AN INTERROGATION OF THE CONTEXT REFERENTIALITY OF
POSTCOLONIAL SHONA POPULAR MUSIC IN ZIMBABWE: A
SEARCH FOR THE CONTEMPORARY LEITMOTIFS

By

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DECLARATION

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I, Benjamin Mudzanire, declare that An interrogation of the context referentiality of postcolonial Shona popular music in Zimbabwe: a search for the contemporary leitmotifs is my own work and that the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

...................... 30 November 2016

Signature  Date
Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to the memory of my late father, educator and philanthropist, Samson Karekwaivanane Mudzanire, whose passion for education and humanity tremendously inspired me.
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ABSTRACT

The study interrogates the context reflectivity of postcolonial Shona popular music in Zimbabwe. It also explores the extent to which the legal environment in which the same music is produced, disseminated and consumed affects expressivity and artistic precision. The study is inspired by the New Historicism theory which assumes that every work of art is a product of the historical moment that created it and can be identified with the cultural and political movements of the time. The same is believed of popular music. The study is also beholden to the Marxist literary tradition for its assessment of the discourse of politics and socio-economic issues in popular music. For all the analysis, an Afrocentric eye view informs the thesis.

Being qualitative in perspective, the research mainly uses the hermeneutic research design as an operational framework for the interpretation of lyrical data. Hermeneutics, as a method of textual analysis, emphasizes the socio-cultural and historic influences on qualitative interpretation. Postcolonial Shona popular music is purposively sampled and critically studied using the hermeneutic method to tease out latent social and political nuances in lyrical data. Interviews are roped in as alternative opinions to validate hermeneutic data.

The research observes that the legislative environment in which Zimbabwean popular music is composed is, on paper, very conducive for the art but in practice severely restrictive. The constitution allows the artiste sufficient space to sing any subject but confessions by some critics alert on the incidences of some censored products. Even against that backdrop artistes have gone on to compose politically suggestive music. However, from the first decade of independence, the tendency for the artiste has been to flow with the meta-narrative or hegemonic discourses of the state, while in the later decades the artiste sounds critical of the nationalist government. Realising the power of music to articulate serious national issues; among other prescriptions, the study recommends that government creates a flexible and democratic legislation that allows for unbounded creativity and consumption of artistic products.
Key words

Censorship, referentiality, motif, leitmotif, composition, lyrics, sociality, popular music, counter-narrative, meta-narrative
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Preamble

The role of music as an articulate record of a people’s culture and history has largely gone undocumented in national and international discourses. Compared to the print media, music has escaped recognition as a serious mode of social and political expression. Music has largely been appreciated at the emotional level of its consumption without a thorough examination of the institutional processes and symbolism implicit in its composition. The focus of analysis, in most cases, has been on the technical aspects of music such as tone, timbre, texture and genre at the expense of music sociality. Social meaning in music has been regarded as merely conjectural, more than purposively contrived. Alternatively, music has been regarded as self-referential and an art accountable to no context, hence its unbounded reception by people, even geographically and culturally alienated, given the palpable globalising thrust of human interaction.

Music as an art form whose medium is sound, like any art, is hewn out of the artiste’s social context and is, in some way, a commentary or a reflection of its creator’s environment. The composition of any music takes place in its immediate social and political milieu whose bearing on the music is a matter of close interest. In fact, as Moyo (2013:560) rightly observes, all cultural productions, music included, are steeped in their materiality. The politics of the time offers the artiste the material to comment on the social and political situation of that society. To substantiate this view, Musvoto (2007:61) argues that all artistic creations, music included, are historical artefacts produced at specific historical moments and their meanings are in many ways produced by these moments. That way, art becomes a people’s socio-political travelogue; a narrative of their evolution in time and space.

Extrapolating this argument into the Zimbabwean context, this study examines the predominant social and political motifs expressed in postcolonial Shona popular music in Zimbabwe as well as evaluating the validity of music as a social transcript of
postcoloniality. It interrogates popular music sociality against the backdrop of the legislative frameworks in which the music evolves.

1.1 Background

Music has always been the core fortifying African societal activities whether it is in happiness or in sorrow, in war or in hunting (Mapuwei and Onata, 2013:111). Yet the place and function of music and musicians in society have been greatly modified in space and time. As old forms disappeared, new forms were created (UNESCO Report 1973 cited in Kwaramba, 1997). The major political interactions and changes locally and globally have given birth to a number of developments whose bearing on Shona popular music excites this research. Before delving into the very centre of this research, a brief insight into the background and changing roles of the utility of music in Zimbabwe’s various historical epochs affords one an enlightened entry into the research. It is not too difficult to delineate in precise and concise terms the development path of music in Zimbabwe as the colonial developments, pre- and post easily rhyme with the developments affecting the growth of music, nature and content of the same. The same goes for the other expressive avenues like novels and poems as Kahari (1990) in The Rise of the Shona Novel, Chiwome (2002) in A Social History of the Shona Novel and A critical History of the Shona Poem (1996) explore. Deducible from the foregoing studies is a neat exploration of the pre-colonial, colonial and the postcolonial developments in Zimbabwe. In similar tone, musical developments in Zimbabwe are interrogated to estimate how close they articulate postcolonial socio-economic and political discourses in their context.

1.1.1 Pre-colonial Shona music and social context

The Shona traditional music pre-dates modern modes of social and political expression. In traditional pre-colonial Zimbabwe, like in many oral-aural African communities, music played many social and political functions beyond mere entertainment. Mano (2007:65) argues that, music has been part of the popular struggles for liberation from the pre-colonial to the postcolonial eras in Zimbabwe. The song virtually pervaded all aspects of human transactions. Pre-colonial music performance and production was imbedded
within society’s day to day activities ranging from birth, through life to death (Dube, 1996:101). It was integrated in the whole process of community living. It graced any social event and activity within the community; from communal labour, war, hunting, courtship to individual relief. It coordinated communal efforts by harmonizing and easing communal labour (Chiwome, 1996). Labour was a collective enterprise within the African communities which demanded a subtle coordination psychology. The song had an easing effect on the mind. Besides that, love, death, agony, anger, pity, and sorrow found expression in and through music (Durant and Welch, 1995). There were songs for the tormented, the depressed, and the elated; assisting them to cope with the vicissitudes of life. The UNISA study guide on Orature (2011:97) lucidly spells out that:

The types of songs for use on a particular occasion generally indicate that each musical type is more suited for use in a particular context than others on account of its emotional content or the way it is linked with actions and people.

Implicit in the observation is the salient point that folk songs had specialised functions. This clearly sells out their composition and performance as context specific. Folk music marked an integral component of any activity within society. In each separate musical rendition, a corresponding mode of behaviour ensued in the audience in response to the lexical import of the song.

Music was also critical for the transmission of the values of the community, as within music were populated the virtues striven for by the community. Mudzanire and Mufanechiya (2010:89) observe that traditional “music was regarded as a repository for cultural values as well as a conduit for communicating individual or group mind”. As Makwenda (1990) cited in Dube (1996:101) observes, performance was produced within people’s personal lives, their social organisation, politics and social control, gender and religion. The content of music was therefore partly a product of the personal opinion of the artiste and the group mind. The concepts of respect, co-operation, and humility among others were packaged in songs for transmission to current and succeeding generations. That way, music preserved important values of society. The song was afforded a special place in the cultural activities of the society. It virtually
pervaded all aspects of community life; from rites of passage, labour, religion, social interaction to politics. The critical minimum threshold in any traditional music was that its subject matter be drawn from the actual activities of people in their lived circumstances. This way, the content matched the occasion.

The Shona people’s conception of conflict resolution was mediated through song and poetry; it was not confrontational but diplomatic. The veiled protest song was valuable as a conflict resolution mechanism (Batidzirai, 1998:130). Its meaning was not explicit but intended to reach the aggressor without arousing a sense of vengeance and confrontation. Through *jikinyira/mavingu* (protest poetry), the Shona solved their problems amicably. The Shona registers restricted that latitude to say out anything one wanted to say to anyone such that the daughter-in-law (*muroora*) and the mother-in-law (*vamwene*) would not directly exchange words. *Muroora* would use the veiled protest song to register her displeasure with her in-laws in any conflict. An attentive in-law would realise that something had gone wrong and there was need for change of behaviour. In the same way, witches were not confronted directly but through veiled protest. It was realised how dangerous it was for anyone to directly confront a witch, hence the need to be diplomatic and scheming in one’s approach. Such poetry pieces became cathartic outlets for the tormented souls within the family set up and mainstream society.

To further confirm the centrality of music in pre-colonial Africa and Zimbabwe in particular, African kingdoms had professional musical artistes who specialised in war and state praise songs. In West Africa these were called bards or *griots* and *izimbongi* (in the Nguni societies of Southern Africa) as Dube (1996:102) records. To accentuate the existence of these professional singers, Mudenge (2011), acknowledges that King Mutapa had professional musicians in his courts. These would sing praises for the king and helped in crafting war songs for use during battles and victory celebrations. In some cases, songs would be useful in transmitting community history, victories and challenges. Vansina (2006) observes that, among some of the mnemonic devices to help in the retention of traditional memory, songs, drums and rhythm must be
mentioned as important aides. In them were reposed important historical and cultural events that would be passed from one generation to another. A song like *Gwindingwi rine shumba inoruma* (Gwindingwi has a ravenous lion) among the Mhazi people of Zimbabwe evokes the spirit of revenge within this tribal grouping. It also reminds the offender of the fighting exploits of the Mhazi people. In intertribal conflicts or wars, songs would be used to boost people’s morale. Previous victories and histories were summoned to help equip fighters with spiritual resources to face the enemy head on.

In African religious traditional practices, music punctuated virtually all activities such that it cannot be considered as farfetched to suggest that without music there was no religion in Africa. In fact, Damone (2013) says of African music and religion, the relationship between the two fields seems so intimate that it is difficult to believe that one ever existed without the other. Music and religion in Africa seem to form a homogenous couple. Songs constituted that verbal aspect critical in the whole process of worship. In religion, music sought to express and arouse pious religious feelings as well as placating the spirits. Spirit mediums were catapulted into a trance at the tune and beat of the drum. Spiritual manifestation was aroused by music and dance. Sacrifices were offered in music and poetry, further stressing the utility of music in African religious practices. Music was also considered a source of information on the nature of the gathering. Every religious gathering had its songs which communicated the nature of that gathering.

Ceremonial processes and traditional rites of passage were marked by songs that carried a message appropriate for the occasion. Marriage songs were populated with messages that bore the morals and values striven for by families of the just married and society at large. The groom and the bride would know what challenges and expectations lay ahead of them. Some ceremonies like deaths and mourning were associated with dirges that expressed the grief and the pain of death. Damone (2013) observes that among the Moba of Togo, all the phases of a funerary ceremony, starting with the announcement of death to the burial were punctuated by different rhythms.
Among the Shona, even in present day death ceremonies, people sing throughout the night as the body lies in state as they try to console the bereaved.

The minimum expectation in Shona traditional music was that every song be relevant to the situation at hand. The occasion not only instructed the beat of the song but the content as well. No serious music was performed out of context. A funeral dirge, celebratory songs or worship songs were dictated by their unique context. That traditional set up has since been superseded by many socio-political events whose bearing on music obviously makes the conducting of this research a compelling undertaking. This spurs the researcher into making an inquiry into the social and political themes populated in musical composition in post-colonial Zimbabwe. Before these can be explored, this study makes a resume’ of the effects of colonialism on the nature and content of Shona popular music.

1.1.2 Shona music during the colonial period

Colonialism is a legacy shared by many African states. The 1884 Berlin Conference is a watershed event that has overarching effects on most African societies in space and time. African cultural practices significantly changed in response to this imperialist wave. Mudzanire (2013:160) observes that the Eurocentric tragic trilogy of slave trade, colonialism and neo-colonialism left an indelible imprint on the African socio-political state. Colonialism marked an important turning point in the history of Africa. The legacy of this epochal encounter between Europe and Africa had far reaching effects on African music and sociality. Affiliated to the coming of colonial rule in Africa, several developments conspired to change the nature and role of music in Africa. Colonialism introduced new social and political structures such as urbanisation, formal education, Christianity among other changes which significantly changed the context of African music. Colonialism brought with it an economic mode of production that was not community based. The new economic system saw many people being recruited to work for the colonialists in the newly created urban centres thereby exposing them to foreign cultures. Women were largely left out of mainstream employment and relegated to the rural areas. Colonialism created individualism and alienated the worker from the rest of
the group as there was no communal production effort. Music was no longer a communal aspect motivated by community activities. Instead, it became a way of life for individuals as the need to eke out a living out of one’s labour characterised the new economic dispensation. As a way of economic adaptation, artistes performed for a fee in the townships as opposed to their counterparts in the rural areas. Music performance, content and rationale assumed new dimensions. Besides, the age old role of music as a medium of instruction and ceremonial aid was replaced with formal education laments Kwaramba, (1997). Traditional religious music was forced to exist side by side with Christian music or would be summarily obliterated as it was deemed to be unholy with its instrumentation labelled vestiges of paganism. (But for some while, traditional music refused to be consigned to the grave as in some resistance pockets traditional practices were followed).

Colonialism ushered in a new era of music commercialisation and professionalisation never seen before. Music production and performance assumed a new dimension and outlook as the economic mode shifted from pastoralism to capitalism. The movement of workers to towns created a music void in the rural African communities since some creative minds migrated to the city (Dube, 1996:104). In the new economic dispensation, music was no longer communally produced and owned as was the case in the past. Individuals drawing their music from the environment were born but the music was no longer tied to specific cultural set ups which in the past dictated the content and form of that music. As in South African reserves, where the homeland policy and migrant labour removed people from their local context of music making (Dube, 1996), the movement of black people to urban areas heavily affected their music originality. To eke out a living for themselves and their families, they had to adopt western musical instruments and in some cases themes that resonated with the cultural change. They had to perform in townships and community halls to thrill the workers and free their minds from the pressure of colonial labour and forced alienation from communal life. The music themes largely ranged from nostalgia to estrangement as musicians took stock of their glamorous culture and history with the latter largely denied them, courtesy of the rigid censorship mechanisms in place.
Be that as it may, the African voice could not be silenced as some musicians resisted to be cocooned by the public broadcaster then. They largely used private recording companies to market their music since the broadcaster strictly gagged songs that had a political outlook (Sibanda, 2014). During the colonial era Zimbabwean musicians recorded inspiring compositions that sought to remind the black populace on the need to free itself from oppression. Political choirs and bands that chose to criticise the establishment vented their ire through Voice of Mozambique which was broadcasting from Mozambique. Pongweni (1982) has examined the import of songs in Zimbabwe’s war of liberation where the writer realised the function of music in negotiating the revolution. Various metaphorical strategies were employed to by-pass the censorship mechanisms prohibiting free expression of political thought. In his newspaper article Zindi (2012) observes that in the struggle for independence, song and dance played a pivotal role in unifying freedom fighters and the masses:

...raising their morale through messages that defined the purpose of the armed struggle. In a bid to preserve the morale of the freedom fighters in camps and the morale of the masses at home, song and dance was used to educate, inform and entertain.

Freedom fighters used the song to mobilise the support of the ordinary people as well as helping them to appreciate the course of the revolution. They convened punywes (night meetings) to educate people through song and speech. Songs were carefully composed to convey political messages to the people. Alongside political punwes songs, popular musicians like Thomas Mapfumo galvanised the audience into a revolutionary frenzy through their songs. Yet in many historical documents, there is very little evidence to acknowledge music as a crucial mode of political expression, hence the need to examine the role of music in discoursing serious issues in society.

Some politically suggestive songs were banned by the colonial government fearing that such compositions would potentially incite Black uprising. The Rhodesia Broadcasting Corporation (RBC), the public broadcaster, then, censored any music perceived to be purveying politically suggestive messages. Back then, the public broadcaster was
strategically placed to make an artiste popular as broadcasting was the most effective method of message dissemination. The other method was through the plastic records, in a nation in which only a few people, who had the opportunity to be on the WENELA (Witwatersrand Native Labour Association) programme in South Africa, could afford a record player. The artiste had no choice but to stay within the thematic framework of the broadcaster. The repressive laws of the 1960s and 1970s were used by the Smith regime to prevent presenters from playing specified music considered to be anti-government in one way or the other. Elsewhere, in the book industry, pre-publishing censorship was commonplace. The Rhodesia Literature Bureau was established, ostensibly to promote Shona and Ndebele literature works while clandestinely wielding a censorship machete to rid literature of any political nuances. The Shona musician, like the novelist, had to avoid politically inclined themes if their works were to see the light of day.

The colonial government usurped the artiste’s voice and most of them had to pursue less politically suggestive themes like love, death, infidelity and poverty, which though socially accurate themes were, no doubt, the less crucial business of the day. Zex Manatsa’s *Chipo Chiroorwa* (Chipo, it’s time you got married) and Mtukudzi’s *Perekedza Mvana* (Escort the Lady Back Home) during the height of the liberation struggle were themselves hot hits narrating parochial social issues against the backdrop of more politically relevant concerns. The total effect of this gagging was to inveigle artistes into expending their creative energy on fringe issues and weakening the tempo of the revolution as well as stifling creativity in the artiste who was denied the freedom to eloquently articulate, in song, the critical issues of their time.

More than thirty years after independence, this research considers it prudent to assess the music composition environment as a way of analysing the post-independence creative environment and its impact on the quality and thematic preferences of artistes.
1.1.3 The postcolonial period

As previously mentioned, this study examines the contextual reference of the Zimbabwean popular music. Zimbabwe became independent from colonial oppression on 18 April 1980. This historic event was largely celebrated in song and dance. Since then, a lot of social and political developments have taken place. The celebratory mood that characterised the honeymoon years of this political development has now dissipated. When the independence euphoria is over, taking stock of the fundamental issues and developments and emotions in the post-independence period no longer becomes optional but obligatory, hence this research in a way interrogates the same independence that was celebrated in song and dance.

African writers have reflected on the betrayal of the masses in postcolonial Africa. Such writers include Ngugi wa Thiong’o, in his novels *A Grain of Wheat* (1967) and *Matigari* (1989). The novels depict the eve of Kenya’s independence from British colonial rule while in the latter he clashes with the self-seeking cancer of the postcolonial period. Both novels expose the political elites of their time. Zimbabwean novels like *Barika Remashefu* (The promiscuity of the bosses) by Nyawaranda (1991) and *Sekai Minda Tave Nayo* (Mock us but we now have our land) by Mutasa (2005) are in themselves a clear reflection of the bosses’ illicit liaisons with their private assistants and the contentious issue of the land reform, respectively. In the radio and telecast modes of bulletins, the validity and reliability of news items and socio-political commentary are an aspect of editorial policy as they aim to produce framed products. Against this background, this research attempts to analyse the location and role of music within the postcolonial context. Affording music the opportunity to reflect on the era not only adds to a variety of angles from which real life issues can be examined but also benefits society from the unique ways in which music addresses socio-political issues. Jann (2007) says music embodies and helps us understand human experiences. Music as an art form whose expression is sound, is unique in that it allows for free expression of political and social thought as the production and marketing can fairly be done independent of the broadcasting authority. This characteristic gives music a discursive
urge over other modes of expression. However, like, Eyre (2001) notes, where there is censorship the voice of the artiste is muted and has to avoid sensitive subjects that may affect the marketing of their music. The climate of fear always affects composers, singers, and writers alike with the effect of silencing the artistic voice.

