"Africans a-liberate Zimbabwe[1]": Music and Pan-Africanism in Zimbabwe and South Africa, 1950-1995

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History 194H

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[1] Bob Marley and The Wailers, "Zimbabwe," *Survival*, Tuff Gong Records, 1979.

Introduction

Music produced in Zimbabwe and South Africa expressed the joys, problems, politics, and values of the people. Music played an integral role in the Zimbabwean liberation war, the achievement of independence, and the critique of the post-independence government. Music serves as a creator and an expression of cultural values. The arts are important aspects of cultural identity formation at all levels. This holds from the "micro" level of small towns to the "macro" level of the identity of an entire nation.

Pan-African ideology was a critical political movement in the twentieth century. Pan-Africanism is a: "worldview that purports the oneness of black people by virtue of their common ancestry in Africa, and which stresses the need for Africans who live in the Diaspora and on the continent to form social, economic, and political links in order to improve their standing in the world."[2] Pan-Africanism had its foundations in the African Diaspora. Pan-Africanism is founded on "feelings of dispossession, oppression, persecution, and rejection."[3] Pan-Africanism developed from the racial inequalities, created through the institution of slavery, in the United States and Caribbean. In the Diaspora, Africans faced inferiority based on race and isolation. Pan-Africanism arose as pride in "blackness" and a longing for a connection to a lost history.[4] The colonial project, through anthropology and oppression, created an African identity that was dictated by European "knowledge" and the written record. Essentially, colonial anthropologists developed their own theories of African identity, recorded these ideas, and influenced colonial policy by re-teaching ideas of the African identity.[5] In contrast, Pan-Africanism attempted to

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[2] Nicosia Shakes, "Marketing Pan-Africanism to a New Generation: A Case Study of Liberty Hall – the Legacy of Marcus Garvey, Kingston, Jamaica," in *Pan-Africanism African Nationalism: Strengthening the Unity of Africa and its Diaspora* ed. B.F. Bankie and K. Mchombu, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 2008), 194.
[3] Colin Legum, *Pan Africanism: A Short Political Guide,* (Westport: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1962), 15.
[4] Legum 19.
[5] Kadiatu Kanneh, *African Identities: Race, Nation, and Culture in Ethnography, Pan-Africanism and Black Literatures*, (London: Routledge, 1998), 18.

rebuild an African identity based on mutual struggle across the continent and world. It rejected the viewpoints of Western colonial ideology and tried to reappropriate an indigenous identity. It asserted that all Africans, including those in the Diaspora, had complex and diverse cultures; but it did imply that they shared commonalities and interests based on shared experiences of subjugation and repression. Pan-African themes were utilized in the political, cultural, and economic terms of the twentieth century. Africans used music, among other media, to articulate and propagate Pan-African identities.

In his book, *Songs that Won the Liberation War,* Alec Pongweni articulates the importance of music to any society but especially African societies. He argues that "music is the first of the fine arts, by which every mind is moved. But music, however crude and simple, speaks to every human heart, and this with dance constitutes nature's general festival throughout the earth; for the music of a nation in its most imperfect form and favourite tunes, displays the internal character of the peoples."[6] The music of Zimbabwe reflected the beliefs of the people partially because it was created directly by Africans.

Many of the liberation songs, in Zimbabwe, were part of a larger historical narrative of resistance to white rule. Many artists used these different songs and appropriated them to specific styles, genres, and themes. The importance of this communal sharing and mixing of musical styles was that the community itself identified with these songs and the shared goal of a black self-rule. Pongweni also argued that the war in Zimbabwe "emphasized and asserted the dignity of an oppressed people and through its music, the vitality of folk art."[7]

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[6] Alec J.C. Pongweni, *Songs that Won the Liberation War* (Harare: The College Press), II.
[7] Ibid., III.

The music created during the colonial period was crucial to the Africans who had been oppressed by white minority governments. But it may be asked whether music played an integral role in identity development following independence?

This thesis traces music in Zimbabwe and South Africa during the reign of colonial governments beginning with the Apartheid regime in 1950. Colonialism was a problem to which Pan-Africanism was the solution. Following World War II, many European powers became unable to maintain empires. The next fifty years saw the independence and development of Africa through various struggles. Apartheid in South Africa and quasi-Apartheid in Southern Rhodesia saw the legalization and institutionalized racial policies that limited African mobility. The pervasive social problems and underdevelopment of Africans were evident through the musical narratives of the people.

There is considerable literature on music in Africa. A lot of this scholarship has been directed at the volatile situation in South Africa during the Apartheid government. In reference to Zimbabwe, the liberation war remains a dominant theme. Within the scholarly resources on Zimbabwean music, there are many different approaches, including anthropology, history, linguistics, and ethnomusicology used to analyze music.

Alec Pongweni and Alice Kwaramba both did linguistic studies of the music of the independence struggle. Pongweni focused on a wide range of musical genres, including songs from guerilla choirs, branches of the nationalist armies during the conflict, and domestic Zimbabwean artists based within the country. However as, Urther Rwafa and Maurice T. Vambe have pointed out, Pongweni left out important topics, such as the role of women musicians. Alice Kwaramba focused specifically on the work of Thomas Mapfumo, arguably the most famous

musician from Zimbabwe, from independence to the 1990s. She dissected Mapfumo's song texts through the social problems in his music.

The role of mass media is important to the dissemination of music to large audiences. In an unconventional study, Julie Frederikse examined the media and public consciousness and the role that communication played in the liberation war and in the early independence era. Her work is not a conventional scholarly book, but a compendium of collated primary materials: interviews, newspapers and magazine cuttings, transcribed song texts, and other news mediums interwoven with small blurbs of analysis that give one full sense of state policy and African agency from multidimensional angles.

Fred Zindi's book, *Roots Rockin in Zimbabwe,* provides useful narratives and interviews of the specific artists influential during the liberation war and in independent Zimbabwe. His work accounts for many of the musical influences in Zimbabwe and provides interviews with many prominent artists during the 1980s.

David Coplan traced the lively musical production in the townships of South Africa in his book *In Township Tonight!: South Africans Black City Music and Theatre*. Coplan addressed the issue of music production within the racist Apartheid regime and also offered an example of the complex way in which musical styles spread and mixed across national borders.

Thomas Turino's book, *Nationalists, Cosmopolitans, and Popular Music in Zimbabwe,* offers a highly valuable analysis of music in Zimbabwe. He focused mostly on the global forces in the music of Zimbabwe. His extensive and well-researched book traced music from the 1930s to the music following the liberation war. While Turino is essential to understanding the breadth of music in the last century in Zimbabwe, some questions have emerged in scholarly discourse about his classification of cosmopolitan and racial issues. According to Ezra Chitando, a scholar

of music in Zimbabwe, much of Turino's research focuses on Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe. Chitando argues that this may have skewed Turino's understanding of music and cosmopolitanism in Zimbabwe. Chitando further argues that Turino's argument misrepresented the racial inequality in Zimbabwe. Despite an emerging black middle class, policies that supported white dominance kept this middle class "traditional" because of economic policy.[8]

For this paper, there are important themes to address as contextualized in the various sources used. ZANU and ZAPU were the principal nationalist forces in the liberation war. The Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) was led by the more militant Robert Mugabe towards the end of the liberation war. The army of this faction was called the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA), and its military operations and headquarters were in Mozambique. ZANLA's liberation choirs were directly connected to the armed forces and not the party itself. The other nationalist force was Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) headed by Joshua Nkomo. The armed force was Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIRPA). At the most fundamental level, ZAPU aligned with the Soviets and tried to rally the urban workers whereas ZANU aligned with China and tried to rally the peasants in the countryside.

A lot of the traditional music produced in Zimbabwe is done in Shona and to a lesser extent Ndebele. These are the two main linguistic groups in Zimbabwe. The Ndebele historically resided in the western section of Zimbabwe. The ZAPU faction was largely associated with the Ndebele while ZANU was tied to the Shona. There are many different languages used in South Africa. Some of these include English, Afrikaans, Ndebele, Xhosa, and Zulu. In reference to the song texts, the songs stemming from Zimbabwe were translated into English by various scholars.

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[8] Ezra Chitando, Review of *Nationalists, Cosmopolitans, and Popular Music in Zimbabwe,* by Thomas Turino, *Zambezia (2002):* 87.

Similarly, the translations of the non-English songs by Masuku were also done by scholars. The interpretation and ambiguities of translation is the work of those scholars.

Colonialism

Music was a strong unifying force against colonial power structures in Southern Africa. The repressive Apartheid policies in South Africa secured an elite status for whites while further impoverishing Africans. Colonialism was a vile form of oppression shared by Africans among different national contexts. Music, like other forms of cultural expression, mirrored the social and political problems of its creators. In considering colonialism, artists addressed three main

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ideas: the white oppressors directly, songs of unity, and songs that critiqued society. Musical production unified artist across national boundaries both in style and shared situations of colonial power structures. Due to the power of music, artists were often the victims of colonial censorship and violence.

Songs of White Oppression

One of the main themes in colonial music was the demarcation of the different factions in the independence wars. Artists clearly labeled themselves as the victims of an oppressive white regime. In Zimbabwe, guerilla fighters composed songs that questioned the legitimacy of white rule. The guerilla song *Maruza Vapambepfumi* (You Have Lost the War you Marauders), composed by Cde Chinx, spoke to the problem of colonialism and the exploitation of Africans:

> *You exploiters, you've experienced the war now.*
> *ZANU's revolutionary war,*
> *They came to Zimbabwe,*
> *From Britain,*
> *America,*
> *France,*
> *And from Germany, the lands of hunger and suffering.*
> *They made for Zimbabwe*
> *But this country belongs to the blacks*
> *It flows with milk and honey,*
> *Yes, but it's our country.*
> *They brought their guns to Zimbabwe*
> *They came to hunt they said,*
> *And would return to their homes-*
> *The liars.*[9]

In this song, Cde Chinx narrated the Zimbabwean war for independence. He clearly delineated the different identities. The Africans were the rightful and oppressed owners of the land, which the Western world had appropriated. In Zimbabwe, the history of colonialism was a liberating theme and constructive history in the songs of both the home artists, musicians not directly associated with ZANU and ZAPU, and guerilla choirs.

