1969 constitution allowed "Non-Europeans" (principally Blacks) to elect legislatures for only eight of the seats out of 66 parliamentary seats provided in the house of parliament, with the other eight seats reserved for tribal chiefs.

It was against this background that motivated many Black nationalists to advocate for liberation struggle to free Zimbabwe from the White minority rule and bring independence under Black majority rule. The zeal for Zimbabweans to take up arms was provoked by the wide economic inequality between Blacks and Whites. This as Ranger (1985), pointed out that during this period in Rhodesia, Whites were sole owners of the vast fertile land whilst many Blacks were congested on barren land, due to forced removals by the British settlers a point also reiterated by (Moore 2005).

As a result of these grievances, two contending nationalist organisations were formed namely the Zimbabwe African People's Union

(ZAPU) and the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), following a split in the former in August 1963, due to disparities over tactics, tribalism and personality clashes (Sibanda 2008). ZANU and its military wing ZANLA were under the leadership of the Reverend Ndabaningi 'Chankandiwana' Sithole before Robert Mugabe took over and was mainly composed of the Shona-speaking people. ZAPU and its military wing ZIPRA comprised mainly of Ndebele speaking people under the leadership of Joshua Nkomo (Rogers 1998).

After Independence

Zimbabwean musicians did not only play their music to communicate messages to the armed forces and the general populace. They still continued with their musical renditions even after Zimbabwe gained her independence from Britain. Some were singing songs praising the government of President RG Mugabe while others were singing against his presidency. To the surprise of many, even some of those who were singing praises for President RG Mugabe and the armed forces in their quest to liberate Zimbabwe were now singing against the same cause. Thomas Mapfumo could not divorce himself from controversy, thus after doing a wonderful job in communicating messages of support to those fighting for the liberation of Zimbabwe, he sang songs do downplay the time of President Mugabe. He sang songs like *Corruption* (1990), *Chamunorwa* (1991), *Ndangariro* (1991), *Hondo* (1993), *Vanhu Vatema* (1994), *Chimurenga Movement* (1997), *Zimbabwe Mozambique* (1988), *Chimurenga Masterpiece* (1988) and *Shumba* (1990, *Earthworks*)

Corruption

This 1989 song (the CD jacket has a typo; it incorrectly says 1987) changed everything for Mapfumo. Composed and recorded in the wake of the Willowvale gate scandal, in which government ministers were found to be selling BMWs on the Black market, the song pointed a sternly accusing finger at Mugabe's regime. This was a first, and the start of Mapfumo's public shift to become a vocal critic of the government he had once helped to empower.

It is noteworthy that Mapfumo was determined to keep on communicating his love for

the country even after independence. After Zimbabwe gained her independence, there were some government ministers whose hands were caught in the cookie-jar. This happened at the expense of the general Zimbabwean populace. Just like when he was lamenting corruption that was becoming the order of the day for the President RG Mugabe led government. The composition of this album did not seat well with many government officials singing encouraging Zimbabweans to fight the Smith Regime, Mapfumo did not disappoint. He sang for Mapfumo was exposing their corrupt deeds. The album was banned from all the Zimbabwean radio and television stations. It is at this time that Mapfumo's life changed drastically for he was now regarded as a traitor and he decided to go into self-imposed exile.

When Mapfumo decided to go into self-imposed exile, he did not stop entertaining and communicating about the state of affairs of his motherland hence his composure of the album *Jojo* which is a live recording.

Jojo

This is a live recording made by Afro pop Worldwide at SOB's in New York City in 1991. The song is a warning to young Zimbabweans not to be ensnared in the violent projects of manipulative politicians. The recording, featuring the Blacks Unlimited brass section, showcases the band's unique live sound during this era.

At the time of recording this album, Zimbabwean youths were alleged to carry out political mandates of selected politicians in breach of the constitution. Mapfumo composed this to communicate with these young people to be weary of these tendencies and stop being used to settle political scores.

Bukatiende (Wake Up, Let's Go)

This adaptation of a classic Shona mbira song is well suited to both hunting and war scenarios, wherein early rising is key. It is also a stellar example of the rich sound Mapfumo's early-90s band created with mbira songs. A real gem!

Mapfumo did not just compose to either commend or denigrate successive governments. At times he just composed to entertain his audience in his quest to make them forget about the prevailing standards of life. It is for these reasons that he composed this rendition.

Ndiayani Waparadza Musha (Who Has Destroyed My Home?)