The search for a dominant discourse mode among a plethora of modes of expression, invites a full review of the expressive avenues locatable in the context under review. This research examines the validity of music as an expressive option in reflecting on the activities and concerns of a people in the given social and political context. This study tabulates the various opportunities and challenges in music as a commentary of Zimbabwean socio-political context.

1.2 Towards a working definition of popular music

The term popular music is, essentially, a generic name for all genres of music having wide appeal to diverse sections of society. According to Longhurst (2007:2), the term refers to music that relates to the issues of market and context in which the music is consumed. Sadly, like Cluley (2007:828) observed, “Longhurst’s silence on what constitutes popular music means that he, ultimately ignores the fundamental starting points for the study of popular music and society.” Yes, the music enjoys popular reception among consumers but what exactly is in the music. Kwaramba (1997) in Mapuwei and Orina (2013:112) argues that popular music like popular culture has a dual meaning that stems from the duality in the concept popular which is derived from the Latin word *popularis* meaning ‘of the people’. It is the music of the people, whose lyrics are almost democratic, liberal and accommodative to changes and fusions. The music originates from the people and is about them. Kwaramba combines the two senses of the phrase which are hospitable to the understanding and use of the phrase in the context of this research; the popular appeal and context derivation aspect of popular music

Middleton (1990:220) and Manuel (1988:1) agree that the common way of defining popular music is to link popularity with scale of activity. The music enjoys popular
appeal and has a larger footprint. It is part of everyday contemporary social life. The Harvard Dictionary of Music (2003) in Mupuwei and Orina (2013:112) reinforces the sense of popularity of music. Here popular music is defined as music that is understood to be a musical idiom of recent centuries whose mass dissemination appeals to the broad public. This conception of music is potentially problematic as it may be fairly difficult to restrict or confine any form of music as popular or not. Is it about quality or quantity?

Contextualising the concept to Sungura and Benga music, Mupuwei and Orina (2013:112) regard popular music as, “essentially part of oral literature...pregnant with metaphors, symbols and cultural signifiers reflecting Kenyan and Zimbabwean social life”. These symbols and signifiers are reflective of the context in which the music is produced and consumed. This definition however, includes but is not limited to the two genres in context. The symbolic and metaphorical constituents of popular music pervade genre bounds.

In this study, popular music is understood as referring to the whole range of music, regardless of genre, which sings about general and specific life issues. It is that music that enjoys currency and relevance in its social or political context much as traditional music in the pre-colonial period would do. In this research the definition of popular music links with popularity of reception of that commercially marketed music. It can not be restricted to any specific genre of music like urban grooves or rhumba but popularly received music enjoying currency in its time.

1.3 Statement of problem

The research evaluates the power of Shona popular music in depicting the social and political landscape in post-independence Zimbabwe. The entertainment value of music in various parts of the world has been appreciated; what sounds largely unexplored is the potential of popular music in articulating contemporary life issues. Traditional music has since established itself as a solemn record of the concerns of the society in which it
is carved, yet popular music is easy to dismiss as a rhythmically driven composition bent on affecting the emotional domains of the consumers. This research therefore explores the validity of Shona popular music as a mode of expression in depicting the contemporary issues of the postcolonial period.

1.4 Aim of the Research

The research estimates the power of Shona popular music in highlighting the contemporary socio-political issues in postcolonial Zimbabwe. The research is prompted by the realisation that music is carved out of real life issues and invariably, in most unbounded contexts, tends to be an honest reflection of the fundamental and critical issues in its background. Buoyed by this conviction, this research therefore assesses the extent to which Shona popular music addresses critical social and political issues in postcolonial Zimbabwe. While the research accepts the existence of other modes of social and political expression, it takes a focused curiosity on music expression as a social and political index of people’s lives.

1.4.1 Objectives

The research seeks to:

a) identify and discuss the social and political issues expressed in Shona popular music in postcolonial Zimbabwe

b) explore the creative environment in which music is composed and consumed in postcolonial Zimbabwe

c) investigate the institutional challenges constraining Shona popular music composition in postcolonial Zimbabwe

d) assess the relevance of Shona popular music as a socio-political commentary in postcolonial Zimbabwe.
1.4.2 Research questions

a) What social issues are contained in Shona popular music in Zimbabwe?

b) What political concerns does the Zimbabwean society grapple with as reflected in their music?

c) What are the institutional opportunities promoting popular music composition in Zimbabwe?

d) What are the institutional challenges constraining popular music composition?

e) How useful is popular music as a socio-political commentary?

1.5 Justification

An attentive examination on the existing spate of literature on music shows that although the subject is of interest to many scholars, very few have devoted their energy on the sociality of music. Most music critics have concentrated on the technical aspects of the discipline such as rhythm, timbre, texture and harmony, among other aspects. Admittedly, these defining characteristics of music form an integral aspect of music. Technical qualities of music belong to an exclusive class of technocrats which tends to shut out ‘novices and outsiders’ from the business of music analysis. This makes musical analysis a preserve of the elite class of musicologists. However, to suggest that music appreciation should be left entirely to this class of technocrats is to confirm a deep seated lack of understanding of the composite meaning of music. It also conveys a covert and implicit assertion that music can only be understood from a purely technical perspective. This research examines the neglected area of music namely, the social context of its composition.

The fact that music from any part of the world can be enjoyed in any part of the world, even among those who do not speak the language of that music, has helped spew the misconception that the issue of context is immaterial in the appreciation of music. Some have seen meaning in music as merely conjectural, than deliberately factored in during
composition. Should music be considered self-referential, self-contained and accountable to no context? No, any music is situated and located in a specific cultural context of creation though it may have a global appeal in terms of listenership. It is that immediate social context which forms the basis of this research. As Shepherd (1991) rightly observes, music informs us about the nature of our relatedness to ourselves, other people and the environment. In other words, Shepherd sees music as a social commentary which reminds us of how we ought to behave, transact, and work out our social relationships with and within our environment. Premised on this understanding, this research explores the postcolonial Zimbabwean socio-political society through the mirror of music. Renowned Zimbabwean poet and writer, Chenjerai Hove (2002:57) remarks:

I always tell people that if they want to know about the history of a country, do not go to the history books, go to the fiction. Fiction is not fiction. It is the substance and heartbeat of a people’s life, here, now, and in the past.

To appreciate a people’s culture and history one has to interrogate the people’s art works, in which are ensconced the critical issues of their livelihoods. The mind that frames artistic products is a carbon duplicate of the social activities and concerns that lie squarely on the hearts of the people whose environment is featured in the art.

Both composers and consumers of music belong to a social and political context whose culture and history affect what they eventually compose or listen to. This research attempts to fill the void that most people interested in music have deployed scant attention on. The relationship between music and social context can only be understood by undertaking a research of this nature. This research seeks a reconceptualisation of the study of society through the mirror of music.

Various expressions of art have been used to discern the political and even the philosophical aspects of a people’s culture and history. Rock art, wood and stone sculpture, written and oral literature have been received as acceptable epitomes of the contemporary concerns of any people in different historical epochs. Ramnarine (1998)
observes that much of postcolonial social ecology has been tabulated in literary works more than in musical analysis. The socio-political concerns of Zimbabwe have been presented and analysed through an exploration of the written and oral art forms of the land. Scholars like Chiwome (1996) in *A Social History of the Shona Novel* examine the socio-political situation of Zimbabwe from the perspective of creative works of written literature. Similarly, Mazuruse (2010) gives a lucid discussion on the protest literature being a mirror of the daily concerns of the people as occasioned in Shona written literature. Yet there is a paucity of literature on the reliability of music as a social index in Zimbabwe. Credit should be given to Pongweni’s (1982) *Songs That Won the Liberation War*, which acts as the first serious research into the sociality of music in Zimbabwe as it reflects on the role of music in building liberation consciousness. This noble prototypical research has not been pursued in the postcolonial period. The postcolonial exploration of music as a social index comes in dribs and drabs, through discrete social themes like gender (Mudzanire and Mufanechiya, 2010) and HIV and AIDS (Vambe, 2002). This research is conscious of the need to fully examine the role of music as a social litmus of the Zimbabwean postcolonial context. Such a research gives a holistic analysis of the socio-political leitmotifs that characterise independent Zimbabwe. This obviously augments efforts by other modes of expressions in recording the Zimbabwean history and culture.

The postcolonial period is intriguing in a variety of senses: it marks a new political and social dispensation where the expressive mood (as well as expressive modes) and thematic frames in the new milieu are expected to change significantly. The colonial system and the war of independence brought a lot of anxiety and apprehension into the post independence era. The postcolonial as a historical and psychological space has received fair coverage from the print and electronic media and a variety of social and political platforms within the country and beyond. Issues to do with the expectations of the political and social struggle from the colonial regime, conceptions of independence, new challenges, aspirations and cultural issues in the post colonial become topical issues in the new political dispensation. In this study, it is considered very critical to view the postcolonial era from the perspective of the music arts. Unfulfilled promises, new
challenges of neo-colonialism, cultural imperialism, popular cultures, and multiculturalism are some of the broad issues inviting critical attention through the mirror of music.

Popular music, as Bilby, (1999:258) in Guerron-Montero (2006:638) observes, offers the ideal setting to study contemporary socio-political perceptions in the society due to its unique capacity to communicate on multiple social planes and symbolically encode and embody social issues. Any people would naturally dance or listen to familiar or vogue issues. That interactional platform is extended through music. Music is imbued with that quality to allow people to dialogue sophisticated and sensitive issues. This study pursues the popular music discourse for its potential to address a variety of contemporary motifs in the postcolonial dispensation. Popular music tends to appeal to the wider community faster and even more extensively than any mode of expression.

1.6 Key words

Censorship: any restrictive mechanism, directly or indirectly affecting freedom of political or social expression. Such mechanism may be institutionalised or self-imposed.

Composition: the writing and creation of music themes. The term is reserved for lyrical compilation and invention of the word messages, not the arrangement of guitar or cymbal tunes and drum beats.

Fan: an avid consumer of music.

Leitmotif: major social or political theme.

Lyrics: words that are sung or spoken with musical accompaniment or without. They embody the sentiment of the artiste.

Motif: a recurring social or political thread in music. It should be disambiguated from its technical use in music where it refers to a short melodic passage that is repeated in several parts of a work. In the present context, it refers to critical messages on love, death, dearth, poverty and many other issues encapsulated in Shona popular music.
**Popular music:** music that receives considerable listenership and is popular with the fans. The term here should be freed from the iron cast global definition of popular music to loosely focus on all music that enjoys currency and popular reception with consumers.

**Referentiality:** music’s ability to refer to certain events, situations and issues in its context.

**Sociality:** that ability in music to express the events in the environment. This is the quality of music to articulate and reflect the fundamental social and political issues in its context.

### 1.7 Scope of study

This research focuses on the socio-political context of postcolonial popular music in Zimbabwe. Popular music belongs to a number of musical genres having ‘wide appeal’ and is typically distributed to large audiences through the music industry. It does not look at traditional music. It stands in stark contrast to traditional music which is typically disseminated orally to smaller oral audiences. Popular music should also be distinguished from pop music in that popular music is a generic term for music of all ages that appeals to popular tastes whereas pop music is a specific musical genre. This research is not tied to a specific genre of music but covers diverse swathes of music space from: kanindo, rhumba, chimurenga, jazzy, rock, among other species. The study thus interrogates Shona popular musical pieces along socio-political motifs rather than musical genres. The issue of genre lies outside the scope of this research since lyrics lie at the centre of this research more than the instruments in the music.

The research examines the postcolonial era as reflected in music. Its focus is primarily the period 1980 to present, with a specific slant on the socio-political domains of the music. It is these domains that reflect the major outlook of a people’s culture. The postcolonial period is intriguing in that it is the era associated with freedom of
expression, now that self-autonomy is in place; it is interesting to assess how music portrays Zimbabwean social, political and economic truths.

Zimbabwean music covers all music by Zimbabweans or non-Zimbabweans but about Zimbabwean concerns. It covers music by Zimbabwean artistes at home and in the diaspora whose music has a local appeal in terms of content. Musicians are free to compose on any subject but they mainly comment on what is around them, hence the need to interrogate their works of art and come out with an estimation of the socio-political import of their messages.

Chapter one comprises the introduction. It includes the research aim, the objectives, justification and significance of study as well as the delimitation of the study. Chapter two situates the research in the context of other studies through a review of related literature. Chapter three explores the theoretical framework guiding the research. Chapter four explains the methodological design that is employed in securing and interpreting data. Chapter five looks at the research findings, particularly the legal and political motifs in popular music. Chapter six covers the social and economic motifs. Chapter seven discusses research findings while chapter eight concludes the research and suggests recommendations for music production and dissemination as well as further research.

1.8 Conclusion

The above discussion highlights the course taken by the research in its pursuit of the interrogation of popular music in postcolonial Zimbabwe. The discussion in this chapter explains the critical issues of the research process. The background helped to shed light on the critical issues and observations that spurred the researcher into embarking on the study. The aims and objectives of this research are tabulated in order to inform on the focus of the research. The justification of the research serves to illustrate the efficacy and the need for a research of this nature. The scope of the study was also
deliberated upon as well as the definition of terms that hold a key stake in this study. Chapter 2 locates the research in the context of related studies.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The discourse of music has scantily encroached into the path of literature analysis. For quite some while, the field of music appreciation has been an exclusive prefecture of polished musicologists more than it was a domain for mere linguists. Analysis of music tended to centre on those technical properties of music like tone, timbre, harmony and rhythm oblivious of the fact that music essence is immanently located in its function as a symbol of society (Shepherd, 1991:13). However, in recent years there has been a surging curiosity into the sociality of music. The current spurt of literature on music referentiality compels the study’s reflection on the social interpretation of music; its role, composition and reception. The aim of this chapter is to situate this research in the context of other studies in Africa, Zimbabwe and the rest of the world. A few themes are discussed here to examine other scholars’ views on music.

2.1 The nature of music

Most definitions of music, by many authors, attest to their discipline backgrounds. Hence, any understanding of music is sincerely testimonial of one’s specialisation. In the earnest pursuit of a music definition it is common to encounter a plethora of music conceptions that, if not properly handled, may have an untoward bearing on the use of the concept in this research. Attending to such definitions as occasioned in various literary spaces may help in delineating the concept and obviate ambiguities associated with the term.

Cook (1990:10) proffers a definition of music as organised sound but later on refrains and says one may never reach at a definition of sound alone. Furthermore, the way in which music is defined by professionals may create a sense of inadequacy in the novice, that though they may enjoy the music they may not claim to understand it. As a result, Cook (1990:11) explains music as the interaction between the sound and the
listener. Detectible from this definition is the view that music is an interactive phenomenon allowing the music and its audience to locate a common ground. Failure of music to achieve this two-pathway system means that music has lost one of its basic characteristics. This definition of music, like the reader response concept of literary criticism, considers the listener as critical in music meaning creation. Other definitions of music tend to relegate the listener to obscurity as a passive recipient on whom the music has predetermined effects without the listener's conscious input being involved. Shuman in Cook (1990:11) talks of the listener's freedom of imagination. The listener should be accorded the space to reflect wildly and even widely on the music. In this research, music listeners are afforded any opportunity to reflect on themes generated from hermeneutic interpretation of music. Hansluck in Cook (1990) sees the average music listener as responding to the sensual and emotional suggestions of music. The sensual aspect marks an important feature in this research as it essentially tries to find out the critical issues constituting musical themes. The emotional aspect, though a crucial component of music, lies outside the scope of this research as this is hardly a verifiable component of music unlike the lyrics which can give a fair estimation of the musical referents.

Hurd (1968) sees music not as an emotion but as capable of awakening emotion in the listener. To him a composer is an ordinary man to whom fate has given a mind to respond profoundly and creatively to the language we call music. His perception of music composition demystifies the art of composition as an engagement of ordinary men and women who look at life the way everyone does but go on to give it a musical perspective. Armed with this understanding of music composition this research interrogates what these ‘ordinary men and women’ compose; what they see, hear and experience. For an inordinate amount of time the histories of nations have been told from perspectives of 'learned mouths' of scholars who have in most cases tried to complicate and mystify simple events on the ground. By consulting the voice of the ordinary people like musicians, this study seeks to examine the simple men and women’s appreciation of the critical social and political issues confronting the nation.
On music and meaning creation, Durant and Welch (1995) fail to imagine a time when music composition was not influenced by the natural and social environment. To them music has always reflected a deeper understanding of the world in which people live. Viewed this way, music becomes a social product like an artefact from the hand of an artiste. This notional acceptance of what music means to its social context equips this research with the inquisition of finding out what social and political nuances are populated in musical composition.

Ho (1999), commending on the socio-political transformation of music education in Hong Kong, stresses the importance of meaning in music. The materials of music education in Hong Kong secondary schools were deliberately shaped by the state. It bore no explicit political orientation but implicitly made music education a political socialising force. Political ideologies, beliefs, or values advocated by the communist party of mainland China were introduced in Hong Kong music curriculum. The inclusion of Chinese music was seen as transmission of the Chinese cultural tradition. This was seen as a way of affirming and confirming a basic understanding and knowledge of their cultural heritage. To this end, music meaning was conceived in terms of its socialising role. In this research music is considered as a socialising agent.

Small (1996:80) argues that music, in its highly abstract nature, is the most sensitive indicator of culture, and of all the arts, is most tied to the subconscious attitudes and assumptions. The author does not discount music lyrics as devoid of social referents. In stead, the author only refers to lack of explicitness in music compared to other arts such as written literature. The writer’s conception of music as devoid of explicit verbal and representational content, alerts, and therefore, forearms the research in that the researcher goes into the field knowing that analysing musical content requires an extra-perceptive craft of putting together ideas in the song to come out with a cogent meaning. Knowledge of this abstraction of music in this study is critical as the research is constantly cautioned against fixation of meanings and contextual references in the analysis of Zimbabwean music.
Rice (2001:23) looks at the tripartite nature of music; as art, commodity and as behaviour. The music as art metaphor suggests that “the nature of music is first and foremost about its making and the result of that making: the processes of performing and composing music resulting from that process” (ibid). Such a conception of music looks at how music is made and how effectively it is made. Issues such as techniques, forms and structure are considered here but these do not form the basis of this research. As such, this metaphor does not eclipse the referential metaphor. The referential metaphor looks at music as a set of symbols or text which conveys a certain message. The other metaphor, as Rice (2001: 24) puts it, is the one developed by the ethnomusicologists who claim that music is a social behaviour. “Because music is made and understood by people in society, every performance by music is also a performance of social structures or social relations” (ibid). Musical practices mirror existing social states or challenge them. This metaphor is closest to this research as it is the one that links music to social context as this research investigates the social and political messages in Shona popular music in Zimbabwe.

The other metaphor is the conception of music as an expression of an emotion. “It claims that music is either the surface manifestation of inner emotions and therefore expressive of them or is generative of emotions” (Rice, 2001:24). Put differently, music does not simply reference emotions as a symbol might; it expresses and manifests them directly. Although this research does not entirely focus on the emotion, (which is a psychological construct very difficult to measure in music) emotions in music become critical in interpreting the mood of the artiste and the consumers of their products against the backdrop of their socio-political milieu. This study, however, focuses on the messages encapsulated in the music.

The conception of music as a commodity is a metaphor that realises music as a marketable article of trade that has the potential to motivate the artiste through monetary rewards. This is a sharp departure from an ethno-musicological conception of music which sees music as a cultural product. Though this research is not directly focussing on the marketing of musical products, the conception of music as a
commodity of trade excites the attention of this research in that the artiste’s energy to compose is also reinforced by the need to earn a living from the same product they compose. In a way, that this research is exploring the social and political content of music is a result of the artiste responding to the profit attraction of engaging in music. Moreover, it is in the industry where the marketing of the product faces the scourge of censorship which has the power to inhibit and prohibit creativity in music arts.