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[9] *Maruza Vapambepfumi,* as translated in Alec Pongweni *Songs that Won the Liberation War,* 18.

The First *Chimurenga* was a war fought in 1896-1897 between the British South African Company and the Shona and Ndebele.[10] *Chimurenga* is the Shona word for revolutionary struggle.[11] Guerilla forces invoked the First *Chimurenga* as opposition to white imperialism and a symbol of black unity during the struggle for independence in the 1970s. Although these wars were seventy years apart, they connected Africans to their ancestors' struggle for independence. Many Africans saw the war for independence as an extension of the 1896 war. This represented the continuation of struggle against colonialism. The Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) published a journal called *The Zimbabwe Review.* In these journals, poetry and music composed by the nationalist soldiers often appeared. In one poem, "Down with the Boer-Settler," the poet invoked history to describe the effects of imperialism.

> *The old peaceful folks-men*
> *Used to mine and farm the land...*
> *The Boers trekked in*
> *They grabbed it all by force.*[12]

This characterization of a "peaceful" community implied that the problems and violence in Rhodesia were caused by the imperialism of the white settlers. While this was not an entirely accurate account, it was an important narrative. This poem situated the history of colonialism as a foundation and reason for present problems. It clearly articulated the people responsible, the Boers, and the problem the colonial system. In order to solve these problems, Africans had to remove the white government.

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[10] The First *Chimurenga*, or revolutionary struggle, occurred in 1896-97 between a Shona-Ndebele coalition and the British South Africa Company. It is regarded by the black majority in Zimbabwe as the first war for independence. The Second *Chimurenga* was the liberation war between ZAPU/ZANU and the illegitimate colonial regime of Ian Smith. In 1965, the white minority government of Rhodesia unilaterally declared independence from Britain; it named Ian Smith as its Prime Minister. Between the mid 1960s-1979, this Rhodesian regime fought guerilla forces (ZANU/ZAPU) to maintain the rule of the white minority in Rhodesia.

[11] Alec Pongweni, *Songs that Won the Liberation War,* (Harare: The College Press), 1.

[12] Gift Busarurwa, "Down With the Boer-Settler," *The Zimbabwe Review.*

The Nationalists framed the liberation war as the Second *Chimurenga*, thereby

comparing it to previous ancestors and indigenous culture. ZANU connected the First

Chimurenga to its revolutionary struggle as a part of their policy of "cultural nationalism."[13] This

policy was cultivated by ZANU; although ZAPU published poems, their policy did not promote

as much cultural programming. However, the connection to the First *Chimurenga* was important

in both the discourses of ZANU and ZAPU. The nationalist choirs appealed to the previous

liberation struggle by invoking ancestral spirits. One song, *Mbuya Nehanda*, used Nehanda to

appeal to the masses.[14]

> *Nehanda's bones have come back to life.*
> *Now the spear of ZANU is emitting fire*
> *That fire is ZANU's gun.*
> *The very gun that took our country.*[15]

Nehanda was a spirit medium during the First *Chimurenga*. She provided inspiration but

was captured and executed by the British forces. ZANU's use of Nehanda symbolized respect for

indigenous culture and connected the second liberation war to a longer history of resistance

against British rule.[16] This further legitimized the nationalist cause to the masses because it

depicted current violence as a continued fight against invaders and an illegitimate British regime.

This song falsified any claims for a white regime. Uniting the masses was a critical component to

the nationalist success. Identifying the reason for African poverty and immobility unified

Africans against a common oppressor. Music and poems offered an important media through

which Africans, both leaders of guerilla forces and non-fighters, focused their grievances on an

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[13] Thomas Turino, *Nationalists, Cosmopolitans, and Popular Music in Zimbabwe*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 209.
[14] Pongweni, 57.
[15] *Mbuya Nehanda*, as translated in Alec Pongweni, Songs that Won the Liberation War, 56.
[16] Pongweni, 58.

enemy. Despite many different languages, cultures, societies, and political boundaries, Africans had at least one unifying force: colonialism.

Songs of Social Problems

Because of this shared experience of oppression, Pan-Africanism was a powerful tool aimed at combating the inequalities created by colonial policies. Although colonialism took many different forms, Africans, across the created boundaries of colonialism, united in the different struggles for independence. Musicians spoke to the different social problems that plagued African societies. These social problems directly stemmed from colonial policies. South Africa and Zimbabwe were two cases in which music provided support for the struggle against Apartheid in South Africa and the Rhodesian government in Zimbabwe.

Apartheid was the institutionalization of racial policies in South Africa that cemented the political, social, and economic power for whites. The Afrikaaner-dominated National Party gained political control in 1948; they reinforced the informal racial segregation that had existed in the colonial government by creating a permanent policy of segregation.[17] Despite the work of the OAU, the destruction of the Apartheid regime did not take place until 1994.[18] The OAU attempted to build Pan-African unity via political support of anti-Apartheid struggles. Through cultural production, Pan-Africanism was a weapon against the Apartheid government. In the 1950s and 1960s, musician Dorothy Masuku teamed with popular South African musicians Hugh Masekela and Miriam Makeba. Masuku represents Southern Africa as a transnational cultural unit. Her father was Zambian, her mother South African, and she was raised in Zimbabwe. Not only did her music transcend national boundaries but she embodies the Pan-African spirit.

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[17] Ali A. Abdi, "Identity Formations and Deformations in South Africa: A Historical and Contemporary Overview," *Journal of Black Studies* 30 (1999): 148.
[18] Adekunle, Ajala, *Pan-Africanism: Evolution, Progress, and Prospects,* (London: Andre Deutsch Limited, 1973), 381.

She penned the songs that started the career of Makeba and became huge hits for Masekela.[19]

Masuku was known for her deliberately political songs. The policies of the Apartheid government aimed to socially engineer the permanence of white superiority. Masuku's song, *Dr. Malan,* addressed the pass laws in South Africa that restricted the movement of Africans.[20]

Dr. Malan has difficult laws.

Prime Minister Daniel Malan led South Africa from 1948 to 1954. In this song, Masuku both directly addressed the Apartheid regime and alluded to the social issues at stake. The Pass Laws Act of 1952 required that all non-whites carry a pass book in order to move throughout the country. The Apartheid regime attempted to limit African spacial mobility and educational mobility. The Pass Laws in South Africa controlled African movement in order to solidify African identities. It constructed space that maintained segregation and white superiority. Africans were meant to serve as labor for white controlled industries but remained in a separate urban landscape. The construction of isolated urban space was not limited to the South African government.

In the late 1950s and 1960s, an educated black middle class had emerged in Southern Rhodesia whose members had attended mission schools.[21] The complex nature of the class chiasms in Southern Rhodesia centered on colonial policies limiting the growth of Africans. In the quasi-Apartheid policies in Zimbabwe, mobility was an important factor in the creation of white controlled African urbanity. As Maurice Vambe argued, African movement into urban spaces was useful to white industry, as labor. However, to maintain the African identity as "primitive," the Rhodesian government controlled the movement of Africans to urban spaces

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[19] David Coplan, *In Township Tonight!: South Africa's Black City Music and Theatre* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 175.

[20] Banning Eyre, "Dorothy Masuka biography," http://www.afropop.org, accessed February 13, 2011.

[21] Thomas Turino, Interview by Banning Eyre, Afropop.org, October 2005, http://www.afropop.org, accessed January 12, 2011.

while maintaining their colonially generated rural homes.[22] The song *Hapana Chavo* (Nothing Belongs to Them), expressed the exploitation of Africans on the basis of colonial land policy:

> *They won't leave our country to us*
> *Because they claim*
> *They have businesses to protect,*
> *They have investments*
> *They have farms*
> *All these belong to the people to you the masses of Zimbabwe.*[23]

This song addressed the uneven development in Zimbabwe. The Land Apportionment Act of 1930 forced most Africans to live on "Reserves" (basically communal lands) and prevented Africans from purchasing nearly two-thirds of the land in Southern Rhodesia.[24] These policies allowed white to profit from previously African rural lands. It also fabricated an African identity of laborer for both urban and rural businesses. Land expropriation was a fundamental cause of the intense poverty faced by many Africans in Zimbabwe.

The limitations of all Africans existed despite beliefs that there was an African "middle class." Turino argued that the cosmopolitan black middle-class was unaware of local or indigenous music practices, but this argument has been questioned by scholars of Zimbabwean music. Ezra Chitando argued that Turino's classification of the black middle did not address the complex relationship between whites and blacks.[25] The white-controlled UDI government increasingly repressed all blacks by broadening the inequalities in land distribution, applying police and military power.[26] Turino's argument that the black middle class was closely related to the repressive white culture did not address this relationship of inequality. There was an

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[22] Maurice Taonezvi Vambe, " '*Aya Mahobo':* Migrant Labour and the Cultural Semiotics of Harare (Mbare) African Township, 1930-1970, *African Identities* 5, no.3, 356.

[23] *Hapana Chavo,* as translated in Alec Pongweni, *Songs That Won the Liberation War,* 12.

[24] Patrick Bond, *Uneven Zimbabwe: A Study of Finance, Development, and Underdevelopment* (Asmara: Africa World Press, Inc., 1998), 93.

[25] Chitando, 88.