This song was created in collaboration with the author, Banning Eyre, in Harare in 1998. It draws on a West African traditional song, the Mande classic "Kulanjan," but Mapfumo and his musicians transform it into a powerful lament about the dissolution of Zimbabwe under the Mugabe regime.

The album 'Chimurenga 98' contributed to the continuous dislike of Mapfumo by those in government. He composed the song 'Ndiayani Waparadza Musha' lamenting about the appalling conditions of Zimbabwe under the leadership of President Mugabe.

Marima Nzara (You Have Harvested Hunger)

This 2001 song, recorded in Eugene, Oregon, with Zivai Guveya on lead guitar, deeply inflamed loyalists of Mugabe's ZANU-PF party. The song suggests that the government's thuggish occupation of White-owned farms in Zimbabwe, and general lack of knowledge about agriculture and farming, were inflicting hunger on the people of Zimbabwe. Reaction to songs like this had already caused Mapfumo to move his family to the United States. Soon, he would not be able to return to Zimbabwe at all.

It was just after compiling these albums that the controversial land reform programme began just after Zimbabwe was hit by successive draughts. Many White farmers did not like the land reform programme and had to pack their bags and go back to their motherland with some seeking refuge in neighbouring countries. The successive draughts to Mapfumo were not an issue; he sang this song questioning the reasonability of the land reform coupled with the lack of skill from the general populace to produce enough food to sustain the whole country. This song was directly pointing at President RG Mugabe led government. He was laughing at the whole process of land redistribution which he regarded as both wrong and corrupt.

Ndangariro (Remembering)

*This richly layered anthem was the lead track on Mapfumo's 2010 release, *Exile*. It expresses the sadness Mapfumo feels at being sep-*

arated from the land and people he loves. It also demonstrates Mapfumo's more ambitious approach to studio recording during his years in exile. Much time was taken in creating, arranging and mixing this track. For all that is going on within it (including rhythm guitar by Banning Eyre, and multiple leads by Gilbert Zvamaida) one can hear every detail.

When Mapfumo started singing against the government and ruling party, he thought his life was at risk. This forced him to go into self-imposed exile. While in exile he composed many songs and "Ndangariro (Remembering)" is one of them. In this masterpiece he was lamenting how his political fallout was impacting on his life and how he misses playing in front of his home fans that followed his music with passion.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The study did not use any participants since it was a content analysis based research, which evaluated relevant information.

Instrument

The instrument used in this paper was historical research approach. This approach will look at the historical development of music and selected musicians who contributed to the liberation of Zimbabwe. The paper will be more concerned with their musical rather than political contribution.

Findings and Discussions about the Music and the Liberation Struggle

The tussle for the emancipation of Zimbabwe from the yoke of colonialism was fought on diverse fasciae. Other combatants were physically involved in the battle front while others fought verbally and some provided the means to fight. While no detriment was intended in anyway by those who proclaim that their involvement was more imperative than others, the most essential point is that whoever was there contributed immensely in jettisoning the encumbrance of White monopoly which sought to undermine the Black majority.

There are some people who were not directly involved in the battle front who find their contribution overlooked in the political discourse. As a result their efforts have been disdained yet no contribution was too small in struggle for liberating the country.

This is where musicians for example come in for they enormously contributed to the revolution. Their music stimulated, invigorated and taught the general populace the values of the liberation struggle as inculcated by the leaders. Thus they did not only express their thoughts but went as far as letting the *povo* into the plans of the fighters and the leaders by conveying the message and the principles from the leaders to the masses. Music was therefore an imperative component of the liberation struggle and its influence can never be overemphasized.

All the Black musicians who before independence composed songs with a deep lyrical connotation, rich in deep Shona or isiNdebele aphorisms did this at prodigious menace of being arrested by the oppressive White government that was all too fervent to muzzle anything they deemed precarious of their decree.

Yes, some of the Black musicians took it upon themselves to sing about the war, about Blacks as sons of the soil and being rightful heirs to their God given heritage. They chose to sacrifice the commercial side of music at the altar of political expediency and that fact alone deserves some recognition.

It was personal of musicians to be purveyors of political information during this difficult time characterized by capricious detentions, lashings and incarceration. Prodigious musicians like *Simon Chimbetu*, *Solomon Skuza* both late, *Dorothy Masuka*, the late *Ketai Muchawaya*, the late *Safirio Madzikatire* and *Thomas Mapfumo* come to mind when one talks of the pre-independence music heroes. There was also *Kasongo band*, the *original LMG choir*, *Impi Yesiko*, *Zipra Choir* and many other choral groups that braved arrest and did what they knew best to inspire the comrades.