2.1.1 Music as communication

Lombardi (1991) views music as specialised medium of communication reaching out to many people. The lyrics convey social, religious and political messages to people of different tastes, ages and affiliations. Music embodies the sentiments of the artiste or the immediate cultural milieu of the artiste, which art is then passed on to the music listener for consumption and regurgitation. This communication conception of music is at the centre of this research as an attempt to locate the socio-political messages imbedded in music is a desired end. The research takes the artiste as the sender in the communication matrix and the listener as the receiver, though concentrating on the message itself as the observed social or political stimuli the artiste is responding to in music. The views of the artiste and the consumer of the product (the music) help in estimating the sociality of the music since, due to the implicitness of music, some vital information that completes the understanding of the music is sought through interviewing these people.

Contrary to the above, the communicative conception of music, McDermott and Hauser in Cross (2005) believe that music, being fundamentally expressive of emotion, is commonly produced and listened to for enjoyment rather than for communicative purposes. This view of music seems to emerge from the perception of music as organised noise without a thorough regard of its other properties like lyrics. Such a view obtains justification from the observation that music in any language or culture can be received in areas that are distant and culturally alienated from the source of that music. However, this research concentrates on the lyrical communicative domain of the music.
Sergeant and Himonides (2014) agree with Bertrand Russell’s (1941: 204) view of language that “it expresses the state of the speaker and alters the state of the hearer”. They draw parallels between music and language as aspects of communication. They however notice essential differences between speech and music in the nature of their significations. “In speech, meanings attaching to words are relatively specific... whereas those of music are less precise, though they cannot be regarded as being arbitrary”. This observation is a candid distinction between music and everyday speech, one which cautions the researcher on the need to put his ears to the ground as he interprets the referentiality of music since music is less explicit. Monelle (2000) in Sergeant and Himonides (2014) suggests that speech is the intellectualisation of reality while music is communication of a feeling of reality. The distinction alluded to is equally important in this research as the attitudes to the political and social realities in Zimbabwe can be appreciated through the study of music. The exploration of the socio-political referentiality of music in Zimbabwe becomes an exploration of the attitudes of people to socio-political realities in postcolonial Zimbabwe.

Another important difference between music and speech is that in “the case of speech, the expression and consequent alteration of states take place through communication within a dyad—the speaker and the hearer—but in the Western “classical” art music praxis, the interchange of information passes through three levels” (Ibid). Every day speech is dyadic in that the interlocutors are contemporaneous that they can transact information instantly. In the case of art music praxis information is transacted triadically. Sergeant and Himonides (2014) discuss the triadic transfer of music. They posit that there is the generative level comprising the infrastructure of pitch, temporal and timbral events determined by the composer, that is, the intentional musical narrative of the emotional state of the composer. From the creative level, one goes to the performance level where the performer interprets and actualises the compositional data giving it expression. At this point the performer is motivated by the desire to “enable the listener to share the way the performer intrinsically feels “the music should go,” whilst being “truthful” to what are believed were the composer's intentions”. The performance could be live or recorded. The third and final stratum in the triadic communication complex is
embodied in the listener, that is, in the reception of the sonic information in the process of cognition and transformation into meaning. For proper decipherment of musical stimulus, the receiver should be familiar with the discourse or the ‘musical idiom of the composer.’ In the final analysis, Sergeant and Himonides (2014) argue that for the communication to be functional, the “meaning” imparted to a musical gesture by the performer must be recognized by the listener. Composer, performer, and listener must therefore understand a mutually shared code. Extrapolating this view into this researcher, one understands the threesome model of music as implying the consideration of views of the three cardinal levels in the full appreciation of music in postcolonial Zimbabwe. This means that the views of the music listeners be considered as well in the process of music interpretation. The full meaning of music should look at the composer (who could be the performer as well), the performer and the audience. Within these three levels of communication, three levels of meaning are operative; the compositional meaning (embodied or the intra-musical or inherent meaning), the expressive meaning located at the performance level and the meaning invoked in the listener which is “subject to constraints of listener mind-set, social perceptions, availability of appropriate cognitive abilities, and experience of the musico-linguistic idiom employed” (Sergeant and Himonides, 2014). This study distinguishes ‘general’ from ‘specific’ listeners (that is music critics and commentators) and deliberately focuses on the ‘specific’ who the researcher feels have taken considerable time to reflect on the messages in music.

Juslin and Vastfjall (2008:559) argue that music both expresses and induces emotions and is, thus, seen as a powerful means of emotional communication. Probably this stems from the observation that the composers of the music are themselves emotional beings who can vent their emotions through music. These emotions may be individual feelings or shared responses to some political or social stimulus. On one hand the artiste may compose their music with a view to inducing an emotion in their listeners by stirring feelings of acute reflection, resentment, ecstasy or anger on a familiar unpleasant or pleasant subject. This research finds this emotional communication understanding of music very relevant. Pertinent to this study is the exploration of the
potential of music in reflecting the mood of the nation and the personal issues that are contained in the music. The caution, however, is that emotions are very slippery to deal with as they can be very difficult to verify.

Bisphan (2007), in his review of Graham’s work on music as socio-affective communication, reinforces the sociality of music and the affective features of music making. Two issues are central in this review; that music is a product of society, about society and that it has an emotional element in its composition and listenership. The communicative and the affective domain broadly describe the boundaries of relevance that should be applied to music. Bisphan suggested the communicative instead of the signal since the later is a unidirectional flow as opposed to the communicative which is a two-way process. Music to him should be a way of communication rather than a one way passage of information. This view of music as interactive tallies well with Cook’s (1990) view of music earlier on discussed. When musicians churn out music, they are communicating with the audience. This becomes the concern of the current study to examine the role of music in depicting the social and political concerns in post-colonial Zimbabwe.

2. 2.0 Language and music

To associate music and language in any discourse is to suggest the two are harmonious but different. Several authors have explored the relationship between the two as well as highlighting their points of disjuncture. In music, language is employed as a complement to the instrument or exists on its own in poetic form. Adorno and Gillespie (1993:401) contend that “...music is similar to language... but music is not language. Its similarity to language points to its innermost... The person who takes music as language will be led astray by it”. The scholar starts on a promissory note on the relationship between language and music but ends on a cautionary note alerting on the futility of taking the two as the same. Music is similar to language in that it is temporal succession of articulated sounds that are more than just sound. Likewise language is not about sound; it is about meaningful aspects of human communication. Where music ceases to
be language is when instrumental music leaves the lyrics to stand on their own. But one may still argue that instruments on their own can still constitute language if they are used to convey a message. This, however, lies outside the scope of this study as it has the mandate to look at the content of music lyrics.

2.2.1 Music as literature

The study of connections between music and literature has become a flourishing confluence of international research activity. The formation of The International Association for Word and Music Studies (WMA) and Literature and Music Research Group was out of the realisation of the close contact between the two fields. Correa (2006) adds weight to the connection between the two when she remarks that the confluence between music and literature, long hymned as sister arts, is a newly burgeoning field of critical inquiry. A significant number of literary works attest to the thesis that music is literature. Remove the drums, the strings and the other attendant accessories; music is essentially literature. This conception of music is at the centre of this research. This research benefits immensely from this literature conception of music in that it justifies the use of literary theories in a study that would normally be viewed as remotely related to literature. In fact, Correa, Chornik and Samuels (2009:51) contend that, "Music finds a place even within critical theories that would seem inhospitable to it". It further boosts the confidence of the researcher in that the researcher treads on familiar ground (literature) in a field otherwise jealously guarded by 'music technocrats' and therefore fenced from the inquisition of 'foreigners' (those from other disciplines).

Crosson (2008: 17-46) traces the theoretical developments that have conditioned the relationship between music and literature. Although the two fields, in the past were inseparable, the division of knowledge forms into disciplines has had the effect of projecting them as fields pursuing idiosyncratic and peculiar subjects. This 'separatist' conception of music and literature is fast ceding ground to the more synergetic approach where the two are seen as companionable. He further advises that the existence of such academic studies as 'literature and music', 'music in literature', and
'literature in music' is symptomatic of the common flow of energy around the two disciplines. These themes recur with increased frequency in music-literature discourse to a point of suggesting there is close chemistry between the two. Bucknell (2001) observes that literary critics from the Romantic Movement way into the twentieth century subscribe to the view that poetry is suggestively and mysteriously musical and as such literary criticism could be conducted in musical terms. Such an understanding of music allows this research to apply theories that were seen as eccentric to the study of music to be used in understanding musical phenomena. For instance, applying the Marxist approach to the study of music could be seen as incompatible with this type of art but with this understanding, one is confident to apply this theory in music analysis. This substantiates the observation made by Lewis (2013) that music and literature share numerous terrains as well as techniques and goals.

It is not fortuitous, that some authors are themselves accomplished musicians in their own right, observes Lewis (2013). Some, like Cuban author, Alejo Carpentier, English author Alodus Huxley and Cameroonian Francis Bebey are professional musicians and writers. This adds weight to the intricate link between music and literature. It is understandable that some authors exploit the evocative power of music in their products, for instance, in the choice of titles or as technique in story telling. The observation by Lewis is not a matter of conjecture, but a professing signal that the two arts could be related as the musician-cum-writer would be drawing from the same motivational pool for their ultimate product. This observation gives this research a comparative plane on which the expressive power of the sister arts can be measured for their proximity to expressing reality around them.

Music can be a combination of lyrics and instruments or each severally. It is the lyrical part that excites the attention of this research more than the instrumental aspect. The relationship between music and literature was noted back by Brown (1970: 97) who argues that music and literature rose as a single activity long before the concept of art existed. But his conception of the relationship, as far as this research is concerned, is somehow obscured by the fact the Brown restricted his understanding to non-lyrical
aspects of music. However, Lombardi (1991) lucidly demonstrates the relationship between music and literature with regards to lyrics. He observes that:

Music lyrics are essentially composed as poems, ballads, monologues and the likes set to music. They may take the form of actual spoken or sung sounds or of written words as literature does. Any form of literature can be sung with musical accompaniment and become lyrics. Remove the music and we are left with literature.

This reductive analogy of music and literature summarises the general argument that linguists use in their entry into the ‘hard hat area’ of music jealously guarded by technocrats. Affiliated to the view is the thinking that all the concepts that apply to literature can therefore apply to lyrics. This research uses this view as a springboard and a height from which it can pursue musical issues from a perspective of literature. Barricelli, in Lang (2014) warns of the danger of equating music to literature. He cites the example of Scher (1982) whose article ‘Literature and Music’ observes the natural affinity of word/literature and music. He warns that the commonplace juxtaposition of phrases like ‘music and poetry, ‘word and tone’ and ‘sound and poetry’ lends a ‘deceptively axiomatic aura of legitimacy to the comparison of the two arts.” He advises that correlations between words and music be viewed from metaphorical rather than a literary perspective. “They are only analogous, never identical”. This is particularly true when music is meant to imply the vocals, when in fact music can imply the instruments as well. Understanding the boundary fence separating the closely related arts is ample caution to this research as the researcher is constantly reminded on the need to delimit the extent to which the analysis of music as literature can go. For instance, the researcher restricts his conception of music to the lyrics not to the whole range of other musical aspects like tone, timbre and rhythm. That way, he remains within the intersection of music (lyrics) and literature.

On the relationship between music and literature, Hurn (2009) argues that literature, like music, is an expression of the individual thought and feeling through the creative
process. Both literature and music are artistic products, acts of human creativity. Through these products artistes seek to share their experiences, observations and understanding their truths through the medium that most effectively lends itself to their personal skills and abilities. For Hurn to limit musical expression and literature to the thoughts and feelings of the artiste is to underestimate the artiste’s ability to reflect on the wider social and political issues. This research considers art a reflection of both society and the individual’s life and circumstances. It takes a holistic rather than a monolithic perspective to the study of music.

2.3 The use of figurative language in music

Although it is generally accepted that music occasionally involves the combination of both language and instruments, the use of language in music presents a number of opportunities and challenges for both artistes and music listeners more than instruments do. Complications and opportunities arise mainly because of music’s use of symbolism in both its lyrics and instruments which lends it to a variety of interpretations. According to Sheldon, (2004) figurative language is expressed in many ways including analogy, metaphor, simile and verbal imagery. The words used in music should be handled with caution as they may mean many things or hide certain messages behind them. Words in music, particularly imagery, whose polyvalent nature appeals to different social and historical positions of its interpreters have no bounded references (Rice 2001). Music has multiple meanings. Admittedly, imagery in music allows different interpretations to music; it is, however, the placing of music into respective contexts that completes the understanding of the meanings assigned to the music. This study therefore, penetrates into the meanings hidden in Shona imagery rampant in Shona popular music in the postcolonial setting in Zimbabwe as a way of recouping the salient socio-political messages encapsulated in it.

In her article, Castrejon (2006) looks at the symbolic representation of music instruments in the Baroque celebrations of the royal funerals in the Hispanic monarchy. She notes that every element in this creation participates in a sense of order and the
desire for order is accentuated in the literary and artistic creations. Man as a creator, like God, is able to reproduce cosmic order in material constructions and intellectual lubrications. Viewed this way, any metaphorical or iconic presentation in art serves the purpose of creating order in the universe. Castrejon’s idea is similar to Lakoff and Johnson (Crossley 2005: 502) who argue that the conceptual system in which humans think and act is fundamentally metaphorical in nature, or constructivist. Constructivism believes that the “objective world is not directly accessible but rather constructed on the basis of constraining influences of human knowledge and languages. Within this view, metaphor aids in creating reality” (ibid). Lakoff and Johnson counter the misconception of seeing metaphors as “gratuitous in everyday life and speech” choosing rather to elevate them to a point of importance in both speech and action since they can be used to inspire action. In this study, the artistes’ use of metaphorical language is not construed from a perspective of decorative formalistic indulgence but from one of pragmatic utility where context messages are deliberately inflected in the music.

Crossley (2005:501) explores metaphorical conceptions in hip-hop music and makes the following observation on the role of metaphorical language:

Traditionally, literary scholars focused on three aspects of metaphorical language unique to human communication and dissimilar to literary language... it enabled them (speakers) to express ideas and meanings that were difficult, if not possible, express in literal speech. Metaphor also gave speakers a particularly compact means of communication, one not laden with extraneous words. Most importantly, metaphors unlike literal speech were able to express the vividness of human experience...

This observation still carries some weight with regards to the place of the metaphorical language in music today. Besides the critical functions spelt above, the use of pictorial language (as in videos) opens for the artiste unlimited vistas of expressing their message in a way that reaches a diversity of audiences without exposing themselves to censorship. Crossley further notes that the metaphors tend to be language-community
specific. They thus can be incorporated as “special expressions of precise meaning” (Crossley, 2005: 501). The author further notes that metaphors give people new understanding of their collective experience and new meanings to their past, their daily lives and their collective memory. The use of Shona metaphors in popular music in Zimbabwe helps in the comprehension of the artiste’s message by the audience as the later can easily tap into their linguistic repertoire as members of the same linguistic community with the artiste. In this study, the researcher is not released from the obligation to explore the various forms of figurative language that help in the understanding and expression of the artiste’s message.

2.4 Music appreciation

A number of scholars have expressed their views on music appreciation. Shepherd (1991:5) demystifies music appreciation as a permanent and exclusive concern for musicologists when he contends:

To say music should be left to the musicologist and not linguists is to draw an implicit line between the study of musical life and the study of music...Linguists, sociologists and cultural theorists do have a legitimate interest in music and is only through a continual and permanent dialogue with the intellectual areas they represent that musicology will be able to expand its horizons convincingly.

Couched in the above citation is the liberalisation of musical space to various professions of concern clear of the fact that the discipline of music is indeed a confluence of a variety of interests. A close reading of music lyrics exposes one to the truth that sociologists, linguists and others are not aliens to the appreciation of music. Social issues of music are a legitimate concern for literature and linguistics. This study adopts Shepherd’s philosophy of music sociality to explore the socio-political motifs characterising popular music in postcolonial Zimbabwe.
Van Leeuwen (2012), observes that within the broader field of critical discourse studies, critical music analysis has remained an exception because music analysis is seen as too difficult and too specialist a domain for critical discourse analysis. This is, partly, because most musicologists do not see music as discourse and refuse to deal with musical meaning. Already music semioticians like Nattiez (1971) cited in van Leeuwen, (2012:3) have stoked fierce criticism in critical music appreciation by their conception of music as signifying nothing. To them music is seen as autonomous and abstract. In aggravation, Adorno (1976:4) advocates for structural hearing of music since he focuses on the formal aspects of music like tone, harmony and rhythm which are considered the universal components of music. This study however focuses not on the formal elements of music but its social and linguistic aspects as located in the postcolonial Shona music in Zimbabwe. The approach adopted in this research fundamentally destabilizes the notion that text and context independently exist as separable domains of meaning.

Cross (2006) advances that music can be explored in terms of a tripartite model that embraces music as sound (the western conception of music), as behaviour (the musical and the non-musical) and as a concept of how people think of music in terms of powers and relations to other domains of life. The western conception of music and the behavioural components are irrelevant in this research since they lay outside the scope of this research. The power and relations domains of music are considered relevant since they take into consideration the issue of the relationship between music and its surrounding.

On matters of music appreciation Schoenberg (1984) thinks of music in terms of its meaning rather than in terms of its effects, that is, in terms of production conceived structures to be communicated through sound, rather than in terms of intended effects. To him the effort of the composer is solely to make the idea as comprehensible as possible to the listener. Real composition should quench the law of inner necessity. The artiste should be self-forgetting much as she should not be consumer driven (Cook: 1990). For the artiste to give what the audience like is a betrayal of artistic integrity and
ingenuity. The implication is that the musician be as neutral as they can and allow the undiluted message, thus appreciation of music should be as impartial and objective as possible. Unpacking the conception of music appreciation, Nettle (1983) in Cook (1990), is of the opinion that the fruits of music are enjoyed by all people but the academic musical establishment has led the lay public to feel that without understanding the technicalities of music construction, without the knowledge of notation and theory they cannot deal with music. The clarion call by the scholar is that all people from all walks of life can appreciate music in their own ways. This view gives this research, steeped as it is in literature, the audacity to venture into music analysis from the perspective of music as literature. The research is further released from the obligation to venture into the technical aspects of music but stick to the exploration of the social aspects of music in Zimbabwe.

2.5 The Role of music in society

“Keep in mind, when brothas start flexing the verbal skillz, it always reflects what's going on politically, socially and economically” – Musician Davey D in Blanchard (2006)

Art is humanity’s means of reflecting and communicating to itself in its environment through figurative and symbolic structures and processes. Plato in Lombardi (1991) sees art as “a lie that helps us see the truth better”. For Plato to use the word ‘lie’ is not to demoralize the utility of art but to express the point of it not being the very thing it attempts to express. It is a lie because it attempts to imitate the truth or reveal something about reality outside the piece of art. This conception of art is critical in this research as it stabilises the basis for the interrogation of the sociality of popular music in post-colonial Zimbabwe. If music is art, and art is a reflection of reality then it is legitimate to ask how representative of the socio-political reality are the music symbols in Zimbabwe.
Garfias (2004:1) believes that music has a place, a role and function in each culture. It is an outgrowth of the culture as well as a reflection of it. There is a way people use it, practice it or reflect on it that is unique to each culture. Music has played myriad roles in social anthropology from the traditional symbolic purposes to modern conception as a tool for socio-political communication to general entertainment. In traditional communities there was and still remains a place for music in their rituals and ceremonies. Dube (1996:101-102) observes that music was found in specific contexts like rites of passage, that is, births, marriages, weddings and deaths which were important ceremonies marked by song that bore their community interpretation of these events.