[26] Bond, 122.

emerging middle class that appropriated some Western styles but the economic power of these Africans was imagined. The Rhodesian government ensured that all blacks lacked sufficient social mobility. The song lyrics addressed the racial inequality and the platform of Smith's regime that attempted to mask the continued exploitative policies of the previous British imperialists.

In both Southern Rhodesia and South Africa, the government maintained separate but blatantly unequal spheres for whites and blacks. This socially engineered the identities that whites held so firm. It created an elite spacial status for whites, while limiting African growth thereby producing the supposed identities of "primitive" Africans and "civilized" whites. The similar features of colonialism in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia united Africans in a shared experience.

Despite the large time gap, the music of Masuku and artists like Lucky Dube, a South African reggae artist, remained connected by the thread of colonialism. In the later years of Apartheid, the late 1980s, Dube released the album *Slave*. It featured the main track *Slave* that challenged the issue of Apartheid in South Africa:

> *'Cos now I am a slave, a slave*
> *I'm a slave*
> *I'm just a liquor slave*
> *I am a slave, a prisoner*
> *I'm a slave*
> *Just a liquor slave.*[27]

Outwardly, the song seemed to be about alcoholism, but the deeper meaning of African enslavement under Apartheid was evident. *Slave* used the symbolic idea of slavery and its relevant history to the African continent to represent the situation of Africans under Apartheid. Liquor was an important avenue of colonial control but also African agency and economic

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[27] Lucky Dube, "Slave," *Slave,* Gallo Record Company, 1987.

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[27] Lucky Dube, "Slave," *Slave,* Gallo Record Company, 1987.

advancement. Historically, African women brewed African beer as a means of economic subsistence that was limited due to colonial policies of repression. But in 1962, the Apartheid government lifted the ban on African access to "European" liquor which was presumed to be higher in alcohol content.[28] However, it limited the economic opportunities of African agency in the liquor industry.[29] Essentially, although Africans had gained the legal right to consume this alcohol they could not profit economically. The law was engineered to serve white business interests in the liquor market. When Dube alluded to liquor slaves, it both added ambiguity to his lyrics and also lamented about the policies that had limited Africans.

Like Masuku, Dube focused on the limited freedoms of Africans. The pass laws restricted the movement of Africans and spatially controlled Africans as a means of securing a system that economically favored whites. Dube's other explicitly political late 1980s song was *Prisoner:*

> *I asked the policeman and said*
> *How much must I pay for my freedom?*
> *He said to me, son*
> *They won' t build no schools anymore*
> *They won' t build no hospitals*
> *All they' ll build will be prison, prison.[30]*

Dube's song directly addressed the unequal and racist education policies of the Apartheid government.

The 1953 Bantu Education Act relegated the educational policy in South Africa to the Department of Education and Training.[31] The education systems benefited the whites, offering them better educational opportunities. The schooling system in South Africa was very

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[28] Anne Mager, "The First Decade of 'European Beer' in Apartheid South Africa: The State, the Brewers, and the Drinking Public, 1962-1972," *The Journal of African History* 40 (1999): 368.
[29] Ibid., 371
[30] Lucky Dube, "Prisoner," *Prisoner,* Gallo Record Company, 1989.
[31] Diane L. Brook, "From Exclusion to Inclusion: Racial Politics and South African Educational Reform," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 27 (1996): 208.

centralized and ensured domination by the Apartheid government.[32] The Apartheid educational

policy was designed to ensure the superiority of white opportunity. One of its main features was

the unequal distribution of government money. For whites schooling was free and compulsory,

but for Africans school was neither free nor compulsory.[33] Because of Apartheid policy that

created a ceiling for African economic mobility, schooling that required payment became more

of a burden. Secondly, the schooling provided to Africans was instructed in African languages.[34]

This proved to be a difficulty in the quality of education. Teaching African students within the

context of African languages limited their economic opportunities and further schooling because

English was the main form of communication in the professional atmosphere. Finally, the quality

of teaching conditions and supplies was superior in white schools.[35]

Dube's commentary on educational policy reflected the situation of black South Africans.

The racist educational policy kept blacks in poverty and prevented social mobility. All of these

aspects of the educational policy robbed Africans of the opportunity to ascend a higher economic

and social position. Further, the policies resulted in lower education levels of Africans that

rationalized further Apartheid policies of "lower" African. Apartheid policies guaranteed that

black South Africans were both actually imprisoned and metaphorically behind the bars of the

Apartheid policies intended to keep blacks' status unchanged in order to serve the purposes of

the whites. The specific policies differed across different national contexts, but the main thread

of colonialism aimed to secure white privilege. Musicians combating colonialism in Zimbabwe

also relied on social commentary as a form of empowerment.

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[32] Ibid.

[33] Walton R. Johnson, "Education: Keystone of Apartheid," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 13 (1982): 220.

[34] Ibid., 221.

[35] Ibid., 222.

The deplorable situation that Africans resisted in Zimbabwe was a common theme in songs. In the song *Matiregerera Mambo* (Lord You have Abandoned Us), Mapfumo used religion as the foundation to question white policy:

> *O! Lord you have abandoned us*
> *We are dying like ants;*
> *Yes, Lord you have turned your back on us;*
> *Old women receive no mercy either*
> *We are entirely alone, vulnerable;*
> *They wash their bayonets in the blood of old men.*[36]

It is uncertain whether Mapfumo intended to refer to the Christian God or the *Mwari* of the Shona religion, but they both represent the same god.[37] He created an us/them dichotomy; Africans were suffering despite the same religious beliefs while Rhodesians lived comfortably. Missionaries and colonialism asserted Christianity as a European religion, but Ethiopia had a rich history of Christianity before Europe. If many Africans had converted to Christianity, how could Rhodesians still justify the under development?[38] This questions the very foundation of the Rhodesian argument to maintain political power. Rhodesian policy was based on the perceived superiority of whites. But, as Mapfumo argued, there was no difference between whites and Africans that justified white policy. The deconstruction of the perceived white superiority destroyed the foundations of white policy in Southern Rhodesia. The popularity of musicians allowed them to critique society from a special position.

Oliver Mtukudzi considered his role as a musician as synonymous with that of a *sahwira* (family friend).[39] In the Shona familial traditions, a *sahwira* uses his privileged outside location and poetic license to intervene in a family's internal feuds, to censure the wrongdoer and resolve

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[36] *Matiregerera Mambo,* as translated in Alec Pongweni *Songs that Won the Liberation War,* 103.
[37] Pongweni, 105.
[38] Ibid., 105.
[39] Turino, *Nationalists,* 298.

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crises without any repercussions to his own person.[40] Mtukudzi's music was modeled on this role. He observed social problems and sang about them in popular music styles. In the song *Zivai Nemwoyo* (Keep this Secret in your Hearts), Mtukudzi lamented the destruction of values in Shona society.

> *Our ancestors knew and respected God*
> *They also revered their mothers*
> *Our forefathers had a strict code of conduct*
> *But we are breaking all their rules*
> *Just think about it,*
> *We go as far as to beat our own mothers*
> *By rights, those rules are our rules*
> *And yet we are ignoring them*
> *And offending God in our process.*
> *Now we are sinning against our ancestors and God.[41]*

In this song, he addressed a particular problem during the liberation war. The white Rhodesian forces, under the control of Abel Muzorewa, undertook military missions that included beating women who fed or aided the guerilla forces.[42] His tone was different than Mapfumo's in that he addressed the issue as a social problem involving the overthrow of ancient social codes. Muzorewa was an African who attained power through a private agreement with Smith; Mtukudzi framed the issue as an assault on African social values rather than a political problem. This did not mean that he did not understand the underlying political problems; however, the physical punishment of women was a social evil. His assumption of a *sahwira* role placed a considerable amount of power into his hands as a musician. In this way, he understood the impact that music made in the political and social landscape. The *sahwira's* power resides in his poetic license and social immunity from retribution.

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[40] Ibid.

[41] *Zivai Nemwoyo,* as translated in Alec Pongweni *Songs that Won the Liberation War*, 75.

[42] Pongweni, 76.

The music of these musicians stressed the social evils involved in colonial rule. Certainly, the situation in South Africa differed slightly from Zimbabwe and Southern Africa. However, Africans in South Africa and Zimbabwe were both subjected to policies that limited their social, political, and economic advancement. The exact policies may have varied, but the theme of the music applied to many different contexts. Songs that focused on social problems were important because they put the issues of colonialism at the forefront of concern. Some songs focused on unifying against colonial power.

Songs of Unity

Pan-African unity was an important element to the different independence struggles across Africa. Groups, like the Organization for African Unity (OAU), a group that aimed to unite Africans based on their shared experiences, played significant roles in independence struggles. They offered economic support and supplies to help eliminate colonialism in Africa. Songs of unity grappled with the unification of Africa as a whole. In order to eliminate colonialism Africans had to bring together their different interests.

Oliver Samhembere's *Batanai* (Unite) called for a more all-encompassing identity of Africans:

> *Come together everyone*
> *If we are going to have happiness*
> *Show respect towards one another*
> *So that we can all eat and be merry. . .*
>
> *All the peoples of Africa*
> *We are one nation,*
> *Let's not divide ourselves*
> *We are one nation.*[43]

This song, very overtly, expressed Pan-African emotion. It stressed the need for unity in order to achieve the goals set out by guerilla forces and other movements. Through a very detailed lens, a

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[43] *Batanai*, as translated in Alec Pongweni, *Songs that Won the Liberation War*, 73-74.

lack of unity between different political forces within a national boundary could potentially end the fight against colonial control. However, through the lens of Pan-Africanism, the unity of Africans provided each nation the best opportunity to ward of the remnants of colonial power. Because of colonial structures that limited Africans, the unity of Africans enabled guerilla forces to obtain supplies, money, or political support.