This shows that music played an essential part in the dissemination of the significance of the liberation struggle and as a morale booster. It was the energizer even though most if not all of the musicians could not execute live shows and their music was precluded from the White controlled radio. As a result they became restricted to beer gardens where they would deliver the

political message, encouraging the continuation of the revolution though they sometimes did so in a very delicate way.

On Sunday, April 12 2015, Vincent Gono wrote, the contribution made by great musicians was also echoed by Chase Skuza, younger brother to Solomon, who stated that his brother was one of the musicians from the region who recorded songs with robust political librettos. These songs were notably composed before independence although he continued retelling people where and how Zimbabwe gained her independence.

Songs like Kambe yibolaba, Salibonani maZimbabwe, Ndangariro, MaKhumalo were some of the hits that come to mind when one talks of Solomon Skuza.

Chase further noted that, these songs were partially stimulated by the liberation struggle which resulted in his brother Solomon undertaking military training in the then USSR, now Russia, and Libya before coming back to Zambia. Musician and Zimbabwe Music Rights Association (Zimura) chairperson Albert Nyathi echoed the same sentiments, he said:

".....there were a lot of musicians who contributed but Solomon Skuza, Marko Sibanda and Cde Chinx were part of the outstanding ones. "We have people like Dorothy Masuka, Miriam Makeba, Gift Nare, the late Marko Sibanda, Abel Sithole, Joseph Masonda of the Eye of Liberty and many others who were part of the revolution through music."

He added that while others were in the camps like Solomon Skuza and Marko Sibanda, the contribution of those who were singing while in the country was equally important.

Sotsha Moyo, one of the pioneers of Black Umfolosi said although the group was formed after independence he and others had long been doing choral music in Zambia while at the Jason Ziyaphapha Moyo camp commonly known as the JZ waiting camp said:

".....We had gone there with the intention of joining others in training but we were told we were too young and we were kept at JZ camp where we joined various choral groups and sang. We were entertaining the comrades and passing on the message to people on the values of the liberation struggle. We also inspired others to join the liberation struggle. We had LMG choir that was fronted by Gift Nare who was teaching in Zambia. He was a great

lyricist who used to compose well thought-out songs. He is now staying at home in Gwanda I think but he is old now. I remember the song Happy New Year that was sung by LMG around 1977-78 which was one of their great compositions that speaks of the values of the war of liberation."

He, however, lamented the lack of recognition of the music greats whose contribution to the liberation struggle spurred the revolution. Musicians, he said, were an important part of the struggle although their efforts were never recognised. Moyo said he was happy when Cde Chinx was finally rewarded for his unwavering stance in revolutionary songs. He added that it was crucial that people like Solomon Skuza, Ket-ai Muchawaya, Marko Sibanda, Thomas Mapfumo and Nare of LMG get the recognition they deserve as they stood for the values of the liberation struggle when times were hard. He said they did what they did at great personal risk and they deserved a place in the history of the country.

It was evident from this paper that musicians played and continue to play a vital role in communicating with the general populace about the political situations of different countries. If for example one takes into consideration musicians like Lovemore Majaivana's prophetic songs about the situation of Zimbabwe, you will see that most of his songs are coming to pass now. Songs like *elilizwe kalila Mali (this country does not have money)*; *Siyayiwela (we are crossing)* where he was saying *"...siyayiwela igulugudela siyofuna imali...."* Here Owaka Majai-vana was saying we are crossing the Limpopo River to South Africa to look for money. This was before the Zimbabwean situation was in limbo. This goes on to show that it was not only during liberation struggle that musicians contributed immensely to the liberation of Zimbabwe but they also prophesied the situation and were warning Zimbabweans of the dangers ahead.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It was evident from the literature compiled that Zimbabwean musicians just like the liberation war heroes who risked their lives by taking up arms against the British imperialists, played a pivotal role in the emancipation of the country from the yoke of the White settlers. However

these musicians unlike war veterans did not stop advocating for a free Zimbabwe on attaining independence. They carried on the battle by criticising politicians and vying for a booming Zimbabwean economy. Some of them went as far as reminding those in power of their promises of a free Zimbabwe for all where the Black majority will own land. Artists such as Thomas Mapfumo now in self-exile are a good example of the artists who did not side with the government even if they are to the best of his knowledge doing evil against the Zimbabwean general populace.

The Role Played by Music

History of the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe from the White regime is a protracted one and music proved vital. Music proved to be an essential during the armed struggle. Power of music has a profound influence as well as emotional therapeutic effect in any society. Researchers contended that liberation wars were won through music and dance, drama and poetry. Combatants and musicians who took part the liberation struggle left their homes, beloved wives, children and parents in pursuit of liberating their country from White monopoly.