Music is a vehicle of national memory. As Dube (1996:102) observes, in most African societies there were professional musicians who specialised in political music production. These were called bards or griots in West Africa or izimbongi in Nguni societies. These composed songs that captured important historical developments and bore the mood of the nation. The victories of the people, their military prowess, and ambitions were boldly declared and expressed in song and dance. This research assesses the utility of music as a commentary of society. It tries to record the role of popular music as an alternative narrative agent of Zimbabwean culture and politics. The various roles of music in context will be discussed below along world, regional and local trends in music sociality.

2.5.1 Global trends in music and socio-political context

In the words of Baoz and Bruce Springsteen in 1988, as recorded in Gavish (2009:1), music has always been a tuneful force for political change. They note that “politics and music have always been natural partners”. Throughout history, music has shared boundaries with politics. The Greeks are reported to be the first to discover the potential power of music in building a democratic state. Music was instrumental in galvanising society to rebel against the government since, as Gavish (2009) puts it, political music appealed to the oppressed and the oppressor to realise the power within them to attend to their challenges. This way, the oppressed were sensitised on the state of their
political oppression while the oppressor was warned on the need to correct their wrongs. To more stable political institutions, music bore such a potentially dangerous threat to their existence that at one point Plato intimated that musical innovation is full of danger to the whole state and ought to be prohibited (Gavish, 2009:1). Plato’s observation though seemingly critical of the role of music in the state, is a statement that affirms and recognises the role of music in society. Conscious of the Platonian view of music, this research assesses government’s reception of political music in postcolonial Zimbabwe. What is the attitude of the state towards political music? A hostile reception of music creates an atmosphere for the composition of politically charged music or may silence the voice of the musician. All this lies at the heart of this research.

Romnarine (1998) examines the musical dialogues that handle diasporan issues and Caribbean history as expressed through music. To him, “music has also been seen as having a role to play in the processes of decolonization, and "postcolonial" as a framework for the study of music.” (p.4). While acknowledging the power of music in the process of decolonisation, the author accepts the power of music in the postcolonial context in articulating the contemporary social and political challenges. The postcolonial socio-political frame is lucidly reflected in the mirror of music. Diasporic remnants of slave trade have used music to dialogue their culture and the postcolonial condition.

Throughout antiquity, the journalistic role of music was noted as music served as the bulletin of contemporary issues in society. Pedelty (2009:215) notes that: “Popular musicians perform a journalistic role in political movements. By serving as an alternative headline service, these musicians continue to update an ancient news tradition.” From ancient Greeks to Mexican Corridistas, music allowed story tellers to effectively compose, retain and present news (Pedelty, 2009:215). Ancient, yes, but can music still be considered a source of news given the rate at which news is released every passing second? Every minute someone is ‘BREAKING NEWS!’ in various mediascapes across the globe. One also thinks of occasion musicians who pen a song for an event. For instance, Elton John recrafted ‘Candle in the Wind’ soon after the passing on of Princess Diana in a horrific accident on 31 August 1997. Originally the song had been
written as a tribute to Marilyn Munroe (Norma Jean), a famous actress and sex symbol who died of drug overdose in 1962 (Song Facts n.d.). Occasion musicians are still common the world over, making their contribution to bulletins a global phenomenon. As Pedelty (2009:215) observes, such musicians have a constituent class of consumers in the youths:

Although print news replaced lyrical reporting as the central channel of news distribution centuries ago, musicians have not completely abandoned their journalistic tradition. Many young activists first hear about important issues, events and people through listening to popular music.

Youths barely have time for serious issues like politics and would, therefore, hardly spare a minute on news bulletin. Youths are seriously attracted to popular culture just as children are drawn to playing house. If an important issue has to be appreciated by the youths, it has to be wrapped up in popular music where they frequent for leisure. This accords with the conception of learning through play located in most traditional African societies as Mapara (2014) observes. Just as traditional education was wound around play, serious issues are encapsulated in music for consumption by youths. This research argues that music has serious issues for the youths to learn or appreciate. The research locates and analyses the various political issues in popular music in Zimbabwe.

Political music has the power to cause great movements and revolutions as it has done in Australia and New Zealand where songs composed by indigenous songwriters have ignited indigenous land reclamation movements (Barreth, 2013). In Brazil, the Tropicalia Movement was created by singers like Caetano, Veloso, Gilberto Gil and Rita Lee as a form of protest against the Brazilian military junta. The military junta was infamous for corruption and incompetence but it eventually gave in due to the musical pressure. On the global platform, one discovers that Bob Marley’s music is replete with political refrains to the effect of making oppressed people conscious of their political plight. Smith (2010) picks ‘Redemption Song’ as no-holds political song by the late reggae
genius, Bob Marley. He seems to share opinion stage with Lockard (2010) on Marley’s explicitly political songs as hewn out of the context of oppression and political subjugation. By highlighting sensitive historical and political issues, the music becomes a strong force in the full articulation of critical issues.

A number of studies point to the social and therapeutic functions of music the world over. Tracey (1970:4) views music as having a cathartic function in a society that has no daily press, no publications. She imagines the forcefulness of a reprimand conveyed to a wrongdoer when his misdeeds are sung in public before the people of the village. What better sanction would be brought to bear upon the culprit to know that the poets will have you pilloried in the next composition? Music can therefore record and communicate the mood of a people. Moreover, there is no law of libel that would protect one from condemnation conveyed by these concerted voices. This further amplifies the efficacy of music as a social signal. Emmanating from this discussion, one is tempted to explore what words of warning on what behaviour and context are being conveyed by Zimbabwean artistes. The other question that this study grapples with is: ‘Is the Zimbabwean musician playing the sentinel role and about which situations?’

Richardson and Scott (2002), in an article on Rap Music and its violent progeny, decorticate the socio-political referentiality of rap music. To them rap music is a creative and metaphorical offspring of America’s well established culture of violence. They contend that rap is not only an expression of the sordid socio-cultural background but a background of a battered American social situation. It should not be seen as a perpetuator of socially deviant behaviour without placing artistes and their life experiences into context. In the music, the American urban social landscape is seen as exhibiting signs of stress, violence, excessive alcoholism, crime and substance abuse. This research examines the social issues imbedded in popular music in Zimbabwe.

Focusing on the relationship between music and identity creation, Mitchell (1996) believes that music has the power to mould citizens into developing a corporate ego or collective identity as they reflect on their day to day challenges and their shared striven
destiny. The author further explores the interactions between the global configurations of contemporary popular music and local music scenes. The author advances that the importation and appropriation of foreign musical aspects constitute cultural imperialism which has the effect of displacing authentic representations of local music which accurately depict local identities. Commenting on the Bhangra, an Asian music beat, the author realises that the music is rooted in the original culture of a new generation which is an unequivocal expression of British experience. It becomes apparent that music can, at the point of language, be classified as local yet the content smacks of a foreign tincture. The author seems to project and convey the view that global pressure may also instruct the content of music. This study examines the context fidelity of Zimbabwean music through an analysis of sentiments in post colonial popular music. In the same girth, this research examines the extent to which foreign musics affect local motifs.

Avorgbedor (2003:34) explored and found out that music holds a special place among the Islamic forms of statement. Sufi mystics have developed music to promote ecstasy as they strive to approach divinity. Compared to other art works like paintings and other plastic arts, music raises the soul beyond form. In tone is imbued the sensation that links humanity with divinity. In the Islamic religion singing and chanting is the most native mnemonic process through which a person remembers God. As is generally the case elsewhere, familiar spirits have specific favourite songs to which they respond. In similar tone, this research explores the social sentiments locatable in popular religious music in Zimbabwe.

Martin (2013) in an article on music and the politics of resistance sees music as one of the greatest tools of social evolution and a special force for social justice and change. Humanity is kept in a state of balance by such critical forms of expression as music. Musical beats such as Rock and Roll in America in most cases sing about the social injustices or the collapse of social amenities in Black communities. Peter Sieger’s song ‘My Dirty Stream’ raised an alarm call to the scourge of industrial pollution destroying the Hudson River. When John Coltrane composed the ‘Mournful Melodies of Alabama’, it was a tribute to the four girls who were killed in the Birmingham Church Bombings on
15 September 1963. The Sixteenth Street Baptist church in Birmingham was used as a meeting place for civil rights for such leaders as Martin Luther King and Fred Shutterworth. Tensions became high when the Southern Christian Leadership and the Congress for Racial Equality became involved in a campaign to register African Americans to vote in Birmingham (Modern American Poetry 2014). The song stirred racial emotions in the black community and helped to fan acrimonious relations between whites and blacks. That a song is composed to mark a reminder of important events shows the importance of music in rekindling national memory. How is this possible? Pedelty (2009) says it is because music is an excellent mnemonic device - rhyming verses are an effective means of remembering, retelling and recording events and oral cultures. Like Joe Hill noted, in Smith (1969:19):

> A pamphlet, no matter how good, is never read more than once, but a song is learned by heart and repeated over and over; and I maintain that if a person can put a few cold, common sense facts into a song and dress them . . . up in a cloak of humor to take the dryness off of them, he will succeed in reaching a great number of workers who are too unintelligent or too indifferent to read a pamphlet or an editorial in economic science.

This view ably captures the efficacy of music in conveying a message to the receiver more than print media can do though however it is not as elaborate as the latter. As this study unfolds, the researcher interrogates the Shona music content to see how it captures vital events, processes and moods within the country.

### 2.5.2 Regional trends in music and socio-political context

A number of people have reflected on the socio-political aspect of music regionally. For instance, Lockard (2010) looks at Victor Jara of Chile and Fela Kuti of Nigeria who, with explicit political messages, insinuated political action through their political compositions. Lockard notes that local popular music industries provide one of the few accessible avenues to present criticism and protest. In Chile, he notes that the New Song movement played an important role in the political dialogue and movements of the
1960s, 1970s and 1980s, which originated in part as a reaction to cultural domination emanating from the U.S. In Nigeria. Arguably, the most influential of the New Song musicians, Víctor Jara wrote and recorded many songs about the concerns of average people, the struggle for social justice, and the inadequacies of the centrist government of the late 1960s. In Nigeria, Fela Kuti personifies protest music. His brief stay in America exposed him to the Black Power Movement which radicalised his Pan-Africanist ideals. He would return to Nigeria to confront his government with militant and radical politically cusped lyrics that attacked corruption, insensitivity and departure from cultural traditions.

On music and political movements, Vershbow (2010) explores the role of music on the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa and says; during the apartheid period what songwriters sang was the communal art of expression which shed light on the injustices of apartheid. Music was used as a weapon of the struggle. Songs like, *Sobashiya'abazali* (we will leave our parents) became popular at Umkonto wesizwe training camps as they invoked a spirit of sacrifice in the youth who would have left their parents in pursuit of the struggle. All this seems to point to music being the catalyst for political change. If that be the fact, this can be extrapolated into the Zimbabwean context. Whether or not musicians sing about politics is a question worth exploring in this research. If Zimbabwean artistes are expressing any political messages, what is the content of this expression and how accurate is this projection of the Zimbabwean context is the central concern of this research. These questions prompted this research.

Englert (2008:9) commenting on music in Africa, observes that “popular songs with political contents, expressed more or less explicitly, have certainly played a role in different moments in history in various African countries.” However, he notes that critical and explicitly political songs are very rare. He also observed about Cameroon, by Nyamnjoh and Fokwang (2005: 264) who contend that “songs which comment on social virtues or social ills, or songs which are in praise of the political regime are much more frequent than explicitly political songs.” Politics is generally considered a dangerous
game in Africa. Can the same be said about music and politics in Zimbabwe? This study discusses how popular music is expressing political opinion in Zimbabwe.

Allen (2004:1) avers that music functions as a trenchant political site in Africa primarily because it is the most widely appreciated art form on the continent. He makes an interesting observation about music consumption. He notes that more people in Africa can name an artiste and their song than can name an author and his works. Besides, leisure time seems to be more of sound than letter oriented. Given the people’s proclivity to music entertainment how much of the music exploit this tendency to communicate social and political messages in Zimbabwe? This study attentively responds to this question. Allen (ibid) further observes that music communicates better in Africa than the literary mode because it is disseminated faster through electronic mass media to the convenience of the public. The question for this research now is: are the airwaves open to both critical political and social messages?

Music functions both as individual or group agency, notes Allen (2004: 4). ―It is considered a fundamental mechanism through which people indicate what they personally enjoy, approve of, identify with, recognise as true or acknowledge as ethically appropriate‖. Artistes as such lose their clients if they sing what the clients do not approve of. The research estimates regularity of themes as indicative of the currency that theme enjoys in society. For instance artistes who regularly explore love songs are responding to the demand for that particular theme in social context.

A number of studies have been done on music and social context in Africa and most of them view the African conception of music as quite different from the western view of music. Van Rensburg (n.d) believes that:

The African concept of music is totally different to the Western one. Traditional African musicians do not seek to combine sound in a manner pleasing to the ear. The aim is simply to express life in all of its aspects through the medium of sound.
The same author makes a strong appeal for African music to be studied within the context of African life because there is an intimate union between art and man in Africa. Similarly, Garfias (2004:6) advises that music be studied in its own cultural context. Music amounts to total communication that is shared abroad all sections of society. Garfias goes further to suggest, but cautiously refrains from concluding that everyone in Africa must be a musician. Discernible from his observation is the pervasiveness of music in the average member of the African society. The relevance of music in traditional African life having been noted, this research tries to look at the significance of popular music in recording the mood and events in the postcolonial setting.

Jones (1992) traces the history of Zimbabwean musical infrastructure against a backdrop of a changing context. While the focus of his study was self-avowedly instrumental, the writer devotes significant energy on the context which musical instruments are changing in response to. The writer affirms the relationship between music and culture, socio-political change and musical instruments. Traditional music here is seen as being appropriated into the changing socio-political set-up as well as being infused into the new instruments. The author sees social realities as dictating on the musical genres and instruments. Whichever way one looks at it; the same reality is that, content and instrumentwise, music and context are mutually dependent. In the early colonial days artistes continued to express themselves with a lot of political refrain, choosing to concentrate on the social and environmental issues. During the federation period music was characterised by liberalisation of airwaves resulting in cross-pollination of musical ideas and an influx of music from the north, that is, from Congo. Though there was adulteration of musical genres, there was no real change in the content aspect of music. However, this research interrogates how the context is reflected in musical composition in postcolonial Zimbabwe. Though Jones (1992) occasionally tramples into the postcolonial, his stress and focus is on the non-social issues of music thereby creating a gap for the exploration of socio-political issues, which void, this research attempts to fill.
2.6 Music in colonial Zimbabwe

Musical expression in this epoch should be seen as a response to social and political developments unfolding in the colonial state. Vambe (2004:171) laments the colonisation of the land between Zambezi and the Limpopo in 1890 as the most unfortunate historical incident to the people on the land. In similar echo, Gibbs (2005) says colonialism was a significant turning point for the Shona people as it introduced alien social and political structures such as urbanisation, formal education, Christian religion and new varieties of music. He situates the developments in Zimbabwean music as responding to the changes in the resultant colonial state. The role of music as a medium of instruction was replaced by formal education. For quite some while, Shona music lost its pragmatic social and political function and composition as it was blended with a western flair in terms of instruments and lyrical content. This may be seen as a form of cultural imperialism though apologists like Stokes (2004: 54) largely view this as globalisation of music. He sees the cultural imperialism hypothesis as “clearly a poor guide to understanding the global circulation of music”. However, it is not easy to dismiss the charge of cultural imperialism as the content of some world music has shown that music is neither apolitical nor self-referential. In colonial Zimbabwe, music was largely influenced by the developments between the coloniser and the colonised. The music reflected the context in which it was created as it accommodated within its lyrics the major changes on the social and political landscape. This reflection on colonial music and social context helps in the appreciation of the relevance of context in creative works. This research is driven by a similar conception of sociality of creative works but is located in the postcolonial setting.

As colonialism firmed its footing on the land from 1890 onwards, the political developments in the period 1965-1979 saw changes in both the form and content of local music (Gibbs 2005). The infamous Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) from Britain by the Ian Smith regime, in 1965, culminated in a concoction of oppressive measures served on the indigenous people. In response to these and compelled by political revolutions elsewhere in Africa, Africans in the then Rhodesia, started to make...
radical demands for independence as seen through the formation of new political parties and the composition of protest music (Ibid). Because political expression was muzzled, the only way to express dissatisfaction was through protest music as Gibbs (2005) rightly observes:

When formal means of political representation are closed to a group of people, music can provide an outlet for their anguish and bitterness about the system. Resistance to oppressive rules becomes covert. A new artistic genre emerges under a new system partly as a way to cope with the new challenge and as a way to express their protest against it.

Unpacking this loaded observation, one further realises the utility of music as an alternative method of expression where the official method is blocked. Equally imbedded in the statement is the view that the resultant music can be a way of coming to terms with the status quo and as a way of objecting to such developments. Prior to these developments, Shona music had largely comprised relics of traditional music and a fusion of western music and traditional music.

Owomoye (2002) looks at music and uprising in Zimbabwe and notes that chimurenga music rose at the instigation of freedom fighters who challenged the musicians to turn away from their imitation of such western performers as Presley, the Beetles and the Rolling Stones and instead aid the struggle with their music. Although music changed significantly in response to the developments, this observation is inaccurate in that it suggests that the music was urged by freedom fighters, yet most musicians were driven by the desire to contribute something to the liberation struggle. A more accurate reflection by Awomoyela (ibid), as shared by Gibbs (2005), is that the new revolutionary songs often simply substituted new lyrics for church tunes. Added to that, as part of the revolutionary strategy, the musicians redirected the “barbs of traditional songs from being aimed at unjust chiefs to condemning the Smith regime”. They also reinvigorated traditional war and hunting songs to express the black and white conflict. Songs like “Pamuromo chete” (It is only empty rhetoric) by Thomas Mapfumo mixed traditional
lyrics and protest nuances in their reference. According to Gibbs, (2005) the song was composed as a response to Smith’s declaration that there would not be majority rule in the next 1000 years. Thomas Mapfumo disguised his criticism of the colonial system through traditional lyrics. The strategies employed were veiled and implicit. This research identifies and records the expressive strategies employed by the musicians in their bid to express the injustices served on the black majority and their desire to urge the people to stand up and fight.

As counter strategy to local music censorship by the Smith regime, the revolutionaries established a radio station located in Mozambique (Owomoyela, 2002). Here, ‘controversial’ music and explicitly political music was played. This urged musicians to express their political messages without fear of reprisals though a significant portion of the local artistes were mute on the injustices and concentrated their creative genius on apolitical themes. Chiwome, (1996, 2002) notes the same conformist trends in the Shona poem and the Shona novel during the colonial period. Most authors and poets chose to focus their attention on peripheral themes at the expense of the burning socio-political sensibilities mainly due to motley strategies of censorship strewn in the way of the artiste such as self censorship, patronage, traditional, internalised and institutional censorship by the Literature Bureau; apparently by a board set ostensibly to support creative works. This scenario resonates with the musical space during the colonial period. The greatest censorial force was the Rhodesia Broadcasting Corporation. Songs that seemed antiestablishment were not afforded airplay while those that sounded neutral were extensively played.