Mapfumo's song *Tichakunda* (We Shall Overcome), expressed both the intense poverty and spirit of Africans. This song served two purposes: it tackled the main social issues but also built a more unified identity of those struggling against colonial rule:

> *This is Harare,*
> *The Famous Harare,*
> *Our Lives are a round of poverty,*
> *Our houses are like fowl runs,*
> *We sleep like rats,*
> *Our children at school,*
> *We beg for their meals,*
> *Their clothes are full of patches,*
> *Their education is an uphill struggle,*
> *But we shall win in the end.[44]*

Harare is an important city in Zimbabwe, and a major center for music production. In this context, Harare refers to the city Mbare. This city has been a locus point for African cultural production through both music and dance.[45] The city itself represented Pan-African unity. Many Africans migrated from Malawi and Mozambique to capitalize on the limited opportunities for work within the city.[46] Because of colonial policies that relegated Africans to only labor possibilities, African social mobility was limited. The music and dance cultivated in this urban landscape was the mixing of different cultures. The town in the song represented the rich cultural

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[44] *Tichakunda,* as translated in Julie Frederikse *None But Ourselves: Masses vs. Media in the Making of Zimbabwe,* 110.
[45] Turino, *Nationalists,* 63.
[46] Ibid., 64.

diversity of Africans but also called for unity. The use of the pronouns "we" and "our" identified Africans in Mbare as unified based upon their suffering. Artists like Mapfumo, played significant roles in promoting Pan-Africanism. The guerilla forces also tried to foster unity and support against the Rhodesian government.

The radio was arguably the most crucial medium used to address the masses. It became a prominent form of media during the Second World War. Radio was controlled by the Ministry of Information, under the Rhodesian Broadcasting Corporation (RBC), and used as a political medium for Smith's government.[47] Due to the RBC's ability to censor and control mass media within colonial Zimbabwe, ZANU was forced to broadcast radio programs from Mozambique and ZAPU from Zambia and Tanzania.[48] The participation of these countries, in hosting guerilla forces, further represented the cohesive approach to combating colonial forces. ZANU and ZAPU relocated to other African countries, mainly Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia, and at these headquarters they trained soldiers, held meetings, and broadcast on the radio. The outside organization was necessary because of the power of the white Rhodesian government and its ability to censor the communication of alternative views. These broadcasts used to convey speeches by Mugabe or other leaders greatly impacted many local people. According to Thomas Mapfumo, *Chimurenga* songs were sung before the broadcast by Robert Mugabe.[49] The "*Chimurenga* Requests" program was an immensely popular ZANU program that played *Chimurenga* songs and promoted participation of Africans in Southern Rhodesia. Songs included music by popular musicians such as Thomas Mapfumo but also songs directly from the liberation choirs. One specific song played by ZANU liberation choirs was *Muka! Muka!* (Arise! Arise!).

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[47] Mhoze Chikowero, " 'Our People Father, They Haven't Learned Yet': Music and Postcolonial Identities in Zimbabwe, 1980-2000," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 34 (2008): 154.
[48] Frederikse, 102.
[49] Ibid, 103.

People of Zimbabwe
Living under Oppression
The world is changing
Arise! Arise!
People of Zimbabwe
Living under bondage
The world is changing.[50]

The song *Muka! Muka!* sought to raise mass consciousness of and opposition to the oppression in Rhodesia.[51] This song alluded to the widespread change within the Africa continent. The lyrics stated that not just Zimbabwe was changing, but "the world" was changing. The decolonization of Africa took place over a span of fifty years. However, each of these battles to end oppression of Africans was linked to the decolonization of whole continent.

Within the lyrical composition of liberation songs, artists intended to build a more unified African identity on the basis of colonialism. This did not represent as complete unification of all elements of culture, but it did show that the fight to end white control extended to the continent as a whole. The lyrics were not the only element that represented Pan-African unity. The fusion of different musical styles represented the transnational cultural mixtures in Southern Africa.

Musical Styles

African nationalism rejected both strict ethnic identities and the superiority of white Western culture.[52] The blending of different African musical styles represented an African creation that existed outside the control or dominance of white culture. The mixing of different musical styles, but also other cultural productions, was further proof of a broader African unification. The Diaspora was an important element of musical blending. The music of African-Americans in Harlem united Africans outside of the continent on the basis of repression and the

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[50] *Muka! Muka!,* as translated in Julie Frederikse *None But Ourselves,* 104.

[51] Pongweni, 33.

[52] Lara Allen, "Commerce, Politics, and Musical Hybridity: Vocalizing Urban Black South African Identity during the 1950s," *Ethnomusicology* 47 (2003): 240.

fight for racial equality. The work of Bob Marley provided a international voice against white dominance. The interplay of different musical styles was a powerful symbol of African unification and solidarity.

South African jazz was not just the African counterpart to American jazz. The American jazz movement has roots in African music. The cross-cultural sharing of musical styles was very fluid. American jazz stemmed from the blues, whereas South African jazz came from *Marabi*, a synthesis of local and outside musical styles. However, both the blues and *Marabi* were deeply grounded in African music theory.[53] The evolution of these two different but related forms occurred because of their roots in African music. Miriam Makeba, a prominent South African artist, spent significant time in America during her exile. As well as Hugh Masekela, who studied music in America.[54] Beyond the music composition, both South African jazz and American jazz played important political roles. American jazz represented the music of repressed African-Americans and similarly, South African jazz was the music of culturally rich communities of oppressed Africans in South Africa.[55] African jazz had more subgenres and the participation of artists like Masuku represented the interchange of identities in the formation of new styles. It was not simply South African, but the jazz style that emerged was mostly associated with the struggle to end rule in Apartheid. The development of the musical styles of Mtukudzi and Mapfumo also signified an African harmony.

The music recorded by popular musicians in Zimbabwe included use of the mbira-guitar, a combination of the western guitar and the musical qualities of traditional mbira music and jiti, an acoustic guitar with adapted indigenous *ngoma* drumming styles.[56] Jiti was a style of music

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[53] Coplan, 114.
[54] Ibid., 197.
[55] Ibid., 197.
[56] Turino, *Nationalists*, 230.

connected to the young community that included village dance and drumming.[57] There were many variations and individual styles that combined these two activities. The use of these musical styles, along with African languages, blended foreign popular music with unique African styles that suited the African community. Reverting back to traditional styles, instead of appropriated western styles, undermined the previous dominance of western music styles and attempted to forge more cohesive musical identities. Thomas Mapfumo was famous for reinventing traditional music for a political purpose.

Mapfumo did not create or begin with indigenous music styles; he appropriated them into urban clubs. Stylistically, Mapfumo fused traditional music with popular urban styles including rock.[58] The mbira was critical to Mapfumo's style.[59] The mbira itself is not strictly an instrument of Zimbabwe. It is actually more generally associated with Eastern and Southern Africa. The importance of the mbira to Mapfumo's music was that it was an African instrument not that it strictly represented the Shona. Mapfumo's style of traditional music is perhaps the most popular Zimbabwean music on the current world market. Along with musical styles, Mapfumo changed his attire to suit the changing political context. For example, he donned robes that symbolized non-Western forms of dress.[60] Like ZANU's connection to the 1896 uprising, Mapfumo's clothing related the current struggle to the previous battles. However, his music did not exemplify the whole range of traditional music in Zimbabwe's liberation struggle.

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[57] Ibid., 228.

[58] Ibid., 261.

[59] Hugh Tracey, "The Mbira Class of African Instruments in Rhodesia (1932)," *African Music Society Journal* 4 (1969): 79. The fight against colonialism required troops, arms, and all the tools of rebellion. One of these, however, proved to be the mbira, a musical instrument that is crucial to the traditional music of Zimbabwe. A lot of scholarly work has stressed the importance of the mbira, which is played by musicians who pluck metal reeds. Although it is generally associated with Zimbabwean music, the mbira exists in many different forms across Africa. The use of this instrument has a symbolic connection to the ancestral spirits. This is significant for the liberation music that involved the mbira. The mbira is a crucial part of the *Chimurenga* music of the liberation war. *Chimurenga* music was made popular by Thomas Mapfumo during the struggle. It is characterized by the use of a mbira but with electric instruments and political themes.

[60] Alice Kwaramba, *Popular Music and Society: The Language of Protest in Chimurenga Music: The Case of Thomas Mapfumo in Zimbabwe* (Harare: Department of Media and Communications, 1997) 64.

Other musicians, including Oliver Mtukudzi, had different styles that also addressed traditional music. Mtukudzi combined beats from different regions in Zimbabwe to produce what Zindi called a "national music."[61] This style addressed Zimbabwean regional differences while still forging a musical identity separate from the colonial cultures. Mtukudzi acknowledged that his music is diverse and stated "Yeah, I wouldn't blame them for failing to identify my music because it's like that, it's got a lot of fusion in it. I fuze local, different types of music."[62] Mapfumo and Mtukudzi's styles were distinct but championed the use of traditional African music styles. The reversion to traditional music styles, although reinvented, undermined the dominance of white culture and in turn uplifted African cultures.

The music of repressed Southern Africans reflected both a connection through lyrical content and a stylistic element. Musicians did not just draw from one ethnic group but the entirety of Africa. These styles were dynamic; constantly changing, blending, and playing off different artists. No one artist was static. What connected all of these artists' styles was their rejection of dominant white Western cultural practices. In South Africa, this included some influence by African-American artists and vice versa. Lara Allen argued, in her study of musical hybridity in South Africa in the 1950s, that the ambiguous lyrical structure was a distinct quality in the music of Southern Africa.[63]

Ambiguous Language and Lyrics

Artists that performed during colonial rule were subjected to the repressive policies of white governments. This extended to issues of censorship. This forced artists to write songs in very cryptic language that required the listener to fill in the deeper meaning. Different languages were helpful in this endeavor. Using African languages offered artists a veil in which white

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[61] Fred Zindi, *Roots Rocking in Zimbabwe* (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1985), 41.