Thus they wanted something to take their minds off the memory of leaving behind their beloved ones let alone the comfort of their homes to reside in the bushes and foreign land. Hence they would find that solace in music provided for by different musicians.

This is in line with Grant et al. (2010: 185) who said: "Music plays a powerful role in society. Thus it has the ability to create associations, place and cause emotional reaction amongst citizens. Music inspired reactions and helped to confidently create a sense of belonging to many; it can also provoke rebellion against one another such as during the liberation struggle. Zimbabwean musicians have through their music contributed immensely towards the formation of social identity. Thus they contributed to the societies' cultural and political identification, in that their music does not only predate colonialism but also links to Zimbabwean historical and cultural processes. Most of their music was/is about the socio-political and economic problems of the poor, and most of the musicians live in the same locations as their listeners. "Music was and remains a central part of

Zimbabwean society, for example in times of war and peace at workplaces, in the home and outdoor, during religious and social ceremonies (rain-making, collective labour, religion, marriage, death or love, for instance." The above observation is congruent with the arguments of Mano (2007: 67). This paper traced the role music and musicians during and after independence, and the present day. It highlighted how music has continued to play influence in either shaping political discourse of social transformation. The extent of influence and importance come in different ways.

Pre-independence-Music and the War of Liberation

The liberation struggle to free Zimbabwe from White rule started in 1966 which marked the second Chimurenga (war of liberation). Throughout this period, liberation fighters would gather the general populace for night vigils known as 'pungwes' gatherings for the purposes of providing entertainment, stress relief, boosting of morale and inspiration of troops. Songs which were chanted throughout that time echoed the predicaments of the beleaguered general populace. Music gave society hope and the zeal to fight against their oppressors since most of the songs were in vernacular language, causing language barrier amongst the Whites for some of the lyrics were insulting. Music and poetry were tools and forms of social commentary that were used to motivate the masses to fight. As a result of the need for music as morale booster, profuse endowed musicians emerged in the bush, and composed music that inspired the guerrillas. Musicians such as Dickson Chingaira better known as Cde Chinx, LMG Choir, ZANLA Choir, composed inspirational songs that drove the war of liberation. Songs like 'Maruza imi' (You have lost) signifying that the Rhodesians have lost the war became anthems during pungwes and they gave the fighters optimism that definitely the war will be won. Some compilations were used as a mobilisation tool to recruit fighters or simply played a uniting role as they created a strong connection amongst the fighters who were drawn from different tribal and geographical backgrounds. Other renditions such as 'nzira dzemasoja' (A soldier's code of conduct) were composed to echo the conduct of the guerrillas in the bush, pointing out the

rules and regulations to be followed by soldiers, teaching them not to exploit or rob the masses, return anything confiscated for military reasons.

Simon Chimbetu

Simon Chimbetu was a liberation stalwarts, music composer and renowned musician. He contributed enormously throughout the liberation struggle by composing songs that motivated both the guerrillas and the general populace to take up arms against the White regime. Chimbetu was a combatant soldier trained in Tanzania however he did not see the battlefield but continued to sing and motivate those who were fighting. His songs such as *State House*, *Ndarangarira Gamba*, *Pane Asipo*, *Hondo*, *Pakati Pegungwa* and *Ndiyamure Mukoma* among others were a great inspiration to the general populace. The general populace continued to sing his songs during and after *pungwes* just to keep people focused on the main goal, independence.

Thomas Mapfumo

Some musicians did not set foot in the battle front but managed to inspire the general populace and the armed forces through their music to continue fighting for the liberation of the country. Thomas Mapfumo happens to be one of the outstanding musicians who did not take up arms but sang about politics, social injustices, and poverty through his highly poignant lyrics. He supported the predicament of the rural masses by singing demonstration songs which ridiculed the colonial regime. Before Zimbabwe attained her independence, Mapfumo crooned songs such as *'Hokoyo'* (Watch out), *'Pfumvu paruzevha'* (Hardships in the rural areas) which depicted the plight of the rural people at a time when the freedom fighters were in battle with the Rhodesian army. His 1977 hit song, *'Tumira Vana Kuhondo'* (Send Their Children to War), was meant to mobilise young men and women to join the war of liberation. Mapfumo's songs were banned from national radio by the oppressive government due to their political undertone and the resultant provocation of the general populace to fight the regime resulting in his arrest on several occasions.