2.7 Postcolonial music literature in Zimbabwe

A small number of books and articles on music and society have been written in the postcolonial era. Chitando (2002:82) laments the paucity of literature on music when he argues that Zimbabwean music has not consistently received due scholarly attention with the available literature being largely fragmented in outlook, mainly on political protest and social issues like gender. They have severally attempted to look at various
social issues in a manner that has encouraged and paved way for others to pursue the issue of music and social context. By focusing on few discrete topics on the sociality of music, they have obviously exposed the gaps which others may only attempt to fill through continued research and this research strives to add that rare voice on music and social context. This study adopts a more global way of looking at music and social context buy choosing to look at various thematic angles that discuss the postcolonial situation in Zimbabwe.

Writing after independence but retrospectively, Pongweni, (1982) explores the role of politically charged music in motivating the liberation fighters and helping spread a shared vision between the liberated and the liberator. The songs were characterised by the use of metaphors and political innuendos so as to conceal the political meaning from the regime. Pongweni locates the place of music in expressing the liberation struggle. This trailblazing effort is unique in that it is the first serious work on music and political context, at least with reference to Zimbabwe. In similar thread, Kwaramba (1997) focuses on the idea of protest from the pre-independence to the post-independence era, with a special focus on the music of Thomas Mapfumo. She notes that, in a situation where black people were systematically excluded from the formal means of political representation, music became an alternative means of articulating their experiences. Music takes over where the speech of men stops short of expressive effect. This view rhymes with Mano’s (2007:61) observation that where mass media are weak and opposition parties frail, music can serve as the voice for the voiceless particularly in repressive contexts where the expressive potential of the mass media is rendered impotent. Illuminated by these insights, this research examines the degree of freedom of expression afforded the musicians in the macro political and social environment of music composition.

Mudzanire and Mufanechiya (2010: 88) have written on the recurrence of gender motifs in popular music. They advance that the modes of expression predominant in any given society has a significant bearing on the organisation of that society and its modes of thought. The two have realised that Zimbabwe music influences the perpetuation of the
gender differences by composing and broadcasting gendered music; that is, music which articulates and projects gender identities. The Zimbabwean music industry, being male dominated, has been used as a platform to advance the male hegemonic discourse as well as restricting women to culturally structured modes of self perception. The publication in context however, uses the gender theory which is not hospitable with African conceptions of gender. This study applies Africana womanism perspective as a refreshing alternative to the reading of gender issues in Zimbabwean music.

Vambe (2002, 2004, and 2007) has significantly contributed to the study of the Zimbabwean society through the mirror of music. Concentrating mainly on major voices in Zimbabwean music like, Mapfumo, Mtukudzi, Chimbetu and Chinx, Vambe (2004: 167-193) explores the trends in Chimurenga musical discourses of post colonial Zimbabwe and disabuses the reader of the restricted conception of the term chimurenga which many have come to associate with political protest music or parochially limited to Thomas Mapfumo’s music genre. The term Chimurenga is unbundled to accommodate social protest and struggles within the postcolonial state. Vambe (2004:168) notes:

*Chimurenga* songs have been misconstrued as a monolithic musical formation concerned with political platitudes. This limited definition has compromised the music, in which the actual musical formations or narrative lyrics strive to explore a conflict of values. This has led to closed discourse within *chimurenga* protest, one that fails to explore its own possibilities.

The author exerts the focus of his study on the four artistes who represent various shades of struggles. Thomas Mapfumo, himself a virtuoso of the political *chimurenga* genre of music, is seen as contesting the official discourse of *chimurenga*. Mtukudzi fights a social struggle in his music while Chinx and Chimbetu explore the safeguarding of the gains of the revolution and the pan-Africanist stance respectively. While Vambe’s study is very intense, it is rather restricted on the theme of *chimurenga* while this study attempts to explore a variety of motifs along political and social domains of life. This
study interrogates as many voices as possible as a way of recording the mood of the postcolonial nation through popular expression.

Reflecting on images of black women in popular songs and HIV and AIDS in post-independence Zimbabwe, Vambe and Mawadza (2007) situate Zimbabwean popular music into contemporary HIV and AIDS issues in Zimbabwe. Exploring the images of black women in popular music, they discover that the male artiste is culpable for the wide range of verbal abuses served on the Zimbabwean women in the name of music. They note that black women are paraded in contemporary music as responsible for the spread of the disease. In another publication on popular songs and social realities in post-independence Zimbabwe, Vambe (2002) makes a prototypical attempt at documenting the role of popular music in tabulating the social and historical context of its composition. This research derives inspiration from this work and thusly inspired to explore more extensively the validity of music as social, political and historical communication.

Fred Zindi cannot go unnoticed in Zimbabwean music given the volume of ink that he has devoted to music study in books, newspapers and magazines. Commenting on the power of political music in The Herald newspaper of 16 October 2012, Zindi observes that Zimbabwean political music, unlike other brands, is unambiguous and is used to portray specific political messages. He refers to Last Chiyangwa’s (Tambaoga) song ‘Agrimende’ (Agreement) which clearly refers to people like Robert Mugabe and Tony Blair. However, is it always the case that Zimbabwean music is unambiguous, as Zindi would have us believe? This research deeply interrogates the Zimbabwean music to disinter even the most subtle political nuances located in popular music.

Commenting on the importance of the musical voice as a national record, Zhangazha (2013: internet) has this to say about Thomas Mapfumo’s music in Zimbabwe:
Listening to Mapfumo’s new compilation album, Golden Classics is akin to undergoing a musical historical narrative on the progression of Zimbabwean society since the late 1970s through the euphoric early years of independence.

The above citation accentuates the importance of music as conveyer of national history. Zhangazha’s observation is a classic testimony to the claim that music has a role to play in national history and his view shares space with the thrust of this research. Zhangazha, therefore, stands as a local witness motivating research into the sociality of music in Zimbabwe.

2.8 Music censorship and freedom of expression

The subject of music censorship lies diametrically opposed to the issue of freedom of expression. The presence of one signifies the absence of the other. Where censorship abounds, there is violation of the freedom of expression or abuse of the freedom of expression and where there is no censorship there is/can be freedom of expression. In many parts of the world, violations of freedom of musical expression are commonplace. The voice of the artiste and their right to participate in cultural life is increasingly prone to the threat of sinking into oblivion as the right to self express is constantly denied them. This has the net effect of whittling down the range and extent of themes they are ready to express. To this end, the variety of themes artistes are prepared to explore is directly correlated to the regulations defining the extent of freedom of expression in any country. This item of literature review explores the issue of music censorship as recorded in different literary spaces. The review of the hurdles and opportunities that musicians grapple with every day, affords this research the chance to assess the vistas and obstacles Zimbabwean popular music encounters in its attempt to tell the Zimbabwean story. The absence and presence of these barriers to effective expression is an index against which the whole field of musical expression in Zimbabwe can be assessed as referential to its context.
2.8.1 Freedom of expression

Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is the right of every individual to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers (Freedom House, 2016). The Ford Foundation regards free expression as central to all the other freedoms as society changes and people participate and connect in various forums (Ford Foundation, 2013). It entails equal access to all media platforms like radio broadcasts television and the press. This freedom is referred to speech, musical and artistic expressions, among others. In principle, this is a right that every person potentially possesses. The European court on Human Rights has interpreted artistic freedom of expression in a broader way:

Those who create, perform, distribute or exhibit works of art contribute to the exchange of ideas which is essential for a democratic society, hence the obligation on the state not to encroach unduly on the freedom of expression.
(Hald 2001)

In an environment where they are allowed to express their artistic prowess, musicians can perform and release their music without any hindrance. Those who receive the music should be allowed to play the music in private or in public. Moreover, article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, hereafter, UDHR, observes that music involves a number of possibilities for human beings to express themselves. Joy, hope, or any other mood may be expressed through music. Charged with such an important task, musicians must express themselves freely. Freedom of expression affords the individual the latitude to self-express independently. Music is considered as a free expression of ideas, traditions and emotions of individuals and people. According to FREEMUSE, (2013) it may express the musician’s hopes and aspirations, joys and sorrows and their very own identity as a culture. Contained in this statement is the thinking that the sentiments freely expressed may be personal as well as broadly shared concerns. When musicians are free in their expression, then their voice becomes an honest and accurate projection of their social realities.
So far, it would seem that these rights are free bounded, unlimited and gratuitous. While they are important rights that should be protected at law, they are not freely afforded to the point of one overstepping their extent. Freedom of expression is not absolute. Seeking, receiving and imparting information or ideas which few societies could tolerate, such as inciting murder or peddling pornographic materials to children can not be acceptable under the guise of freedom of expression. According to Free Word Centre (2016) freedom of expression can be limited if it conflicts with other rights for instance:

- the rights or reputations of others
- national security
- public order
- public health
- morals

However, the right can not be waived at the whim of a public official. There must be a law or regulation that is formally recognised by those entrusted with judicial processes in any given context and must clearly, rather than vaguely regulate the extent of freedom of expression. Vague laws are prone to abuse as they give authorities discretionary powers that leave too much room for arbitrary decision-making (ibid). These restrictions have a ‘chilling effect’ and inhibit the discussion of issues of public concern. In this research, an earnest scrutiny of the legislative provisions and restrictions to the freedom of musical expression is pursued. This enables the research to estimate the extent to which musicians are free to express themselves in the background of such legislative frameworks.

2.8.2 Music censorship

Censorship has long been seen as a desperate bid by targets of criticism to choke the free expression of seemingly unsettling ideas. Censors realise the power of the word in conscientising people about oppression and the word’s ability to raise their spirits and overturn their repression. Manguel and Stephenson (1996:9) underscore this view:
Censors bear witness to the power of the word even more forcefully than writers and readers because they acknowledge in their fear the possibility of social and individual transformation running through the weave of stories...

Such is the fear that preoccupies the mind of the censor. Music is a powerful weapon for social and political transformation. Those who wantonly oppress people may feel the need to stifle the expressive avenue of music. Conscious of this view, this study seeks an insight into the expressive atmosphere around postcolonial Shona music. How different institutions respond to music’s articulation of contentious discourses inspires the study to investigate censorship protrusions in music production, dissemination and consumption.

Potentially, every person has that right to freedom of expression but like Rousseau (1712-1778) observed; man is born free but is everywhere in chains. There are always placed, before man, obstructions to that freedom. Musicians are not always free to express themselves as provided for by their national constitutions or the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This accentuates the observation that musical expression is not absolute. In most parts of the world musical expression is censored. The voice of the musician is gagged.

Music censorship has been defined by Wikipedia (2013) “...the practice of restricting free musical works.”. Terseness and word economy characterise such a definition and Hall’s (2009) definition is brisker, ‘banning of music.’ These definitions stress on the process leading to state of silencing of expression without spelling out the offender and the reasons for doing so. Encarta (2009) defines it as restricting free access to musical works which definition is from the reception perspective. The later definition serves to delineate the concept of censorship used in this research. While the earlier definitions express the concept from the perspective of constricting the freedom of the artiste to express issues, the later focuses on the audience being denied access to the music. Wikipedia (2013) provides a more detailed and inclusive definition of censorship:

Censorship is the suppression of speech or other public communication which may be considered objectionable, harmful, sensitive, politically incorrect or
inconvenient as determined by government, media outlet or by any other controlling body.

The definition is process, motive, and agent oriented as it explains what happens with censorship, mentions the one who censors as well as the reason for such censorship. These definitions are critical in illuminating the research on the processes that hinder free music expression. This research investigates the opportunities availed and denied the audience and the musician and, as such, receives insights from the various conceptions of censorship discussed here. Establishing the hindrances and estimating the freedom of expression in Zimbabwe can only be done if there is a fairly adequate understanding of the concepts of freedom of expression and censorship. This makes the review of literature on these issues an inescapable obligation for this research.

Bernard Shaw (Lombardi, 1991) in his essay, ‘On Censorship’ and with reference to press censorship, sees censorship as an inherently conservative action that is performed by those who desire to preserve tradition. This rhymes with Manguel and Stevenson’s (1996) observation in Lost Words: the Stories they Wouldn’t Let You Read where they contend that censorship stems from the fear of change. The censor, they note, is interested in order as an end that is famously supposed to justify the means. The fear of change warrants enlisting of several mechanisms to thwart the agents of change of which music is one. The research is investigates factors stifling musical expression and creativity in post-independence Zimbabwe.

Hall (2009) lucidly explores the concept of music censorship. He observes that music provides a powerful form of expression that at its most basic level helps to entertain while containing the power to cause revolutions both cultural and political; two adjectives that define the concentration of this research. On why music is censored, the author discusses four critical issues namely; morality, racial, generational value gaps and fears. Some songs are censored because they are morally offensive while some songs are racially provocative. Some generation of music listeners may be turned away or upset by the presence of content that seem irrelevant to their contemporary social or political values. Hall’s view resonates with Oluda’s (2011) observation on ‘Music and
Censorship in Nigeria’ that songs are censored mainly because they carry messages that are deemed to traverse political, religious, moral and military boundaries. FREEMUSE (2013), in harmony with Lombardi (1991), goes a step further to mention the culprits of censorship as the state, passionate religious, educational systems, families, capitalist retailers and lobbying groups. In most cases these violate international conventions on human rights. The ideas in the music may be running counter to current thinking or practices of a regime or special interest group.

Music can be censored to enforce morality or because older generations may use their power to censor the music of the younger generations because of its failure to reflect the values of the older generation. These are generational value gaps that may lead to cultural disharmony. Hall (2009) observes that in America it is not coincidental that music censorship began in the 1950s when traditional and conservative values began to unravel. Then, order, morality, and obedience to authority were part of the accepted mindset. Technological developments and inventions such as the radio provided access to new types of music that challenged traditional morality and created dynamics of music censorship, writes Hall (ibid). The advent of rock ‘n’ roll aroused a lot of insecurity on the part of elders who felt that the music had the revolutionised the youth into mischievous behaviour. Moral authorities have minimum standards of behaviour which if any member dares trespass, excites their indignation. Profanities, drugs, violence, and sex are topics that authorities attempt to regulate. Lombardi (1991) observes that all types of music have their detractors and adults are swift in attributing juvenile delinquency on musical form. While elders may be concerned with the form of music as responsible for the foul behaviour, this research focuses on the content ingrained in Shona popular music. This research also asseses popular music’s handling of moral issues and how free the music expresses these.

Hall (2009) observes that fear lies at the root of most censorship schemes. Politicians, elders and religious authorities fear that badly worded music may negatively affect them and prevent them from achieving acceptable moral lives. Change is seldom accepted by most conservative sections of the community because the unknown tends to create
uncertainty even if music merely reflects rather than change society. Though music has this double edge of being a mirror of its context and a causative agent in stimulating emotions and inducing behavioural changes in people, this research largely looks at the issue of context reflection rather than the musical effect.

Cloonan (2006) discusses religion as a significant censorial force in West Africa, much as it is an issue in other non-African states like Afghanistan (Bailey, 2001). The potency of religion as a force in censorship can be seen in Islamic religion, which does not accept any music construed to be against the faith. Religion tends to warn its adherents away from certain cultural artefacts. The violation of religious norms in music affects the sanctity of the members of that religion, it is feared, hence the need to block its access to the members. Zimbabwe is predominantly a Christian nation, but is there any influence of the religion or other religions on music discourse? It is also against this background that the research has a focused curiosity on censorship and music.

Racial motivations have been raised as some of the reasons music is censored. Strange as it may sound, some authors have recorded race as a significant factor in music censorship. Drewett and Clegg (2006) explore the racial perspective of censorship in apartheid South Africa. They note that the most systematic attempt at censoring music along racial lines was recorded during the apartheid era through a plethora of repressive laws instituted to strangle freedom of musical expression:

Through the control of music on the airwaves, control of publications by means of central government censorship board and police surveillance and harassment of musicians, South African popular music was routinely monitored and censored as part of the state’s attempt to maintain apartheid hegemony (Ibid: 127).

Through the Broadcasting Amendment Act No. 49 of 1960, record companies were obliged to submit written lyrics of all songs seeking airplay, and if the lyrics were found to be racially offensive, sexually explicit, political connotative or broke any interpretation
of the laws of cultural segregation (which was on racial lines) would not receive air play. Songs such as ‘Hoza Friday’, a Juluka song was in 1976 refused airplay in terms of cultural segregation laws. Its mixed Zulu and English lyrics were considered inconsistent with the expectations of the apartheid government on language mixing in music. Ostensibly, such a song, it was said, would offend the Zulus because it diluted their linguistic purity. Their real fears were that the infused African word might carry tonnes of political innuendos that would destabilise their hegemony. The same racial fears tended to regulate music listenership in America. Hall (2009) discovered that the emergence of a new musical genre, R & B (mainly associated with the black community) on the national music landscape was received with indignation within the white section of the population. It was felt that the music ought to be ‘filtered’ to rid it of corrupt language, sexually suggestive messages, drug references and other racially repugnant nuances. Viewing the content as racially referent missed the point because the black musicians were simply expressing the frustrations of the inner city and holding the mirror to every day reality.

An array of literary witnesses on music censorship considers politics as a major censorial factor in free expression of music. Tracing the concept of censorship of music to colonial days into the postcolonial period, Cloonan (2006) and Pongweni (1982) view colonial censorship of music as motivated by the need to maintain the status quo. Musical lyrics that tended to instigate rebellion in the black listener were either banned or discouraged on state broadcasts. With the coming of independence, it is not alarming to realise that some songs are still censored as observed by Cloonan, (2006:10-11). To him, many dictatorial regimes existed in Africa in the postcolonial period as a result of complex managerial problems associated with the new states. In a bid to thwart scathing attacks from the hostile and disgruntled voice of the artiste, the governments had to institute censorship mechanisms. During Banda’s reign in Malawi, Chirambo in Cloonan (2006:120) says ‘even to whisper in the dark was dangerous’. Even in some countries, where there was no written censorship rule, the prevailing admonition was that musicians be careful and avoid politically inclined messages. Eyre (2004) refers to the music of Thomas Mapfumo in Zimbabwe as politically charged resulting in the
colonial and postcolonial government critic going into exile. The writer does not however refer to any laws by government restricting the musician to any themes. It is not clear from the article whether the musician was exiled or simply felt insecure and left.

In some cases, politicians may actually instruct some musician to peddle their ideology or praise the name of an authoritarian ruler. This is also some form of patronage. Palmberg (2004:33-34) argues that this ‘sanctionship’ is some form of censorship as musicians are not singing their mind but an instructed message. Whichever way, a form of censorship would have reared its way into the equation. For that reason, this research looks for constraints of free musical expression in Zimbabwe as a way of assessing the ability of the music to convey its message within these circumstances.

2.8.3 Agents of music censorship

When people hear of music censorship they quickly think of some quasi-government authority standing in the way of the artiste and their controversial musical product, yet literature is replete with evidence of some powers other than government responsible for regulation of music. For instance, Lombardi (1991) identifies four major agents of censorship namely; government, parents, special interest groups and self. Korpe, Reitov and Cloonan (2006) focus on religion and governments as the infamous agents of musical control.