[62] Turino, *Nationalists*, 295.

[63] Allen, 235.

governments often lacked the complete understanding of African languages. In Zimbabwe, the guerilla forces were able to produce more politically blatant songs because of their location outside the reach of the Rhodesian government.[64] Mapfumo and Mtukudzi, as well as many other artists, used Shona language to code their messages and reject English as a symbol of colonialism.

Thomas Mapfumo was the most influential musical artist in Zimbabwe during the independence struggle. He wrote political songs that supported the fight for independence from the white Rhodesian minority government. He also wrote songs that addressed life, love and loss. In all of these situations, he related to the mass audiences. The Rhodesian Broadcasting Corporation censored Mapfumo's records because of political content and influence.[65] In spite of this censorship, Mapfumo remained very popular.[66] In an interview with Julie Frederikse, Mapfumo stated that he started writing music in Shona to "encourage those boys who were fighting in the bush."[67]

According to Mapfumo, one of the benefits of writing in Shona was that he could do so esoterically. Despite writing esoterically, many of Mapfumo's songs were still banned from the radio. Mapfumo's music was subject to a lot of the censorship laws of the Board of Censorship and RBC. If Mapfumo released his songs directly to the radio, they were also released to the Board of Censorship.[68] He managed to release records by sidestepping the radio and sending his records directly to venues.[69] The RBC's censorship of Mapfumo's records showed the power of

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[64] Pongweni, 1. The music of the nationalists (ZANU and ZAPU) was more politically oriented than the music of the artists residing in Zimbabwe. The ZANLA and ZIPRA choirs differed from other artists in that they were sharply focused on the political battles for liberation. Their songs were more political because they lived outside of Southern Rhodesia and therefore not punished by Smith's censorship regimen.
[65] Frederikse, 106.
[66] Ibid., 106.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid., 109.
[69] Ibid.

the Rhodesian government to control cultural production. Despite his ability to slightly circumvent the system, Mapfumo's music was still affected by Rhodesian censorship. The censorship laws extended to newspapers, magazines, music, and any form of press. In order to maintain white control the government attempted to limit alternative voices and bombard the Rhodesian media with government sponsored propaganda. Smith's censorship laws did not completely halt or control cultural production but impacted the ways in which it developed and was disseminated.

Mapfumo continued to make political records that were constantly banned by the Rhodesian government. In 1977 Mapfumo's quarrel with the Rhodesian government became more serious. He was arrested and jailed at the Chikurubi prison for three months without facing trial.[70] At this point, Mapfumo was a very famous musician. Many complaints were filed against his unfair detainment, and he was released shortly after.[71] Although Mapfumo was released, many other prisoners remained detained without the possibility of a trial. Although this period was difficult for him, Mapfumo refused to stop protesting social injustices.

Mapfumo's music was also used by the Rhodesian government to support their own cause. Mapfumo played at the Muzorewa rally for the Rhodesian cause.[72] Abel Muzorewa was the Prime Minister of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, established under the Internal Settlement of 1977 that benefited the white minority. Smith attempted to delay the African nationalist government by enabling a black prime minister and a black majority Congress while still supporting white oppressive policies.[73] In exchange for his release from Chikurubi prison, Mapfumo claimed that

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[70] Zindi, 34.

[71] Frederikse, 110.

[72] Turino, *Nationalists,* 288.

[73] Martyn Gregory, "Rhodesia: From Lusaka to Lancaster House," *The World Today* 34 (1980): 12.

he was forced to play at the rally.[74] Mapfumo believed that the Rhodesian government co-opted his popularity in order to gain support for its cause.[75] During bombing raids, Rhodesian helicopters played Mapfumo's songs in an attempt to demoralize guerilla forces.[76] This attempt by the Rhodesian government failed. While the language may have created some ambiguity for non-Shona speakers, for Africans the message was very clear. This was an important distinction between Mapfumo and Mtukudzi. Mapfumo was blatantly political at times while Mtukudzi used more ambiguous lyrics.

Oliver Mtukudzi also similarly suffered censorship but unlike Mapfumo, he was not jailed. However, he also wrote songs that addressed social injustices. In an interview with Thomas Turino, he acknowledged that many of his songs were purposefully vague.[77] He expressed that he wanted to show the "general feeling" of a time rather than make an explicit political statement. Mtukudzi's music addressed social issues, which often had political ramifications. Mtukudzi stated that he wrote music about social issues and if that affected the government then maybe they needed to adjust policies.[78]

Mapfumo and Mtukudzi both used the Shona language as a medium to express their political sentiments. This served many purposes; the music reached a wider audience, supported a unified identity distinct from Rhodesians, and helped to cloud the meaning of blatantly political songs. Writing in Shona enabled them to access a wider audience because many Africans were illiterate and unable to understand English songs.[79] Because of the linguistic complexity of some

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[74] Zindi, 34.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Turino, 288.
[77] Ibid., 299.
[78] Turino, 296.
[79] Ibid, 31.

Shona words, without cultural understanding the Rhodesian government often overlooked songs that supported the nationalist cause.

Masuku faced similar problems of censorship in South Africa; she went into exile because of her music. Masuku's song, *Dr. Malan,* was promptly censored by the South African government in 1960. Coplan argued that local jive, a genre Masuku is attributed to, used the local languages to address social issues that "refer[ed] to current events and address[ed] ussues of common concern."[80] Music that focused on the social problems of African townships unified Africans on the basis of their own experiences and concerns.[81] This particular structure closely aligned with that of Mtukudzi. Song lyrics were simplistic in structure and relied on the underlying meanings of the listener to explain deeper sentiments. This ambiguous language was useful in the oppressive policies of the Apartheid regime.[82] At times, the Apartheid government believed her songs to be in support of their policies while the wider African population interpreted this music as critiques of Apartheid policies.[83]

Masuku's song protested the assassination of Patrice Lumumba in 1961, the critical figure in Congolese independence, and sent Masuku into exile for thirty years.[84] The Belgian and United States' governments were the primary forces in the assassination of Lumumba. His strong Pan-African and Communist beliefs put him at odds with these powerful governments. The governments of Belgian and the United States funneled money into the assassination attempt and political contender Joseph Mobutu, the political enemy responsible for the assassination. Masuku's songs addressed more than just the problems of South Africa, but the problems of Western domination, evidenced by the involvement of Belgium and the United States, in Africa.

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[80] Coplan, 175.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Allen, 235.
[83] Ibid., 235.
[84] Coplan, 176.

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During her years in exile, Masuku maintained a strongly Pan-African identity. Her unfortunate exile cultivated an even stronger Pan-African identity. She performed for President Banda in Malawi and President Nyerere in Tanzania.[85] She did not return to Johannesburg until 1992.

Masuku and Dube represented a very small portion of the landscape of South African political music. Masuku was popular during the 1950s and influenced artists like Mapfumo. Dube became popular in the 1980s. By this time, Zimbabwe had gained independence but the struggle to end Apartheid still existed in South Africa. Each African struggle was not politically or culturally separate from others on the continent. The policies of the OAU attempted to assist anti-Apartheid forces in the elimination of the racist government. Masuku, a Zimbabwean singer, participated in the cultural production of political music in South Africa and underwent exile for her efforts. She also helped launch one of the key figures in South African music: Miriam Makeba. For her music, she was also exiled and was finally able to vote in 1992. Makeba, or "Mama Africa," was a significant figure in the fight against South African apartheid and toured many different African countries.[86] She helped to develop the music programs of Guinea and has multiple citizenships.[87] Lucky Dube's music was very popular, but also assailed the racist policies of South Africa and the colonial leftovers that continued to plague many African nations.

The music in Southern Africa that directly combated the evils of colonialism was connected not only in content but also form. Lyrically, music addressed different issues. Some songs established and placed colonialism as the problem to listeners. This often included the direct approach of the racial dichotomy between whites and Africans. Some songs took overtly

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[85] Dorothy Masuka Biography
[86] Miriam Makeba and Nomsa Mwamuka, *The Miriam Makeba Story* (Johannesburg, South Africa: STE Publishers), 170.
[87] Ibid., 152.

Pan-African stances and called for a unified African approach. Or, songs addressed the issues of other African nations, as with Masuku. These songs are the most Pan-African in their lyrics. Still other songs tackled the tough social issues created by colonial policies across many African nations. These songs are Pan-African in their shared problems. The problems of South Africa were similar to the problems of Zimbabwe. This was evidenced by the issues that restricted the spacial mobility of Africans in different songs.

In form, the musical styles themselves represented the transnational cultural practices in Southern Africa. Because the territories of colonialism were arbitrarily drawn, unity was not limited to national borders. Artists, like Masuku and Mtukudzi strongly represented this idea. Masuku, Pan-African in her own identity, combined many different African musical styles. Likewise, Mtukudzi was not limited to Shona inspiration. He combined many aspects of African music to create his own unique style. The use of African language was incredibly important to music produced during the colonial era. The language itself made the music ambiguous to non-African speakers. The ambiguities of language helped to conceal different meanings and at times avoid censorship.

While music protesting Apartheid continued to be produced in South Africa, the musical atmosphere in Zimbabwe faced some changes following independence. As political unrest quieted, for now, the musical tone changed but music remained an important element in Zimbabwe's cultural development.[88] There was general euphoria following independence that expressed support and thanks to all of Africa for the tremendous achievement of independence. In Zimbabwe, music simultaneously helped to promote a national identity and was then propelled by this identity.

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[88] Turino, 16.

Following independence, ZANU and specifically Robert Mugabe gained control of a black majority government. The government controlled media continued into the new government. These power structures affected the development of music and other arts. Government departments were created in the 1980s to direct cultural development and were appropriated for government purposes. Bob Marley, Thomas Mapfumo, and many dignitaries famously celebrated Zimbabwe's independence with a large concert in Zimbabwe. Marley's success in Zimbabwe was in large part due to his famous album supporting the war. His music offered a message of African unity and solidarity.