Oliver Mtukudzi

Oliver Mtukudzi is another musician whose music had great impact and influence during liberation struggle. He recorded *'Dzandimomotera'* (Struggles) which was unshakably encouraged by Zimbabwe's 1970s war of liberation. The song portrayed the Black man's life struggles under the minority White settler regime; the song symbolises man's prayer for redemption. Oliver's masterpieces were about people's power, freedom and hope. He also composed *'Mutavara'*, a song about a man bidding farewell to his family as he leaves home to take up arms. Oliver's lyrics spoke against White omnipotence rule under the Rhodesian government throughout the colonial period and before independence. Mtukudzi's music vigilantly spoke against subjugation and the oppressive White government and how Black people were suffering because of colonisation. After Zimbabwe gained her independence from British colonial rule in 1980, Oliver released his fourth album, titled *'Africa'* which carried hits like *'Zimbabwe'* a triumphant song for majority rule. The title track to the album *'Africa'* signified the people's fortitude for independence.

Post-independence

Music continues to play a significant role in our society even after the attainment of independence. Amongst those musicians who were involved in conveying political messages pre and post-independence were Simon Chimbetu, Thomas Mapfumo and Mtukudzi. Upon realising independence in 1980, the government of Zimbabwe extended their invitation to the legendary Jamaican reggae star Bob Marley to come and perform together with the local musicians. These celebrations did not mean the end of music and its significance to many. A few years down the line we also saw musicians like Thomas Mapfumo at the forefront singing against corruption especially in 1987 when government ministers were involved in a vehicle scandal called the Willowvale scandal. The government banned the song *'corruption'* and Mapfumo became a target as lyrics on his song corruption raised awareness to the nation. He went on to release songs such as *Vana Kuhondo* thus when the Zimbabwean government sent soldiers to DRC in a so called defence mission. Here Map-

fumo was trying to expose the top officials who deployed the army to safeguard their mineral interest in DRC in the name of peace keeping. He also composed the song Marima Nzara when the government seized land from the White farmers without compensation. Here Mapfumo was bemoaning the corrupt land redistribution.

To show that music was and remains significant, several musicians have since emerged and released hits that expose socio-political and economic ills. One of the famous musicians who come to mind is Leonard Karikoga Zhakata with his 'Mugove' and 'Mubikira' hits. Oliver Mtshudzi's 'Bvuma' was interpreted by society as showing an old autocrat who continues to cling to power; the song saw legal prosecutions of members of the public who used the song to 'undermine the President of Zimbabwe.' The post 2000 era presented an interesting development when political parties scrambling for power used music as a way of rallying their supporters and selling their manifestos, ZANU-PF had its Mbare choir, and Tambaoga and Born free Crew while the MDC had protest songs from Paul Madzore and Dread Reckless. The most important fact is the comprehension that liberation movements were and are able to clearly convey their messages to the general populace through entertainment and provoke emotional response and definite results thereof. Music is still being used nowadays for different reasons, good or bad.

CONCLUSION

Liberation struggle for the liberation of African continent from its oppressors let alone Zimbabwe has been overlooked. All the credit has been given to the armed forces together with the general populace forgetting the role that was played by different musicians. It is not only Zimbabwean musicians who contributed towards the emancipation of Zimbabwe though their unforgettable musical communication. Musical icons such as Bob Marley contributed immensely towards the African cause. The sad part is that all their contributions have been overlooked. It was not the intention of this paper to dig deeper into all the music icons but had to just look at a few Zimbabwean musicians who played a part during the liberation struggle. There is still a lot to be done in acknowledging the role played by musicians in communicating liberation messages through their undying musical renditions. All

in all musicians played a vital part during the liberation struggle of their respective countries by either encouraging those who had to take up arms against the colonial governments and those that had to provide moral support and shelter to the liberation fighters. They even continue to play a part in safeguarding democratic processes of their respective countries thanks to their musical messages which carry with it different communication messages.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Music played a powerful role in the run to the independence of Zimbabwe. Musicians risked their lives by composing and performing political songs which acted as a motivating factor to those involved in the battlefield as well as those who remained vigilant within the communities in giving undying support to the soldiers. It is, therefore, on this backdrop that this paper recommends that the government of Zimbabwe must just like what they do for all the liberation war heroes grant a hero's status to both the living and the dead Zimbabwean musicians who made a contribution towards the political, social and economic emancipation of the country. The paper further recommends that all those musicians who were in one way or the other involved in the liberation of the country and continues to advocate for financial independence be compensated just like what was done to the liberation armed forces. The paper finally recommends that all those musicians who have been targeted for composing songs against corrupt government officials be set free and have their life celebrated rather than being persecuted.

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