Throughout the world, government is largely implicated as responsible for music censorship. Given the power of music to incite or change people’s ways of seeing their surrounding, governments have particularly been watchful of the lyrics of popular music. They have employed various pieces of legislation or arbitrary powers to throttle creativity. Korpe, Reitov and Cloonan (2006) refer to the extreme censorship of music in Iran during the era of Ayatollah Khomeini and Afghanistan under the Taliban government. They submit that when the Taliban took control of Kabul in 1996, a number of edicts were published against music (RAWA in Freemuse, 2001). In shops, hotels, vehicles and rickshaws, cassettes and music were prohibited. If any cassette was found in a shop, then the shopkeeper was to be imprisoned and the shop closed. At weddings
if music was played the head of the family would be arrested. This extreme form of censorship shows that the governments are conscious of the power of music as a conscientising tool.

In another example of censorship from the American context, Scherzinger (2007) observes that songs that were deemed to contain anti-American sentiments were whisked off air or were discouraged on national television and radio. Drowning Pool's 'Bodies' with the refrain, “Let the bodies hit the floor” was in deference to the public mood of mourning and even evocative of the traumatic images following the attack of the World Trade Centre on 11 September 2001. In Nigeria, for instance, successive military governments were incensed by Fela Anikulapo Kuti’s politically incisive lyrics which blatantly and bluntly lampooned their insensitivity. Red Hot Organisation (2013) reports that:

In 1977 Fela and the Afrika '70 released the album Zombie, which was a metaphor to mock the methods of the Nigerian military... the album... infuriated the government; causing a vicious attack on the commune... Kuti was severely beaten and his elderly mother was thrown through the window causing fatal injuries.

As a knee jerk reaction, they banned the verbally pyrotechnic artiste’s music but he responded by penning two more provocative pieces, “Coffin for Head of State” and “Unknown Soldier”. Although the government visited the earlier release with a heavy hand, the artiste’s resolve was not deflated as he went on to produce more stubborn pieces, thereby proving that censoring music, though it may delay the voice, is largely a futile excise. The artiste may be censored by the national broadcaster but still weave their way out by selling their products to record companies and lately through the internet, courtesy of the blogosphere’s open door ‘policy’. Against this background, the research is inspired by the need to examine strategies that artistes make use of in order to overcome state censorship.

Parents, the world over, are particular about the character of their children and therefore take exception to any form of character pollution by music or any form of social
association by bad peers. Floorwalker (2013) explores the formation of the Parents Music Resource Center (PRMC) as precipitated by the need by parents to restrict the youth access to dangerous and prurient songs. This was met with a rude response from Frank Zappa who compared the PRMC’s agenda to a sinister kind of toilet training programme to house-break all composers because of the lyrics of the few. Their action was compared to “treating dandruff by decapitation”. Though the action is an infraction on the freedom of the artiste to explore themes freely, the accomplished musician’s rubbing of parental interest underestimates the power of music to influence negative character in children. The parents’ concern sounds legitimate given most youths’ vulnerability to popular culture. This research benefits immensely from this discussion as investigates the agents of musical control as the factors that affect the artiste's freedom to express as accurately and as clearly as they may want.

One very controversial agent of musical control is self-censorship; controversial in that what may be considered as self-censorship may be the presence of a seemingly absent hand of the censor (Scherzenger, 2007). According to Tim Robins, cited in Scherzenger (ibid), here the artiste exhibits some kind of pathological watchfulness, involuntarily incorporating a censor-figure in his interior, acting as imagined quiescence. Danilo Kis’s (1986:45) view, as cited by Scherzenger (2007:92), is that this introverted censorship is more powerful than the overt kind. Kis sees this as “reading your own texts with the eyes of another person, stricter and more suspicious than anyone else”. This kind of censorship can hardly be defeated as it is both prohibitory and inhibitory and in my opinion very hard to detect in the musician. According to Scherzenger (2007:92), “the musician’s act of silence testifies to a policed self: silent and invisible to the public, silenced by an internalized and invisible censor”. Artistes who lie about their freedom of expression are conniving with the censor. In this study, the researcher relies on the freedom of other modes of expressions like books as an index of absence of explicit and internal control.
2.9 Conclusion

The review of literature in this chapter has illuminated this research immensely. It locates gaps that strengthen the resolve of this study in coming up with an assessment on the sociality of music in Zimbabwe. Literature review delivers this research from the labour of repeating what other authors have written on the subject of music and social context. It also demonstrates how music is construed by different people in different parts of the globe. The chapter looks at the essence of music in these realms in different parts of the world. It has also come to light that music though a vital form of communication and information, has been heavily censored by various political and social agents. Though this has potentially silenced some musicians from expressing politically sensitive issues, it has forced them into devising clever ways of putting across their messages to their fans. This strengthens the view that though censorship can be hindrance to free expression, it also encourages versatility of expression in the artiste. Cascading on the insights of other researches; this research benefits immensely from discoursing music and social context in Zimbabwe against earlier works. In similar track, chapter three discusses the theoretical framework that instructs this research.
CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Introduction

Any study meriting serious academic attention should openly confess the various critical concepts and theoretical lenses that underpin its inquiry and discussion. Ali (2013) submits that theories are selective in terms of their priorities and the perspectives and the data they define. As such, the choice of any set of theories should respect this enlightened observation on the strengths and shortcomings of these theories and, with hindsight, adopt an eclectic approach. This research uses the Sociological and the Afrocentric literary theory; a confluence that affords the study of artistic products from the perspectives of their context. The common platform familiar to both theories is their shared view that art reflects the context of its creation and that qualifies their relevance in the interrogation of the context fidelity of postcolonial music in Zimbabwe.

In integrating these theoretical perspectives, the researcher is conscious that in “theoretical marriages” much as in human marriages, both partners do not have to agree on all points; rather the marriage is enriched when each brings a unique identity and differing opinions to the table (Deluca, 2000 cited in Kinsella, 2006). The two theories may seem inhospitable, but their fusion immensely benefits this research since qualitative reality is multifaceted and cannot be exhausted by adopting a ‘God’s eye view’. These theories are employed as the keys that unlock the social and political meaning in Shona music lyrics in postcolonial Zimbabwe.

The application of these literary theories is justified because of the strong interconnection that exists between literature and music. Before any music is vocalised, it has to be composed in the text form hence it is not a misnomer to regard music as a text. In fact, music can be approached as textual discourse that comments on people’s life in the same manner that literature does. Equally, the ideas from various scholars whose works have been reviewed indicate the connection. Literary theories can therefore be appropriately engaged in the study of music. Music is, indeed, a vocalised text and theories that apply to texts are very relevant in scrutinising musical content. Correa, Chornik and Samuels (2009:51) argue that music finds a place even within
critical theories that would seem inhospitable to it. Likewise the study of music is comfortable with the engagement of literary theories in its search for lyrical meaning.

3.1 The Sociological approach

The Sociological approach to literature starts with a basic conviction that art's relations with society are virtually important and that the investigation of these relationships may organise and deepen one's aesthetic response to a work of art (Ali, 2013). Edmund Wilson traces the sociological theory to the 18\textsuperscript{th} century study of Homer's epics. The study focused on the social conditions of the poet's period. Literary documents were seen as social documents presenting the material condition and ethos of a given period (Ibid). However, the theory's present day outlook is associated with the 20\textsuperscript{th} century literary and critical theorist Kenneth Burke (1971) who saw art as a manifestation of society, one that contains metaphors and references directly applicable to the existing society at the time of its creation (Wikipedia, 2013). Literature is seen as a mirror of social reality. According to Burke (1971) works of art are strategic namings of situations that allow the reader to better understand and gain a sort of control over happenings through the work of art. This is a contradistinction and tangential to new criticism which views works of art as self-contained products accountable to no contexts as if there was an art that was ever created in a social vacuum. While relegating to the fringes issues to do with authorial intent and affective response, the theory considers art as a systematic reflection of society and societal behaviour. The basic premise in this theory is that art is social and therefore should be socially relevant in its outlook and service to society.

Sociological criticism examines art in its political, economic and cultural context of production and reception (Kenedy and Gioia, 1995). It analyses the social content of the artistic work, culturally, economically and politically. In this study of popular music, the use of this theory in interrogating the musicians' handling of social and political issues becomes an enticing exercise. The theory, therefore, helps to examine the music in the social context of its composition. Sociological criticism operates on two planes; it may examine the artiste's society to better understand the artiste's work or it may examine the representation of such societal elements within the artistic product itself. Though
the two planes are interdependent, this study mainly deals with the issue of what and how the artiste records and reacts to the social and political stimuli in his/her milieu.

Art is not created in a social vacuum and no artiste can, in the true sense of ownership, claim to own an artistic product by themselves. The artiste is a member of a society and like Ali (2013) notes; “takes his material from society”. A work of art is not the work of an individual. It is of an artist fixed in time, space and environment, hence, temporo-spacial. Art is, strictly speaking, not a private enterprise. The artiste cannot be understood to be self-seeking in their business of art. They should be understood as a voice for the voiceless or for those who may not afford an opportunity to reflect on what is happening around them. The artist responds to social and political stimuli within their environment.

Literature subsists within defined social and political contexts. Unlike in middle ages world literature which is not in sync with the realities of its social context, Lowenthal (1984) observes:

In certain primitive and some culturally highly developed societies, literature is integrated into other social manifestations and is not clearly differentiated as an independent entity apart from ceremonials of cult and religion.

Literature then becomes an outlet of events, moods, sensibilities and other critical social issues in these institutions of society. This is equally true of music as a manifestation of art which is directly associated with events in its social background. The application of the sociological theories in this research stems from the realisation of the sociality of music.

Harrington (2004) outlines the six ways in which art can be approached from a sociological perspective; the humanistic historical approach, Marxist social perspective, cultural studies, theory of art in analytical philosophy, anthropological studies and empirical studies of contemporary art institutions. The first trio is considered critical in this research as the need to reflect on the historicity of music is as crucial as the examination of the distribution of wealth and power as reflected by the social context. Equally intriguing is the examination of the portrayal of culture in the context of the
music in question. The artistic references and commentaries on present day Zimbabwean society are examined in this study as the search for the answer to the question; should art works be isolated from the contexts in which they are imbedded is made. Burke, (1971) is convinced of the correlation between literary works and social contexts as being direct and positive. He observes that art reflects the context in which it is created. In the words of Aristotle, in his *Poetics* (c.335 BC), art is mimetic in that it imitates its context and therefore not abstract. Art is representational.

However, as a rule of caution, it must be observed that there is a danger in sociological criticism of imposing the critic’s subjectivity on the work in question bearing in mind that the artiste and the researcher are at the same time operating within the same social context. Chances of interpreting the work of any musician using precast opinions abound as the researcher and the artiste are reflecting on the same social and political milieu but may view them differently. There is a danger of subjective hypothesis confirmation discourses influencing conclusions. The researcher is aware of this temptation and relies on the direction of a number of theories under the sociological stable for balance. New Historicism, Marxism, and the Africana womanism theory are some of the sociological theories that direct the interrogation of context referentiality of postcolonial popular music in Zimbabwe.

3.1.1 New historicism

This study is beholden to the new historicism theory of art. Harrington, (2004) recognises new historicism as a sociological perspective of appreciating artistic products that seeks to locate the meaning of the text through a consideration of the framework of the prevailing ideas and assumptions of its historical context (Delahoyde, 2014). New historicism assumes that every work of art is a product of the historical moment that created it (Brizee and Tompkins, 2012). The theory seeks to reconnect an artistic product to the time period in which it was produced and identify it with the cultural and political movements of the time (ibid). The logic that compels the extrapolation of this literary theory to music appreciation stems from realisation that music is essentially a sung or verbal text. Music is therefore a social text like any other
literary piece. Music exists within a social and political context whose bearing on the music is symbiotic in that musicians derive their compositions from that social and political environment while they in turn comment on the same. In other words the basic assumption is that artistic products are simultaneously influenced by and influencing realities around them. Proponents of new historicism, "whatever their disagreements, share a belief in referentiality; a belief that literature refers to and is referred by things outside itself" (Murfin 1996a:124). There seems to be a running thread in all shades of new historicism that literature and context are mutually interdependent.

To say 'new historicism' is to suggest there is or was an old brand of that historicism. Indeed, there was historical criticism of an earlier type whose vision was limited to demonstrating how a work of art reflected its time. According to Murfin (1996a:115) between 1920 and 1950 influential critics of the time used what can be loosely termed the historical approach which with the advent of new criticism was largely antiquated as a paradigm of literary criticism. New criticism tended to look at literary texts as if they were self-referential, self contained objects (ibid). During the heydays of new criticism the critics concentrated on the relationship within the text. The interplay between literature and history virtually disappeared from the literary discourse (ibid). The world beyond the text and its reader; that is, the historical context was trivialised if not completely ignored. Greenblatt's name, more than any other's, is emblazoned on the term new historicism. He coined the term new historicism in 1982 not only as a punning opposition to new criticism but as a restoration of the historical paradigm into the realm of literary appreciation. Viewed this way, new historicism is not diametrically opposed to the old historical approach in terms of its axioms but should rather be seen as a revitalised 'second coming' of the old school.

New historicism is not strictly the same as historical criticism. The word 'new' is still useful in defining the historical criticism of today to distinguish it from old historicism. Questions asked by traditional and new historicists are somehow different though they are self-avowedly historical. Tyson in Brizee and Tompkins (2012) observes that traditional historians would ask questions like 'what happened? What does the event tell us about history?' In contrast, new historicists would ask 'how has the event been
interpreted? and ‘what does the event tell us about the interpreters?’ New historicists resist the notion that history is a series of events that have a linear, causal relationship. Further than previous versions of historicism which concentrated on demonstrating how a work reflects its time, new historicism evaluates how the work is influenced by the time in which it was written. In the context of the current study, it is intriguing to find out how musical content was influenced by the time and social conditions of its composition. The theory goes further to explore the social sphere in which the author moved, the psychological background of the author and the theories that may have influenced his writings (Wisegeek 2015). New historicism is informed by poststructuralist and reader response theory and the thinking of feminist, cultural and Marxist criticism (Murfin1996a) some of which are theoretical protrusions that excite this research.

New historicists are less fact and event oriented than the older type because the truth about an event can hardly be objectively known. They thus believe, unlike old historicism, that a text does not have a single and easily identifiable historical context. In similar echo, Brizee and Tompkins, (2012) observe that “we are hopelessly subjective interpreters of what we observe” since our understanding of what we call facts is only a matter of interpretation. In this study, the theory is employed to estimate but not calibrate the exact historical and political issues in popular Shona music in Zimbabwe. Musicians are seen as subjective interpreters of events around them and the researcher benefits from the same subjectivity to give his opinion on the issues depicted in music.

Understanding the social background, that is, the social and political current of a work of art illuminates the works for appreciation by later generations. Every artistic work is a product of its time and should likewise reflect the prevailing realities of its time of creation. Greenblatt (1980) considers art as neither timeless, cultureless nor a universal human essence; it is situated in specific social contexts. New historicism explores the ‘situatedness’ of art as opposed to the autonomy of art (Greenblatt, 1980). Greenblatt severely criticises the strict severance of the text from its socio-historical context as espoused by new criticism. He, instead, sees the relationship between textual and other forms of social production as more complex than is dreamt of in formalist philosophies (Veenstra, 1995). The critical practice should understand that a work of art is informed
by the socio-historical context from which it acquires its meaning. In similar vein, Pechter (1987) notes that new historicism aims at putting the text back into the context in which it was generated. Pursuant to this, all interpretation of art should deploy a detailed knowledge of the text’s historical and geographical context, where the meaning of the text is traceable to. Likewise the appreciation of music and context compels this study’s exploration of factors propping the composition of music and the context reflected in the compositions themselves.

Greenblatt’s theory of new historicism explores the relationship between the text and context, between art and society. Veenstra, (1995:176) views a text as:

...much more than a written, linguistic phenomenon. Contrary to most of the objects of many of the sciences, a text is produced by humans, and as a human-made object, it is radically informed by all the forces that condition and shape our societies and histories.

A work of art is simply a verbal or symbolic inscription of social and political forces conspiring in its production. The relationship between the text and context is firmly rooted in the Marxist aesthetic inquiry which examines the materialist integration of all discourses. In other words, literary texts are indeed ideological discourses and can only be fully appreciated by critically examining the context in which such artistic works are produced. Greenblatt raises the text from its traditional confines by referring to it as a ‘discourse’; which denotes the sum-total of all thought as social practice (Veenstra, 1995:178). More so, a given text is not seen only as a fragment of the overall discourse; it is also subject to the cultural dialectics that fashion it (Ibid). Greenblatt’s detailed and perspective analysis emphasise that a work of art is informed by the cultural dialectics of society at large. It reflects as well as support this dialectic and like Veenstra (1995) puts it a socio-historical context conditions its textual representations and likewise a text informs and sometimes even conditions the historical process. A good example is how the work of Animal Farm (1945) emerges from and influences the historical activities around its production.
To Greenblatt and other like proponents of new historicism, critical questions that are useful to any critic of literature are:

> Who controlled access to the printing press, whose voices were being repressed as well as represented in literary texts, what social strategies were being served by the aesthetic values we constructed..? (Murfin, 1996a:121)

These questions are critical in this research as the search for social and political issues lodged in music is explored. The research makes a determined search for the hidden meanings behind musical composition. The question ‘who controls music dissemination?’ lies at the doorstep of music censorship and freedom of expression which are critical concepts against which the expressive potential of any music can be measured. More still, Brizee and Tompkins (2012) outline a catalogue of questions new historicists often ask:

- What language/characters/events are present in the work reflect the current events of the author’s days?
- Are there words in the text that have changed their meaning from the time of writing?
- How are events interpreted and presented?
- How are events’ interpretation and presentation a product of the culture of the author?
- Does the work’s presentation support or condemn the event?
- Can it be seen to do both?
- How does this portrayal criticise the leading political figures or movements of the day?
- How does the literary work function as part of a continuum with other historical/cultural texts from the same period?
- How can we use a literary work to ‘map’ the interplay between both traditional and subversive discourses circulating in the culture in which that work emerged and/or the cultures in which the work is interpreted?
These questions define the perspective of new historicism and become very useful in the understanding of critical issues in the sociality of music in this research. These are the questions this research uses in its examination of the historical, social and political utility of popular music in postcolonial Zimbabwe. For instance, the first question is instrumental in tabulating historical events that are recorded in post-colonial Shona music. Already we have seen this elsewhere in music. Scherzinger (2007) discusses a number of songs that were composed with specific reference to the September 11 suicide bombings at the World Trade centre in America. Songs such as ‘Drowning Pool’s Bodies’ was a metaphorical reference to the bloodshed. The question, ‘How does this portrayal criticise the leading political figures or movements of the day?’ attempts to figure out the portrayal of notable people or events in the music under scrutiny. It also examines the various ways in which music understands events within its social and political context. The question ‘How does the literary work function as part of a continuum with other historical/cultural texts from the same period?’ (Instead of the literary, is now the music) assesses the utility of music as an alternative source of information. Virtually all these questions help in the discussion of critical issues in music and the postcolonial society.

On how the theory operates, Greenblatt hints that the point is not to show how the text reflects the historical event but to create a field of energy between the two so that we see the event as a social text and the text as a social event (Murfin 1996a). This way, the artistic product and artistic context coexist in a symbiotic relationship of some sort. According to Montrose, in Murfin (1996a:122), the goal of new historicism is to show “the historicity of texts and the textuality of history”. Rather than see new historicism as the ‘historisization of literature’ as Hoover, (1992) sees it, it should be viewed from the perspective of considering art as alternative sources of history much as history is the source of artistic materials. By extension music can be seen as a source of history as it records vital historical or political issues or events much as history provides raw materials for artistic composition.