Africa in the Diaspora

As the seconds until midnight ticked away on April 17, 1980, forty thousand people awaited the momentous instant of independence in Harare's Rufaro Stadium. Zimbabweans and other invited guests anxiously watched as the Union Jack ceased to wave proudly over Southern Rhodesia and the new flag of Zimbabwe was raised at the venue.[89] The audience erupted when Prime Minister Robert Mugabe spoke of the hopes, dreams, and wishes of an independent and racially equal Zimbabwe.[90] For black Zimbabweans it was a moment that took nearly 100 years to accomplish. The celebration included famed Zimbabwean musician Thomas Mapfumo and the international superstar Bob Marley. Marley's inclusion into this concert displayed his Pan-African status but also was due to his support of Zimbabwe. In 1979, Marley had earlier released an album, *Survival*, which featured the track *Zimbabwe* dedicated to Zimbabwe's liberation struggle. Marley's 1979 album praised self-liberation and African unity.[91] Following

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[89] Sue Onslow, "Freedom at Midnight: A Microcosm of Zimbabwe's Hopes and Dreams at Independence, April 1980," *The Round Table* 97 (2008): 744.
[90] Ibid., 745.
[91] Chikowero, 146.

independence, popular music reflected political, social, and cultural sentiments of Pan-African

involvement and optimism for the future.

> *Set it up in-a Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe);*
> *Africans a-liberate Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe);*
> *Every man got a right to decide his own destiny.*[92]

The theme of Pan-African unity was an important message in Marley's song *Zimbabwe*.

The song represented one of the goals of Pan-Africanism: the complete elimination of all modes

of colonial oppression from Africa.[93] The line "Africans a-liberate Zimbabwe" had a dual

meaning. First, it expressed the importance of blacks in Zimbabwe to eliminate the racist white

minority regime. The right of self-determination and self-rule was an important aspect of African

unity. Independence was the only way to rid Zimbabwe and more broadly Africa from the

oppressive racial practices of Europe and America. However, it also expressed the importance of

the broader African community outside of Zimbabwe. Although Zimbabweans fought for an

independent nation, they did so with the solidarity and support of the rest of the other Africans

on and outside the continent. The Organization for African Unity (OAU) helped the guerilla

armies in Southern Rhodesia diplomatically and financially.[94] Marley's song was not only a

celebration for the people of Zimbabwe but also the celebration of further eradication of colonial

powers in Africa.

Jalani Niaah, in his work on Rastafarianism and Pan-African unity, argued that the

poverty lab, a cyclical system of repression, ensured that blacks remained in a dependent

situation during colonial oppression.[95] In this framework, Africans had been constructed to play

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[92] Bob Marley and The Wailers, "Zimbabwe," *Survival,* Island Records, 1979.
[93] Ajala, 65.
[94] Mohamed A. El-Khawas, "Southern-Africa: A Challenge to the OAU," *Africa Today* 24 (1977): 30.
[95] Jalani N. Niaah, "Poverty Lab: Rastafari and Cultural Studies," In *Pan-Africanism African Nationalism: Strengthening the Unity of Africa and its Diaspora* ed. B.F. Bankie and K. Mchombu, (Asmara: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 2008), 137.

a particular role as weak communities that required governance by a strong white authority.

Niaah further argued that music was the means through which Africans would restructure their

own reality.[96] Music helped to construct a cultural identity of African unity. For example, Bob

Marley's song *Africa Unite* promoted a quest for unity that paralleled that of many African

artists.

> *So-o: Africa unite,*
> *Afri - Africa unite, yeah!*
> *Unite for the benefit (Africa unite) for the benefit of your people!*
> *Unite for it's later (Africa unite) than you think!*[97]

This song called for Pan-African unity. This was an important message for liberation wars

because the masses of Africa were a force that the white governments could not overcome. A

Zimbabwean professor, Isaac Kalumbu, only fourteen at the time of independence, recounted the

importance of Marley's songs sudden popularity; "Zimbabwe was ripe for Marley's message of

liberation, pride, and self-respect."[98]

Niaah also argued that Rastafarianism, the religion associated with reggae music,

opposed colonial oppression by supporting self-reliant principles.[99] These actions were a part of

reconstituting the African identity. Instead of Eurocentric view of Africans, music and cultural

production rebuilt ideas of "African-ness." For Niaah, active participation directly resulted in the

participation of African heritage. This Pan-African ideology manifested itself in music, dance,

literature, and other forms of cultural production. Many artists in Africa adopted reggae. Artists

like John Chibadura, Isaac Chirwa, and Joseph Nhara from Zimbabwe all recorded reggae songs

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[96] Ibid., 137.

[97] Bob Marley and The Wailers, "Africa Unite," *Survival*, Island Records, 1979.

[98] "Zim Professor Recalls Times with Gregory Isaacs," *New Zimbabwe*, http://www.newzimbabwe.com/showbiz-4254-Professor date accessed: 1/21/11.

[99] Niaah, 121.

in local languages. Local artists producing music in local languages made reggae music more accessible and at times appear as more local than imported.

Marley's music was a popular source of African unity from the Diaspora. Africans in the Diaspora faced similar conditions as those faced under colonial rule. African-Americans in the United States struggled against slavery and then the Jim Crow South in order to liberate themselves from politically racist policies, a fight that continues today. There were musical productions from the United States that were influenced by Africa and simultaneously influenced African music as well. Most notably, the mixture of American jazz and different forms of African jazz showed the transnational cultures of the Diaspora and Africa.

In Zimbabwe, cultural production exploded following independence. Music represented the overwhelming happiness that independence had brought to Africans. Much of this music expressed gratitude for the aid of the African continent. Like the music in colonialism, it stressed the importance of continued unity and support amongst Africans.

The Independence Euphoria

The music following independence in Zimbabwe, lyrically, promoted Pan-African unity and in form experienced new styles. The independence era in Zimbabwe captured the imaginations of Africans. It offered the prospects of social mobility and an end to the repressive policies experienced under colonial rule. All of these elements characterized the music atmosphere following independence. It was the imagination of all different possibilities that truly captured the music of Zimbabwean artists. They believed in the prospects of change led by Robert Mugabe, a leader that Africans identified as a member of their community.

On April 17, 1980, the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) broadcast the "music of Zimbabwe."[100] One particular song, *Very Sorry,* by Elijah Madzakatire, showed the awareness of African unity.

> *We thank President Machel,*
> *He helped Zimbabwe, forward with him,*
> *We thank President Nyerere,*
> *He helped Zimbabwe, forward with him*
> *We thank President Kaunda,*
> *He helped Zimbabwe, forward with him*
> *We thank President Khama*
> *He helped Zimbabwe, forward with him*
> *We also remember President Neto*
> *He helped Zimbabwe, forward with him.*[101]

Each of these Presidents represented a neighboring African nation and provided support for the liberation of Zimbabwe. President Machel was the President of Mozambique who hosted ZANLA in his country. Nyerere was the president of Tanzania. He also offered support to the revolutionary groups. Kenneth Kaunda was the President of Zambia who hosted and helped ZAPU in the 1970s. President Khama of Botswana helped to negotiate an end to the war that produced the independent nation of Zimbabwe. President Neto of Angola helped Zimbabwe to achieve liberation. Each of these leaders helped to secure independence for Zimbabwe, and their efforts were reflected in Madzikatire's song.

By the 1980s, Pan-Africanism and the OAU linked African countries in shared oppression and shared aims to de-colonize Africa, but African countries retained their political sovereignty.[102] In Zimbabwe, Pan-African unity was a pervasive societal value as well as a political goal with Zimbabwe's admission to the OAU following independence. In an October 1984 speech regarding Catholic bishops Mugabe stated, "No African on this continent is really

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[100] Frederikse, 326.
[101] *Very Sorry,* as translated in Julie Frederikse *None But Ourselves,* 326.
[102] Ajala, 49.

and truly free and liberated unless and until every African on the continent has been liberated from the shackles of colonialism."[103] Mugabe was directly attacking South Africa's Apartheid government, but his speech showed at the very least the government's dedication toward a Pan-African worldview. The colonialist that continued to ravish South Africa threatened the continent and especially Southern Africa.

Many popular musicians created music that celebrated the success of the war and the hope for a future without colonial oppression. Thomas Mapfumo's music changed in the post-independence era. He included styles like reggae, which not only reflected a Pan-African outlook but reflected popular international music styles. His content expressed a tone of jubilation and support for the new ZANU government. This is evidenced by his lyrics, including the song *Tirikupemberera Zimbabwe* (We Are Celebrating the Birth of Zimbabwe):

> *We are celebrating the birth of Zimbabwe*
> *Zimbabwe is for us all*
> *Mothers are proud of their country*
> *Fathers are proud of their country*
> *Us boys are also proud of our country*
> *Girls are also proud of their country*
> *Congratulations to the liberation fighters*
> *And all their colleagues*
> *Who fought in the Chimurenga war*
> *And liberated Zimbabwe*
> *All the ancestors love them*
> *The whole of Zimbabwe respect them.*[104]

This song signified the hope and perceived change in the political and social policies with Mugabe's government. This song openly supported the new government and the unity of the Zimbabwean people. Kwaramba argued that the unity in Mapfumo's music extended beyond racial boundaries. She pointed to Mapfumo's use of pronouns to create identity in pre-independence songs. For example Mapfumo would justify "us" in his songs with the modifier

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[103] "Africa Needs A Prophetic Church: Mugabe's message to IMBISA," *Moto* October 1984, 14.
[104] *Tirikupemberera Zimbabwe,* as translated in Kwaramba, *Popular Music and Society,* 74-75.

"blacks."[105] But in the post-independence songs the modifier was absent from the lyrics. This showed the extent to which Mapfumo promoted unity as one of his main concerns.

The overwhelming belief in the future was a significant theme in the immediate post-independence music. Mapfumo's *Nwananai* (Understand Each Other), exemplified the need for unity and hope for future success.

> *Unite, Oh! Unite my brothers*
> *Do not demean each other, for we are one*
> *Love each other, we are one family*
> *Do not quarrel among yourselves my dear brothers*
> *Help each other oh! Blackmen!*
> *Do not kill each other my fellow black people*
> *Whatever you want just ask Mr. Mugabe.[106]*

Mapfumo showed the overwhelming idealism in the line, "Whatever you want just ask Mr. Mugabe;" it implied that Mugabe could actually produce policy that satisfied the masses. This assumed Mugabe was in a position to bring about the kind of change necessary to live up to these idealistic notions of independence. This song continued to see unity as the solution. Although independence removed a white government, it did not expel all structures of colonialism.

In his album *Mabasa*, Mapfumo encouraged the people to start rebuilding the country after the poverty and other problems of the colonial period.[107] At first, Mapfumo openly supported the ZANU government, thereby exhibiting his jubilation but also his expectation that revolutionary economic change was coming. The song *Nyaya Huru* (A Serious Issue) addressed the problems of a new government and Mapfumo's support of Mugabe.

> *There's no doubt about the magnitude of the problem.*
> *Only we Zimbabweans can solve it.*
> *This burning issue*
> *Requires the wisdom of our revolutionary leader Mugabe.*

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[105] Kwaramba, 93.
[106] *Nwananai*, as translated in Kwaramba, *Popular Music and Society*, 78.
[107] Chris Stapleton and Chris Map, *African All-Stars: The Pop Music of a Continent* (London: Quartet Books Limited, 1987), 218-219.

> *No one else can tackle this problem – but our wise*
> *President Mugabe.*[108]

This song showed the explicit confidence in Mugabe's regime to resolve the issues that brought

about the revolutionary war. Mapfumo also related Mugabe to his role as leader during the

revolution. This reiterated Mugabe's right to rule Zimbabwe and connected him to the overall

triumph of the war. The problem that Mapfumo addressed was the difficulty of reforming a

government and a society after such a bloody battle.[109] It showed the public's expectations for a

socialist state. But it also illustrated the Pan-African ideals of self-determination.

The song *VaMugabe Votonga* (Mugabe Is Now Ruling), by the Green Arrows, contained

similar sentiments.

> *There's now no doubt in our minds*
> *The people of Zimbabwe*
> *Have made their choice, jongwe (the rooster).*[110]

The rooster was the symbolic representation of Robert Mugabe as a man among men, and also

the symbol of ZANU during the election.[111] The people of Zimbabwe had voted in Mugabe; this

asserted the people's newfound power as conscious controllers of their own lives and

government.

Mapfumo used clothing to also signify the unity of the new Zimbabwean nation. He wore

scarves and other apparel that had yellow, black, green, and red which were the colors of the

national flag.[112] Besides the obvious display of nationalism, these colors bore wider significance.

The national colors of Zimbabwe combine two different sets of colors that signify Pan-

Africanism. Black, green, and red are the colors of the Universal Negro Improvement

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[108] *Nyaya Huru,* as translated in Alec Pongweni, 159. The song references Mugabe as President, he was actually
Prime Minister, but the foremost importance was his position as leader.
[109] Pongweni, 160.
[110] *Vamugabe Votonga,* as translated in Pongweni, 158.
[111] Pongweni, 160.
[112] Kwaramba, 94.

Association founded by Marcus Garvey. Garvey urged a "Back to Africa" campaign, which advocated return of Africans in the Diaspora return to Africa to secure a pure black race.[113] These colors are also the Rastafarian colors, which came to symbolize Reggae music through Marley's immense popularity internationally.[114] Gold, green, and red were the colors of the Ethiopian flag before the split with Eritrea. Ethiopia also was significant to the Pan-African movement. It was the only country to retain independence while Europe cut up the rest of Africa.[115] Ethiopia was also the first country to adopt Christianity, well before European countries, and thus falsified the claim that European Christianity was somehow separate from Africa. For black Christians, Ethiopia was considered the savior of blacks; it was predestined that Ethiopia would save the black race from the oppressive rule of whites. [116] When Mapfumo wore scarves that represented the national flag, he was not only asserting his national identity but also confirming his lineage and allegiance to Pan-African goals.

The explosion of music in the early 1980s and after resulted in music that was not confined to one specific genre. Musicians in Zimbabwe were influenced by many different genres of popular music, both from Africa and abroad. The combinations of different styles and genres were important cultural exchanges of the new independent Zimbabwe but did constitute the creation of a separate identity. Kanneh argued that both language and culture are the blueprints for a nation or people.[117] Thus, Mapfumo's use of Shona during the liberation struggle constituted the rebuilding of an African identity outside of the Rhodesian government's grasp. Similarly, Chibadura's, Chirwa's, and Nhara's transformation of reggae styles into Shona

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[113] Legum, 26.
[114] Ron Bhola, "The 'Lost' Footage of Bob Marley's Early Career," *BBC News*, http://www.bbv.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-12748659 date accessed: April 8, 2011.
[115] C.L.R. James, *A History of Pan-African Revolt* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company, 1995), 9.
[116] Ibid., 9.
[117] Kanneh, 36.

defined them as uniquely Zimbabwean. The reggae style carried symbolic messages of Pan-African unity because of the link to the African Diaspora in Jamaica; but these musicians still represented Zimbabwe. Reggae was not the only style that influenced artists, nor was it the most significant. African styles such as rhumba, South African jazz, and others were involved in the cross-cultural sharing of music in the African Diaspora.

Popular musicians promoted ideas of Pan-African unity and triumph in the early independence era. By the mid-1980s, the euphoric period of independence had ended. Mugabe's government had failed to bring about socialist change and correct the racial and poverty problems in Zimbabwe. However, the context changed from hope to critical analysis of Mugabe's policies and the loss of imagined possibilities.

Trouble on the Horizon, 1985-1995

Moto Magazine reemerged from the censorship of the Rhodesian government in December 1982 with a picture of Bob Marley and the triumphant title "None but ourselves can free our minds."[118] This title came from Marley's famed song *Redemption* and expressed the value of self-liberation and the idealism, even if only imagined, that emerged from independence. By June 1988, the cover of *Moto* read "Prisoner of rigid economic policy?" and depicted a man behind bars.[119] By the mid to late 1980s, Mugabe's efforts to introduce socialism gradually were failing to appease the masses. Music and magazines began to mirror the discontent with an economic policy which continued to benefit the white minority while many Zimbabweans faced intense poverty. In *Uneven Development,* Patrick Bond painted the economic transition from the Rhodesian government to the ZANU controlled government "in

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[118] *Moto,* Front Cover, December 1982/January 1983.
[119] *Moto,* Front Cover, June 1988.

colors of continuity rather than change."[120] Just as the ZBC inherited the structure of the RBC, the economy of Zimbabwe retained much of the structure of the colonial system. By the late 1980s, the music in Zimbabwe had begun to reflect the lack of change in lives of poor Zimbabweans.

The limited structural change in Zimbabwe's policies was evidenced through broadcasting policy. The Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation replaced the Rhodesian Broadcasting Corporation with independence. The only change that occurred was the symbolic changing of the "R" to "Z" on public buildings.[121] Like the RBC, the ZBC was given the only broadcasting rights under the Broadcasting Act of 1957.[122] In Zimbabwe, there were no private radio stations. The government was able to appropriate the airwaves as a medium to disseminate its nationalist rhetoric. The broadcasting system in Zimbabwe consisted of four radio stations: Radio one played predominantly international music for white audiences, Radio two played (in Shona or Ndebele) about 70% local music, Radio three broadcasted 70% international music targeted at the younger demographic, and Radio four played 70% local music in minority dialects.[123] However, Radio one and Radio three had superior equipment producing better clarity; this benefited international artists at the cost of local musicians because local musicians sounded dated compared to international artists.[124]

Broadcasting policy that favored international artists failed to reflect the musical atmosphere in Zimbabwe following independence. The ZANU government was aware of the power that music had to create political and social awareness. They built broadcasting policies

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[120] Bond, 175.
[121] Chikowero, 147.
[122] Diane Thram, "ZVAKWANA – ENOUGH! Media Control and Unofficial Censorship of Music in Zimbabwe," in *Popular Music Censorship in Africa,* ed. Michael Drewett and Martin Cloonan (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006) 78.
[123] Chikowero, 154.
[124] Ibid., 158.

that supported non-political music and music that built the Zimbabwean identity around the success of the liberation war. Official policy did not foster the growth of the music industry or success of popular musicians but used the media to glorify nationalist leaders. The music that was broadcast by the ZBC controlled radios failed to address the inequality of land distribution and poverty.[125] These issues would eventually become fodder for popular musicians in the late 1980s and early 1990s; the music of popular musicians in the early 1980s was filled with optimism for a socialist regime that would end the repressive economic policies of the Rhodesian government.

In the post-independence period, Mugabe's government experienced significant opposition because of his inability to achieve the new life for Africans following independence. It is easy to view Mugabe and the political elites as merely corrupted. While corruption is a main feature of the continued problems plaguing Africans, the problem continues to be remnants of colonialism. Mugabe's government was not without its successes. As female musicians, like Susan Mapfumo (no relation to Thomas Mapfumo), realized in the 1950s and 1960s patriarchy and colonialism subordinated women. She challenged the fractures created in African cultures via colonial policies that sexualized women in urban spaces.[126] In 1982, the government in Zimbabwe attempted to bring more stability to gender differences.