New historicism suggests that literature must be studied and interpreted within the context of both the history of the author and the history of the critic (Wisegeek, 2015).
The author and the critic share a familiar social and political context to a point where they have a shared meaning of events around them. The theory looks at the text in its entire context. Greenblatt acknowledges that the work of art is a product of negotiation between a creator or class of creators and the institutions of and practices of society. He also suggests that artistic productions are intensely marked by the private obsessions of individuals though they may stem from collective negotiation and exchange (Murfin 1996a). Here, the proponent of new criticism releases the author or artiste from the role of a people’s representative to that of self-centred creator of artistic products. The voice in the artistic product becomes the artiste’s own voice and not the representative voice. It is possible to hear the musician singing their own story other than that of society in their music. This should, however, not be seen as a selfish digression from their social responsibility of representing people’s feelings and reactions to social and political stimuli, but confirms the artiste’s personal reflection as a member of the society on what is happening around them.

Critical to new historicism is the thorough scrutiny of the cultural practices and strategies that shaped artistic products (Kaes 1992). The interrogation of artistic products may require the critic to have an insight into the social pressures or sensibilities of that time. This research reflects on how the Shona people’s way of life is mirrored in the music. Social motifs like love, family, disease, famine, gender and scandals find expression through music and the same music is a useful social barometer through which such cultural motifs can be appreciated.

According to Pechter (1987: 292) the emphasis on cultural production of texts extends to their reception as well. The recipients of artistic products operate within known political and social environments and their reflection of the events around them influences their interpretation of artistic products. The contemporary audience has a stake in the interpretation of artistic products. However, this study also throws the interrogation of postcolonial music in Zimbabwe to the audiences; the ordinary consumers of music but mainly engages the researcher as the interpreter (himself a part of the audience) of music.
New historicism may sound overboard and overtly ambitious to a point where it encroaches the borders of other literary theories. This does not, however, reflect the inchoate nature of New historicism. Murfin (1996a:124) advises:

The fact that so many critics we label new historicist are working right at the border of Marxist, poststructuralist, cultural, postcolonial, feminist and now even a new form of reader-response (or at least reader-oriented) criticism is evidence of new historicism’s multiple interests and motivations, rather than of its embryonic state.

Murfin (1996a) presents New historicism as a multifaceted theory whose inquisition often knocks at the doors of other theories not for conflict but for cooperation. The wall between the new historicism and these other theories is a low one.

On the *modus operandi* of the theory, the scholar or critic will study a literary work’s point of origin by studying biography and bibliography. The critic must proceed to look at the expressed intention of the author. The critic must then study the history of a work’s reception as that body of opinion has become part of the work’s reception as the body of opinion has now become part of the platform on which we are situated when we study the work of our own particular point of reception. This study employs the basic procedure from point of entry as the artistes chosen for the study are Zimbabwean and their expressed intention in music is examined from the context of postcolonial social and political developments.

In short, New historicism can be appreciated for its pliability in various manifestations of art. It links the expressive domains of reality and the informative as perspectives that can bring about a holistic conception of reality. As Kaes (1996:156) rightly observes:

Its interdisciplinary orientation embraces textual and symbolic representations that include literary and non-literary documents as well as paintings, films, photographs, monuments, rituals, everyday myths, customs and symbolic activities... New historicism examines the circulation of representations both inside and outside the domain of literature, the borders of which have themselves become porous. Under the new historicist paradigm, literary studies
deal with representations which have a social as well as a textual dimension...
The search for a fixed centre of meaning also gives way to a more encompassing, associative way of presentation that does justice to the excess of historical and linguistic meaning.

In this theory, art and other modes of expression corroborate to bring out a total understanding of the people’s concerns, aspirations and experiences. Here, literary studies may not be looked at as mere works of creativity but reality presented in a creative way. Unlike new criticism which views literary works as self-referential, new historicism views artistic creations as a mirror of what obtains in society.

3.1.2 Marxism and popular music

One influential type of the sociological criticism that instructs this research is the Marxist theory of literature which looks at the ideological content of literature. This research is not released from the obligation to engage the Marxist theory, not only because Zimbabwe is a nation that was born out of a Marxist revolution, but due to the utility of the theory in examining the power relations of a stratified society such as Zimbabwe. The mere admission that music is an artistic product places the very product in a Marxian perspective given Marxism’s focused curiosity on material products and ideology. It was therefore, inescapable to enlist the services of such a theory in this research.

The theory focuses on the economic and political elements of art, often emphasising the political elements of art. To the Marxists, even if a work of art ignores political issues, it makes a political statement (Ali, 2013). The running thread in Marxist orientation is that art is political, either challenging or endorsing (even by that silence) the status quo. Marxist criticism illuminates the political and economic dimensions of art. Marx and Engels could not think of aesthetic matters as being distinct and independent from such things as politics, economics and history (Murfin, 1996b). To them the link between these and art was one that was very strong if not inseparable. The power matrices and relations between factors of production had strong bearing on the arts thereby making artistic productions not a matter of jest. By extension, in this research, music is not
taken just as an item of banter or some psychological relief outlet, but a strong avenue for letting out solemn socio-political issues at the heart of national discourses. Adopting Marxism as critical tool ensures a full discussion of artistic products as related to social and political context. The complex web of social and political relationships that were prerequisite to music production is pursued with intricate rigor in order for the research to explore the full environment in which the music evolves.

More traditional forms of criticism, as Pierre Macherey (Murfin 1996b) believes, set out to deliver the text from its silences by coaxing it into giving up its latent meaning but Marxism interrogates the text as a product of work in search for any existence of a prevailing ideology that can be located in the work of art. The Marxist theory of literature explores the ideological content of literature. In texts Marxists explore ways in which texts may reveal ideological patronisation of readers or oppression by the dominant classes as depicted in artistic products. The theory further interrogates the work on its reflection of the dominant ideology or whose story gets told in the work of art. According to Seldan, Widdowson and Brooker, (2005:110) a dominant system of ideology is accepted as simple view of things by the dominated classes and thus the interest of the dominant class are secured. Art, however, achieves a ‘retreat’ (a fictional distance deriving from its formal composition) from the very ideology which feeds it.

Questions that come to mind are; does the main character in the narrative affirm or resist the dominant ideology? Or whose story is being told in the narrative? The writer’s or musician’s ideology of the world or what surrounds them determines the content of their work. It is the artiste’s attempt at reproducing the world view which constitutes their intention. Murfin (1996b:156) observes this about the writer’s work:

At one level, the work is usually to enforce and reinforce the prevailing ideology, that is, the network of conventions, values and opinions to which the majority of people uncritically subscribe.

In the same vein the musician may compose a piece of music in order to sway consumers into purchasing a certain brand of thought that strengthens or dissuades
them from undesirable modes of action. This study specifically aimed at sifting out the political and social motifs that characterise postcolonial Zimbabwe popular music.

Marxists look at the conditions of the production of a work of art such as the economic conditions for the publication of a work of art as well as finding out what the work of art suggests about the values of the audience. A recurring motif in Marxist Literary Criticism is the issue of the relationship between the economic base and the superstructure. The superstructure emerges from the base and comprises of the law, politics, philosophy, art and religion. Of particular interest to this study is the relationship that subsists between the economic base and music as an item in the superstructure. Music is tasked with the role of commenting on the main course of the economy and how people relate with these developments. The economy is intricately linked to the political and to sing about the state of the economy is to make a political statement. It is interesting to use the Marxist angle to appreciate how music negotiates this role in Zimbabwean music.

Marxist criticism believes that in literary texts reside gaps and silences whose duty it is for the critic to locate and analyse. Most works of art are treated as ‘ideological traps’ which unsuspecting consumers naively plunge into without the slightest inkling of the hidden intentions of the work. It is the duty of the Marxist critic to sound a clarion call to the unsuspecting consumers of the artistic product. According to Pierre Macherey (Murfin 1996b) a realistic piece of art should normally be unified and coherent but instead ends being fraught with lapses, gaps and omissions. This happens because within ideologies there are subjects that may not be covered, things that may not be said. For instance a work of art may not explicitly display its intentions to a point where recipients may blindly accept the product without due caution. A piece of music may be produced as a propaganda or campaign jingle without overtly displaying its ulterior motive. Music as a mode of expression is laden with gaps and silences which may make normal intelligibility of music quite difficult, let alone the hidden motive of the same. The critic’s task is to supply what the text did not say or at least make sense of the gaps and contradictions in the musical text. This is the task of the research; to mine out the hidden social and political messages that may not be openly displayed in popular music in Zimbabwe. In doing so, the researcher is quite aware of the hazard of
imputing what the artiste did not intend to convey and of the need to disabuse oneself of any gratuitous subjectivity in the interpretation of gaps in music.

Marxists firmly believe that content determines the form in which art is produced and not the other way round, as formalists think (Ali, 2013). Formalists firmly believe that in any appreciation of art, form comes ahead of content. To them what is objective is to explore the verifiable form rather than the subjective interpretation of content. Marxists explore the content of art as an end that controls the form of the art. Since content overbears form, it is interesting to find out how artistes who sing about politics negotiate the terrain of various manifestation of censorship. Metaphorical language has often been used by many artistes as a way of circumventing the snares of censorship. This research is conscious of the need to ferret out the socio-political meanings ingrained in postcolonial musical language.

3.1.3 Afrocentricity

Though beholden to numerous antecedents, notably the Negritude and Black power movements and classical Black Nationalist figures such as Marcus Garvey and Martin Luther King, the concept of Afrocentricity in its contemporary state is largely credited to the work of Molefi Kete Asante, *Afrocentricity* (1980). Essentially, the Afrocentric literary theory is a decidedly Afro-baked theory of African agency which seeks to portray all African issues from the perspective of the perceiving African mind. The theory is hewn from the realisation that only participants from a given cultural set-up are qualified to comment authoritatively about that culture (p'Bitek, 1986). By extension, Zimbabwean artistes can be regarded as qualified to comment on social issues in their context. Asante (1998:xii) regards afrocentricity as a moral as well as an intellectual location that posits Africans as subjects rather than objects of human history and establishes a perfectly valid and scientific basis for the explanation of African historical experiences. The afro-centric dialectic assumes a deliberate Afro-vantage point in its deliberations on African issues. Already some scholars like Gilroy, in Mitchell, (1996) have castigated black music as radical utopianism and as having a heavily mythologised Africanaity when afrocentric scholars may simply view it as counter-hegemonic, if not counter-supremacist.
Enlisting the services of the afrocentric literary theory is a thoroughly considered position informed by the context of the music in question. This research is compelled to evaluate the artistes’ fidelity to the African sensibilities and issues in their music. When the music under review is African and the social context is African, then the employment of an afrocentric theory ceases to be an option but an obligation. Its blending with the sociological theory empowers the effort of the study in exploring the fidelity and sociality of Zimbabwean music.

According to Asante (2009), the Afrocentric method seeks to uncover the masks behind the rhetoric of power, privilege and position in order to establish how principal myths create place. In this adventure, the theory shares familiar concerns with Marxism save that the latter is more global. The former pursues the rhetoric of power privilege and position within the perspective of how these are used by other peoples of the world to disadvantage the Africans within their own geopolitics or as they interact with other races of humanity.

Asante (2009) compresses the five characteristics of Afrocentricity as follows:

- an intense interest in psychological location as determined by symbols, motifs, rituals and signs;
- a commitment to finding the subject-place of Africans in any social, political, economic and architectural, literary and religious phenomena, with implications for questions of sex, gender and class;
- a defence of cultural elements as in the context of art, music, education, science and literature;
- a celebration of centredness and agency and commitment to lexical refinement that eliminates pejoratives about Africans and other people;
- a powerful imperative from historical sources to revise the collective text of African people.

Afrocentricity has an intense concern with psychological dislocation that is, where a person’s psyche is out of sorts with his or her own historical reality, is a legitimate issue for any African corrective. As artistes discuss personal and national issues in their
music it is legitimate to interrogate the frame of mind in that discourse and how it affects the overall projection and understanding of African issues. Asante believes that signs, symbols, rituals and ceremonies are useful for societies since societies are held together or disintegrated on the basis of symbols. People go to war over symbols, fight over proper rituals of respect, and find their lives enriched by the memories of those who have achieved heroic stature by standing for what they stand for. This research at excavates social and political symbols that artiste emboss on their music.

The second issue raised concerns Afrocentricity is commitment to the idea that Africans are agents in the world and therefore should not be viewed as spectators. Afrocentricity discourages misdirected agency of serving the interests of other races. Asante advances that Afrocentrists take a strong view that racial, sexual, gender, and class discrimination and exploitation must be condemned outright and forthrightly. All Afrocentric analysis is a critique on domination. Persuaded by such thinking; this research interrogates artistes’ discourses in the postcolonial with a view to examining how African people are projected in music and explore whose interests artistes are servicing.

Thirdly, African cultural capital descended from African classical times should be recognised as valid and venerated as deserving reckon among Africans ahead of cultural products from other zones. This view extends to current and future African cultural products, music included. How is Zimbabwean music received among African listeners and what cultural issues feature in African music are critical questions in this research.

The issue of centredness and agency according to Asante seeks to build institutions everywhere “in our image and in our interests.” A people that have lost their institutions, their reasons for being, and their language, cannot find the proper strength to build institutions until they rediscover their cultural centre. Africans have been quaked out of their centres though perjoratives that speak negatively of those centres and until and unless they are prepared to relocate, they remain entrapped in exilic sanctuaries where their power of agency is not recognised. Popular music in Zimbabwe is thus
interrogated to examine artistes’ centredness and voice of agency in steering the way for the African relocation to the African centre.

The subject of imperative from historical sources disrupts the artificial boundaries that separate people of a common source and encourages synergies among Africans including those in the diaspora. Asante believes that Africans must learn from each other’s experiences. It is the imposed isolation that has kept them from their true understanding of themselves.

These issues become critical in assessing the artistes’ conception of the African person as located in history and in their own culture. This way, the postcolonial Zimbabwean political image can be assessed. Admittedly, the language of music in this context is Shona and therefore African and the artiste arguably African, but one may ask how representative is this music of the social and political conception of the African sensibilities and concerns. This research commits a significant portion of its energy to assessing the themes raised through the Afrocentric prism.

3.1.4 Africana womanism

In its study of gender relations as they are projected in popular music, the study uses Africana Womanism as a frame of reference. Essentially the theory regards Afrocentric conceptions of gender as distinguishable from the western perspectives and as unique to African world view. The theory is a departure from contemporary conceptions of gender manifested in various expressions of the feminist theories.

The theory is traceable to Cleonora Hudson-Weems who is credited for giving it intellectual currency although she humbly acknowledges that Africana Womanism has always been in existence. Hudson-weems (1997:81) acknowledges:

Notice that I did not say that I created the idea of Africana Womanism, for it has always been in existence. Going back to pre-American slavery and even to Africa, the Africana women have been both African and family centred both key components of Africana Womanism concerned with the welfare of the entire family as her number one priority. I simply named it and refined a paradigm
relative to the role of the Africana women within the constructs of the modern women movement so that we do not get confused or displaced concerning our true roles in the lives of our families and communities.

It emerges from the above that African Womanism is a renaissance of a traditional way of gender interpretation among Africans as it seeks to explain and understand the position of African women relative to modern feminist movements. Africana Womanism refuses to recognize western feminism as applicable on African understanding of gender and social reality. Although the theory, like feminism sees maginisation, oppression and male chauvinism as problematic, Cleonora Hudson-Weems (1998:157) submits that these issues must be addressed within an endemic theoretical construct. Rather than see these problems as male instigated; the theory sees them as a racial and classist (Ntiri, 1998). Race and classism are more severe forms of oppression and marginalization than sexism which most expressions of feminism allege is the point of attrition between the genders. In feminist scholarship, patriarchy and the resulting sexual exploitation, one based on social modes of production, divisions of labor, and property relations as the primary form of women’s oppression (Blackmon 2008:22). Diasporan African women would rather remain insiders by countering racism than outsiders in constantly challenging the gender order in such a way that the men could perceive as a threat (Ibid).

Hudson Weems elects to use Africana to identify the race of the woman being considered and established her cultural identity. Woman is seen as the more appropriate word than female because it speaks only to humanity thereby placing it in a higher realm than all other walks of life (Hudson-weems 2004). This presents Africana womanism as a theory of dignity for the African race.

In her seminal work, “Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves”, Hudson-Weems (1993:143) identifies eighteen "descriptors," which should serve to guide informed analysis of the Africana woman’s existence. An Africana womanist is:

- Self-Naming
- Self-Definition
- Family-Centeredness
- Role Flexibility
- Adaptability
- Authenticity
- Black Female Sisterhood
- Struggling with males against oppression,
Male Compatibility, Recognition, Ambition, Nurturing, Strengthen, Respect, Respect for Elders, Mothering, Spirituality.

These descriptors underscore the critical tenets that define the perspective’s approach to gender issues within the African context whether in the mainland or in diaspora. (Not all of these are used in this research) The descriptors of self-naming and self-definition steer the debate of control of self-space, self-knowing and self-expression. Africans should be allowed to turn the tables against European subversion of the self-naming and self-definition in history (Gwekwerere, Magosvongwe and Mazuru (2012:94). Nothing is more important to a people’s existence than naming and defining themselves. Allowing other people particularly those hostile to the African cause produces distorted images of their identity. In the context of this study, the descriptors help explore how the artiste appropriate the privilege to compose and express African issues.

Family-centeredness, role flexibility, and adaptability define African men and women as consumed by the desire to hold together their families and assume many roles to ensure maximised participation in anything that helps them secure vitals for their families. In the postcolonial musical reading of the context, the study uses this descriptor to examine how close to the Africana conception of male-female relational politics.

On the issue of male-female compatibility African womanism views men and female roles as different but complementary. Womanism is premised on African worldview which celebrates unity and connectedness (Sofala (1998:54). Every person has their own different responsibility though complementary to other members’ in order to meet a corporate goal, while other cultures may see that as oppression, denial or burdening. The carting of water, hewing of wood and cooking are culturally a preserve of the women while defending the family, food security and family authority naturally rhyme with masculinity. In the same spirit of unity, African men and women struggle together. They fight and stave off negativity together. There are no threats to men that do not involve women or vice versa.
Gwekwerere, Magosvongwe and Mazuru (2012:93) observe that Africana womanism is not just about African women, but all African people regardless of their gender or generation. This makes the theory applicable to a study that looks at male-female relationships in Zimbabwe. Hudson-Weems makes it clear that her theory is not just an idea, but a method with uniquely African considerations and sensibilities (Reed, 2001). Such a method is preferable to this study, particularly in a postcolonial study which assumes artistes have the power to express critical issues of their lives. Besides, Africana Womanism as a theoretical concept and methodology defines a new paradigm, which offers an alternative to all forms of feminism (Ibid).

3.2 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to explain the various theories that instruct the research's thrust and direction. It has tried to explain the sociological perspectives that it employs in this research. Music being a social activity within and about society, it is desirable that an engagement of theories that accept art as a mirror of society be pursued in a bid to establish the critical issues musicians try to comment on in society. In the same breath, music can be explored to find out how it discourses social and political issues within its background. The adoption of a variety of perspectives in the generic band of sociological theories is suitable as a way of affording the research a diversity of angles from which social phenomena could be explored. New historicism theory attempts to explore music's ability to reflect critical social and historical events within its background. Enlisting the services of an Afrocentric theory affords the researcher to gauge the Shona music of its Africanness in disposition as music obtaining within the African location. As the study unfolds, the following chapter discusses methodological issues that recognise the importance of the theories that have been discussed here.
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

The integrity of any research findings rests on the efficacy and aptness of its methodology. Such a methodology should be instructed by the nature, aims and scope of the research. Hitchcock and Hughes (1995:21) in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:5) suggest that ontological assumptions (assumptions about the nature of reality and nature of things) give rise to epistemological assumptions (ways of researching and inquiring into the nature of reality and nature of things); these in turn give rise to the methodological considerations, instrumentation and data collection. More so, Denscombe, (2010:4) cautions that one should consider the method’s suitability, feasibility and ethicality. This view moves this research beyond considering methodology a mere technical aspect but a well considered and indispensable part of the process of searching for the truth about Zimbabwean popular music as a social index. This research adopts the qualitative research paradigm and the hermeneutic research design to assemble and interpret musical data.