In 1982, the government enacted the Legal Age of Majority Act, which separated African women from the dominance of male supervision. This act made women in Zimbabwe legal at the age of eighteen; they were allowed to enter into contracts without the control of a male relative

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[125] Maurice Taonezvi Vambe, "Popular Songs and Social Realities in Post-Independence Zimbabwe," *African Studies Review* 43 (2000): 77.
[126] Ibid., 84.

and vote.[127] The government's motivation was partially due to the voting rights of a larger part of the electorate.[128] Mugabe and the ZANU government's successes were fewer than the problems that arose from colonialism.

The 1984 government policy in Matabeleland, a ZAPU stronghold, questioned the imagined Zimbabwean identity that had been presented by popular musicians and government sponsored broadcasts. The overwhelming victory of ZANU in the 1980 elections, under questionable circumstances, created an anti-government force in the Ndebele territory of Matabeleland.[129] The anti-government dissidents and rumors of violence in Matabeleland were Mugabe's justification for military action in the area. Reports from Botswana told a violent story of government aggression against women and children.[130] The state-sponsored violence, lack of recognition and policy that promoted musicians, and abandonment of socialist policies resulted in the development of protest songs from popular musicians. Artists like Mapfumo, who had once supported the nationalist government, now began to criticize the corruption and problems in Zimbabwe explicitly in songs like *Corruption*.[131]

> *The big fish are corrupt*
> *Some women strip for a job*
> *Everywhere is corruption.[132]*

In this song, Mapfumo attacked what he saw as a betrayal by Mugabe's government. He also added a gendered element to the corruption; it cost women their dignity to be forced into a sexualized occupation because of the rampant corruption by state officials. Because of a lack of opportunities for Africans, women were forced to sexualize themselves for economic

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[127] Carol Riphenburg, "Women's Status and Cultural Expression: Changing Gender Relations and Structural Adjustment in Zimbabwe," *Africa Today* 36 (1997): 36.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Marguerite Johnson, "Zimbabwe: Terror in Matabeleland," *Time*, 51.
[130] *Ibid.*
[131] Vambe, "Popular Songs and Social Realities," 79.
[132] *Corruption,* as translated in Vambe "Popular Songs," 80.

advancement. Mapfumo's use of English and reggae beat in *Corruption* intended to reach a wider audience.[133] He changed the form of the song to market and fit the particular demographic in which he wanted his message to be heard.

Mapfumo continued to revisit the theme of colonialism after independence in *Tumira Vana Kuhondo* (Send their Children to War), a lyric to which he gave new meaning. During the independence war, the song was used to recruit more boys and girls to fight. In the context of the late 1980s, the song addressed the continued attempts to overcome colonial power structures. In a concert at the University of California Santa Barbara, Mapfumo played this song as a political commentary about the use of child soldiers in African conflicts.

> *They send their children to war*
> *Hoo oa haa aa*
> *You'll regret*
> *Send their children to war, brother*
> *Send their children to war, iyeiye*
> *Send their children to war, sister*
> *Always sending children to war.*[134]

The arbitrary boundaries, which were created in colonialism, proved to be violent constructions. These boundaries combined with colonial policies of divide and rule created imagined ethnic communities with very real consequences. For example, the Hutu and Tutsi conflict in Rwanda stemmed from colonial policies that constructed these ethnic communities. These ethnic groups were pitted against one another, during colonialism, for limited African mobility. Despite independence, these rivalries have destroyed infrastructure in Rwanda and have caused the use of child soldiers in the continued civil wars.

Women participated in the critique of post-colonial governance. Mbuya Madhuve's song *Mutonga* peered into the destruction of the independence visions through the greed of its leaders:

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[133] Kwaramba, 139.
[134] *Tumira Vana Kuhondo,* as translated in Thomas Turino's *Nationalists, Cosmopolitans, and Popular Music in Zimbabwe,* 287.

Look, the leader now controls everything,
Even decision-making institutions are under him
This leader now takes himself as a superior to those that put him in power.
This leader is getting used to oppressing others
This leader is greedy because he eats alone.[135]

Mbuya Madhuve commented on the pervasive power of the government in the line "Even decision-making institutions are under him." The ZANU government's control of social institutions like broadcasting was part of the pervasive power that Mbuya Madhuve denounced. In the line "This leader now takes himself as a superior to those that put him in power," she addressed issues of the widening class problems between the ruling elite and masses. This leader, she asserted, had effectively undercut the very collective identity that had been forged during the liberation struggle.[136] The allegedly cooperative and non-competitive character of African communities was considered the cornerstone of a socialist economy in Pan-African theory.[137]

In 1990 Mugabe was reelected, and this officially ended the quest for a socialist policy in Zimbabwe. This reelection ushered in the period of International Monetary Fund (IMF) restrictions and the implementation of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programs (ESAP).[138] In order to receive the loans from the IMF, Zimbabwe had to implement ESAP. This involved deregulating the economy, cutting social spending, and opening of trade markets.[139] The structural adjustment programs were intended to promote growth in the private sector and thereby bring Zimbabwe out of a crisis and promote prosperity through a neo-liberal economic program.[140] But neo-liberal mechanisms failed to deliver prosperity and indeed increased the difficulties of the Zimbabwean economy. The neo-liberal economic policy limited the

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[135] *Mutonga,* as translated in Urther Rwafa and Maurice Vambe, " 'Hear Our Voices': Female Popular Musicians in Post-Independent Zimbabwe ," *Muziki* 4 (2007): 75.
[136] Urther Rwafa and Maurice Vambe, " 'Hear Our Voices': Female Popular Musicians in Post-Independent Zimbabwe," *Muziki* 4 (2007): 76.
[137] James, 25.
[138] Bond, 376.
[139] Ibid., 414.
[140] Ibid., 381.

government's ability to redistribute wealth and resulted in an increase of poverty.[141] This growing poverty due to the disastrous ESAP was reflected in the cultural landscape of Zimbabwe.

In the early 1990s, popular musicians used song to criticize the social effects of neo-liberal economic policy of the IMF, which was the last option for the ZANU-PF government.[142] Songs like Mapfumo's *Varombo Kuvarombo* (The Poor People) and Leonard Zhagata's *Mugove* (Reward) celebrated hopeful possibilities based on what they perceived to be a prosperous economy.[143] Both artists harnessed the dreams from the euphoric period after independence to build an imagined ideal. With independence, these artists expected the overthrowing of the dominant power relationships in Zimbabwe. The colonial structures made Zimbabwe dependent on foreign investment. Both artists invented possibilities with independence, and used them to critique the failures of the current government. These imagined and prosperous societies of Mapfumo and Zhakata undermined the nationalist music that saw ZANU PF as liberators and the legitimate rulers of Zimbabwe.[144] Despite the invented worlds, the economic situation of Zimbabwe also created musical discourse that called for a unified Africa.

The World Bank and IMF sponsored neo-liberal economic policies had plagued many other African, Asian and Latin American countries, and not just Zimbabwe. Thomas Mapfumo seemed aware of this wider meaning, hence he reacted to the ESAP-induced poverty in the Pan-African song, *Vanhu Vatema* (African People).

> *Africans if we unite*
> *We will be able to feed our family*
> *Africa if we unite*

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[141] Ibid., 397-398.
[142] Maurice T. Vambe, "Thomas Mapfumo's 'Toi Toi' in Context: Popular Music as Narrative Discourse." *African Identities* 2 (2004): 94.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid.

Our family will have enough food
If we bring our currencies together
We will buy plenty of things
If we do speak with one voice
Then everyone will hear our plea.[145]

The Charter for the OAU stated a goal "that all African States should henceforth unite so that the welfare and well-being of their peoples can be assured."[146] Mapfumo's message called for the unity of African states, not just on a cultural level or shared solidarity but he also called for the combining of currencies and thus a unification of national economies. *Vanhu Vatema* focused attention on the human cost of IMF policies and argued that the African communities' globalized economies had actually further impoverished the masses.[147] This separated the African interests from that of the Western world. The notion of community extended beyond Zimbabwe's borders and throughout the continent.[148] Again, artists resorted to the idea of Pan-African unity to fight problems of inequality. This community promoted a united Africa that could continue the decolonization process. The highly commoditized, liberal, and industrialized theories of the West failed. But Mapfumo advocated that the African community could combat what the Western world had failed to change. This extremely Pan-Africanist stance detached the neo-liberal, and some would argue neo-colonial policies, from the well-being of Africans.

Musical production that critiqued the failures of the government and the neo-liberal Western forces mirrored the structures used to fight colonialism. They built narratives that identified the continued problems of Africans. These were often the same problems that existed during the colonial period. In Zimbabwe, this was the problem of uneven access to land that favored whites and political elites. Artists then promoted the solution of Pan-African unity. The

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[145] *Vanhu Vatema*, as translated in Kwaramba, *Popular Music and Society*, 137.
[146] Ajala, 369.
[147] Kwaramba, 139.
[148] Ibid., 148.

situation in Zimbabwe was not unique to Africa. In Africa, independence did not mean freedom from colonialism. In fact, it often meant the continuation of colonial policies through a nationalist government, like in Zimbabwe. The government was limited in the changes that could be made following independence. Thus, musicians were critiquing the same colonial power before and after independence.

Conclusion

Music is an important tool harnessed by governments and individual artists for the purposes of cultural production and – often – the advancement of political agendas. It can pervade everyday life, reach wider audiences, and for this reason is a useful medium for political discussion. This paper attempts to show the ways in which music in Zimbabwe and South Africa, promoted the concept of Pan-African unity. A united African consciousness was considered paramount to development and the success of the liberation war and overthrow of the Apartheid regime. Music artists situated their problems within the history of colonialism in Africa. They then used this structure to call upon a unified African stance based on shared experience and solidarity.

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