4.1 The qualitative research paradigm

This study is largely predicated on the qualitative research paradigm whose axioms are premised on the subjectivity of phenomena under review (Magagula, 1996). This research option is preferred ahead of the quantitative method because it was found suitable for the study of cultural and literature related issues as it seeks to explore the interpretation of phenomena from a rational subjective perspective, where views of subjects are not ‘controlled’ but come out naturally from their verbal data. In exploring the predominant social and political motifs in postcolonial Zimbabwean music, the research employs the hermeneutic method of textual analysis as an interpretive method augmented by interview as an instrument of securing critical data.

Maree, (2007:4) and Flick, Kardorff and Steinke (2004:5) see the label ‘qualitative research’ as a generic term for a range of different research approaches which differ in their theoretical assumptions, their understanding of their object of investigation and
their methodological focus. The three authors observe that the qualitative perspectives may be seen from three broad headings namely; the symbolic interaction and phenomenology tradition (which tend to pursue subjective meanings and individual sense attributions), ethno methodology and constructivism (which is concerned with everyday routine and the construction of social reality) and the structural and psychoanalytical tradition (which proceed from the assumption of latent social configurations and the unconscious psychic structures and mechanisms). The aforesaid traditions have different research goals. This research is more inclined to the first tradition in the search for meanings within music.

Magagula (1996) and Flick et al (2004:6-7) discuss the axioms of the qualitative research paradigm. The latter note that, in the qualitative research perspective, social reality may be understood as meanings and contexts that are jointly created in social interaction. Secondly, social reality is reflexive and recursive (processual) as in communication and interaction sequences with the help of observation procedures and sequential text analyses. Thirdly, meaning in social data is subjective since the words, pictures and symbol may not lend themselves to objectivity. Their meaning is rather shifty. Nieuwenhuis in Maree (2007) observes that most terms and concepts in research refer to complex sets of human behaviour and understandings that can not be easily reduced to simple, fixed and unambiguous definitions) and fourthly, reality is created interactively but becomes meaningful subjectively. Communication in qualitative research takes centre stage and in methodological terms, this means that strategies of data collection themselves take a communicative dialogic character. This research relies on this axiom in its interrogation of the social and political messages embossed in music which is regarded as a way of communication.

For its methodological strategy, the qualitative research paradigm relies on thick descriptions and prolonged engagement with the target community to examine recurring realities. The qualitative method views reality as evolving and not something out there which can be predicted prior to research.
4.1.1 Research design

All researches, whether quantitative or qualitative, must involve an explicit (auditable), disciplined, and systematic approach to finding things out, using the method most appropriate to the questions being asked (Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge, 2009:6). Such a framework is the research design. A research design is basically a plan for collecting and analysing data that will make it possible for the researcher to answer research questions (Flick, Kardorff and Steinke, 2004). Maree (2007:70) explains that:

A research design is a plan or strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to specifying the selection of respondents, the data gathering techniques to be used and the data analysis to be done.

It becomes clearer that the design the footsteps of the research; that well considered and measured process of the research as defined by the guiding philosophy of research. This is the operational framework for the actuation of the research. According to Durrheim (2006) a research design serves as a bridge between research questions and the implementation of the research. It outlines the process of research to its minute details. More so, Diekmann, (1995: 274), in Flick et al (2004:146), argues that “data collection designs are a means to the end of collecting meaningful data”. This amplifies the relevance of designs in ensuring that appropriate data is sought in the process of data gathering.

This research adopts the hermeneutic textual analysis research design. This means that the study is housed in that interpretive domain of qualitative research called textual analysis but using a hermeneutic perspective. According to Myers (1997) Interpretive researches start out with the assumption that access to reality (given or socially constructed) is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness and shared meanings. Interpretive studies generally attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them and interpretive methods of research).
4.1.2 Hermeneutics

This method of textual analysis emphasises the socio-cultural and historic influences on qualitative interpretation. It stems from the understanding that meanings arise through interpretation (Alkaissi, 2014). Hermeneutics, as the art of interpretation, has in some disciplines been described as a philosophy, a theory or simply a method. Bleicher (1980:81) defines hermeneutics as “the theory or philosophy of the interpretation of meaning.” It can be treated as both an underlying philosophy and a specific mode of analysis. As a philosophical approach to human understanding, it provides the philosophical grounding for interpretivism (Myers, 1997). As a mode of analysis, it suggests a way of understanding the meaning or trying to make sense of textual data which may be unclear in one way or another. It is primarily concerned with the meaning of the text or text-analogue; being anything that can be treated as a text, such as any human artefact, action organisation or culture (Newman, 2011).

The word hermeneutics derives from a Greek word *hermeneuein*, itself derived from *Hermes* the winged messenger god of Greece who both conveyed and explained messages of the other gods to mortals (Mallery, Hurwitz and Duff, 1986). In that sense it is traceable to ancient Greece where it was actively applied to literature and ancient biblical exegesis, that even today some still obstinately maintain it is an interpretive method for the scriptures. However, like Forster (2007) observes, a new focus was brought to bear on it in the modern period, in the wake of the Reformation with its displacement of responsibility for interpreting the Bible from the Church to individual Christians generally. Hermeneutics has over the past 150 years exploded on the modern scene as a methodology for the interpretation of all texts (Rutt, 2006:1).

Hermeneutic analysis primarily focuses on texts as a research data source. It is in part the practice of historical retrieval, the reconstruction of the historical context. Ideas are nested in historical and cultural horizons of meaning. No knowledge is possible without presupposition. The basic question in hermeneutics is: what is the meaning of this text? Taylor (1976:153) in Selamat (2008:42) says that:
Interpretation, in the sense relevant to hermeneutics, is an attempt to make clear, to make sense of an object of study. This object must, therefore, be a text, or a text-analogue, which in some way is confused, incomplete, cloudy, seemingly contradictory - in one way or another, unclear. The interpretation aims to bring to light an underlying coherence or sense.

Discernible from the above are certain critical attributes of hermeneutics that are useful for this study. Hermeneutics seeks to make clear of the meaning in a text which is similar concern of this study which seeks to ferret out the context meaning of Shona music in Zimbabwe. This textual method is comfortable with either texts or any human artefacts which may not strictly be considered textual. Music is textual and hence interpretable and analysable through the hermeneutical method. That the hermeneutical method seeks to clarify and bring to light hidden meanings pleases the nature of textual data in this research in that lyrics are generally less explicit and one has to engage the hermeneutical rigor of mining meaning out of ‘confused, incomplete, cloudy and seemingly contradictory’ data which is the nature of musical data.

It is critical at this stage to examine the generic characteristics of the hermeneutic methods which in turn are the basic tips on how one should approach textual analysis from a hermeneutic perspective.

4.1.2.1 Characteristics of hermeneutics

To help one appreciate the basic characteristics of hermeneutic enquiry, Kinsella (2006), Forster (2007), Newman (2011) and many more have outlined the critical concerns of this research method with a view to making plain what is critical to the understanding of hermeneutic inquiry.

a) Hermeneutics seeks understanding
According to Kinsella (2006:3) the goal of a hermeneutic approach is to seek understanding, rather than to offer explanations or to provide an authoritative reading or conceptual analysis of a text. Jardine, (1992:116) in Kinsella (2006:8) opines that,
“hermeneutics’ goal is to educe understanding, to bring forth the presuppositions in which we already live”. One sees the immediate concern of the method being a search for understanding rather than explanation of phenomena, which is a prefecture of experimental methods more than qualitative inquiries. According to Gadamer (1996) the task of this approach is not to develop a procedure for understanding but to clarify the interpretive conditions in which understanding takes place. In this light, this research examines the Shona artiste’s social and political concerns in postcolonial Zimbabwe as they come out of their lyrical data. This position guards against setting prescriptive formulae for understanding texts but underscores the need for one to understand the circumstances that direct an understanding of the artistes’ works. For Gadamer, understanding is reached with a fusion of horizons which resonate when attention is drawn to the prejudices people bring to the interpretive event. He makes an important and interesting observation that the interpreter’s own thought is active in re-awakening the texts’ meaning. This position thrusts this research into the active zone of mining data. Gadamer (1996) in Kinsella (2006) clarifies that the interpreter's own horizon is decisive, not as a personal standpoint that he/she maintains or enforces, but more as an opinion and a possibility that one brings into play and puts at risk, and that helps one truly to make one’s own what the text says. The text merges with the interpreter’s own questions in the dialectical play, which constitutes the fusion of horizons which tallies with Bentekoe’s (1996), in Kinsella (2006:4), acknowledgement of the integrative nature of hermeneutic understanding who says, "The interpretation of meaning that governs our understanding of a text is not an act of subjectivity, but proceeds from the commonality that binds us to the tradition."

b) Situated location of interpretation

Enersti, (1707-81) in Forster (2007) and Nagel (1986) in Kinsella, (2006) hint that all interpretation is situated, located, a view from somewhere and should therefore deploy a detailed knowledge of the text’s geographic and historical context. Hermeneutics hence acknowledges that all interpretation is contextual. Gardiner (1999:63) in Kinsella
(2006:7) eloquently summarises the active role of the interpreter in critical hermeneutic interpretation:

The hermeneutic approach stresses the creative interpretation of words and texts and the active role played by the knower. The goal is not objective explanation or neutral description, but rather a sympathetic engagement with the author of a text, utterance or action and the wider socio-cultural context within which these phenomena occur.

The role of the critic is to seek a sympathetic comprehension of the text or a piece of art as it appealed to its surrounding or in the context of its creation. The context has a bearing on interpretation because it is the one that influences the creation and likewise it should speak to the process of interpretation. Location also refers to the involvement and the view of the interpreter. Smith (1999), in Kinsella (2006:7) highlights:

the influence of social groups and practices, noting that all inquiry begins from a particular social location, in which every knower is located: Such social networks and practices, and the traditions they represent, also influence interpretive perspectives and ways of constructing meaning.

The social environment of the critic is crucial in coming out with the understanding of the text. The hermeneutic method believes in the situated nature of interpretation and the futility of finding a God’s eye view. Kinsella, (2006) raises the uniqueness of each vantage point as relevant; pointing out that how we interpret what we see bears our own signature. The method dispenses with the concept of objectivity and foregrounds the situated location of our subjectivity. In this study, understanding of context referentiality of popular music hinges on the researcher’s knowledge of musical context. Abulad (2007) further stresses that understanding the grammar of a language and meaning of words can only happen if one is a member of that linguistic community, a resource this research immensely benefits from.
c) The role of language and history

The hermeneutic method realises the importance of language in the process of understanding of meaning in the text. It is based on the understanding that language and history are always both conditions and limitations of understanding. Wachterhauser (1986:6) observes that;

Hermeneutical theories of understanding argue that all human understanding is never 'without words' and never 'outside of time'. On the contrary, what is distinctive about human understanding is that it is always in terms of some evolving linguistic framework that has been worked out over time in terms of some historically conditioned set of concerns and practices.

Hermeneutics is grounded in the philosophy of language. Forster (2007:16) observes that meaning consists in the unity of word-sphere, which basically means that the several different usages and hence meanings which typically belong to a word are essentially interdependent so that interpretation is fundamentally a matter of determining the linguistic usage of words. In other words usages and hence meanings of cognate words in a language are likewise essentially interdependent. Meanings are not obstinately fixed but are conditioned by context or usage. This understanding is critical in analysing lyrical data as used in different contextual references of popular music. All thought is conditioned by the thinker's capacity to for linguistic expression and therefore a person can only think if he has a language and can only think what he can express linguistically. Abulad (2007) further underscores that in order to understand an author one should be adept in his/her language and indeed know his/her person as well as one can. Forster (2007) hints that there is no danger that an author's thoughts will transcend his capacity for linguistic expression. Likewise, understanding what the artiste is referring to in their music, takes note of his/her capacity to express issues in his/her background as dependent on their language. Similarly, for the critic, understanding the artiste’s message is identical with understanding the language they use to express that reality, since in hermeneutics thought is identical with language.
The quasi-empiricist principle of hermeneutics implies that interpretation requires the interpreter to perform some sort of imaginative reproduction of an author's meaning-internal sensations (Forster, 2007:8). This is an important aspect of Herder’s thesis that interpretation requires *Einfühlung*; that is, feeling one’s way in. Interpretation of one’s meaning is itself an aspect of psychological imagination. When one analyses music’s reference to some social or political event, the interpreter has to penetrate into the artiste’s or authorial linguistic individuality and be able to imagine his/her reference. Like Abulad (2007) observed, on one hand, he tries to decode the words, and on the other try to read a mind.

The concept of historicity in hermeneutics according to Newman (2011:5) refers to the thesis that one is is through and through historical. In other words, the insinuation is that, what one is is a function of the historical circumstances and community that one finds themselves in, the language one speaks, the historically evolving habits and practices one appropriates and the temporally conditioned choices one makes. Hermeneutics defends the ontological claim that human beings are their history. Gadamer believes that understanding comes from interpretations embedded in our linguistic and which contribute to our, cultural traditions inherent prejudices (Alkaissi, 2014). Furthermore, Gadamer (1996) in Gjesdal (2008:293) views an awareness of historically informed prejudices as a basic condition of understanding:

> A person who believes he is free of prejudices, relying on the objectivity of his procedures and denying that he himself is conditioned by historical circumstances, experiences the power of the prejudices that unconsciously dominate him … A person who does not admit that he is dominated by prejudices will fail to see what manifests itself by their light.

An attempt to understand a text always involves some prior knowledge or expectation of what the text is about. According to Newman (2011:7) hermeneutics suggests that ‘prejudice’, pre-judgement or prior knowledge plays an important part in our understanding. Gadamer, (1975) in Newman (2011) suggests that from a hermeneutic perspective, understanding always involves interpretation; interpretation means using...
one's own preconceptions so that the meaning of the object can become clear to us. By extrapolation, interpretation of what is located in musical data is conditioned by who one is and the preconceptions one already has and what the artiste sees as regarding his/her message, equally hewn from the social milieu. As researchers, we need to become aware of how our own views, biases, culture and personal attitudes affect our interpretation of what we read, hear or see.

c) Inquiry as conversation

In Gadamerian hermeneutics, an inquiry into a text or piece of art is seen as a conversation with the author or the work. Gadamer in Kinsella (2006:8) describes hermeneutics as a skill to let things speak which come in a fixed form, petrified form, that of a text. The interpreter has to modulate and use intonation. He sees interpretation of a text as translation highlighting that in both situations emphasis is applied on things that are considered important to us or playing down things that we may want to trivialise; the implication for critical practice being that the critic is allowed the space to explore issues he/she may feel are important to their line of argument. The idea of seeing an inquiry as conversation is itself an act of personifying a work of art and raising its power to refer to real life issues. The voice of the artiste in the lyrics rolls back to life.

The concept of hermeneutic conversation also extends to conversations between texts or artistic products. The task is to find a common language through which the various texts can be given a voice to participate in conversation and speak to one another. In other words understanding a theme in another text might require cross textual reference with texts in the same generic relationship. Extrapolating this concept into the context of this research implies that the researcher gets to understand some lyrics by allowing songs within the same genre to ‘speak’ or converse their referentiality.

d) Comfortable with ambiguity

Hermeneutics embraces ambiguity. According to Kinsella (2006) a hermeneutic view resists the idea that there can be one single authoritative reading of a text and
recognizes the complexity of the interpretive endeavour. Gadamer (1996:398) believes that in textual analysis, from a hermeneutic perspective, meaning of a text is not to be compared to an immovably and obstinately fixed point of view and “to understand a text always means to apply it to ourselves and to know that, even if it must always be understood in different ways, it is still the same text presenting itself to us in these different ways.” There cannot be any single interpretation that is correct in itself, as the historical life of tradition depends on being constantly assimilated and interpreted (Kinsella, 2006). Armed with this view, this caution regulates the zeal to impose a monolithic understanding of songs on any subject. This view rhymes with the concept of hermeneutic conversation where other voices are sought for corroboration or contrasting.

A hermeneutic approach is hospitable with the ambiguous nature of textual analysis, and resists the urge to offer authoritative readings and neat reconciliations. Kinsella, (2006:9) notes that, in keeping with the spirit of hermeneutics,

Gadamer’s hermeneutic rigor resists neat antitheses and neat reconciliations and precludes pat formulations. He points out that Gadamer does not think in assertions, statements, and propositions that aim at unequivocal meanings in logical sequence. Rather, he thinks in questions. Even his answers open onto an unsaid, unasserted aura of meaning that can not be pinned down in univocal statements.

Realising the uniquely situated nature of interpretation, the ambiguous and linguistically conditioned nature of interpretation, the study refrains from the scourge of monopoly of truth and views its findings and analyses simply as alternative angles from which music sociality can be explored. More so, all texts; lyrical texts included, themselves bear their own confusions and internal inconsistencies and for that very fact defy universal interpretations.

e) Genre affects interpretation
Identifying the work’s genre correctly is critical to understanding or correctly interpreting the work. This is Herder’s vital contributions to the theory of interpretation which emphasises on the essential role played in interpreting a work by a correct identification of its genre, and the difficulty of achieving such a correct identification in many cases (Forster, 2007). By genre he meant the general purpose with certain rules of composition which serve it. Forster, (2007:10) observes Herder’s argument as logical in that,

...identifying a work’s genre correctly is crucial for interpreting it not only because identifying the genre is in itself partly constitutive of fully comprehending the work, but also because the genre often carries meanings which are not explicitly articulated in the work itself, and because a proper grasp of the genre is moreover essential for correctly interpreting many of the things which are explicitly articulated in the work.

Understanding a work is coterminous with recognising the genre. There is some mutuality of sorts. The two feed into each other. Once a genre is identified, understanding is made even simpler and vice versa. This research partially subscribes to this genre concept in as far as clusters of themes expressed by lyrics not classification as instructed by instruments. For instance, in this research, political and social issues are broad genres of musical study while love, gender and family matters may be seen as sub-genres along which music can be studied. However, what complicate the genre thesis are the thin differences and inter-locking boundaries between genres. Genres vary in subtle ways across historical periods and cultures and even between artistes. Musical genres have no neatly defined boundaries and it would be stubbornly complicated to pin any song to a specific genre so in this study genre refers to the classification according to lyrical content.

f) Authorial psychology in hermeneutic inquiry

Herder made seminal steps in his theory of interpretation particularly in foregrounding the psychology of the author. The hermeneutics of Herder believes that recourse to authorial psychology is often necessary in order to resolve ambiguities in a text. Forster
(2007), advances that interpretation requires an imaginative recapturing of certain authorial sensations. A focus on authorial psychology is an important means for author's conceptual-linguistic individuality.

The interpreter should penetrate beyond an author's conscious meanings and thoughts to include his unconscious ones as well as Schlegel argues, "Every excellent work . . . aims at more than it knows" (Forster, 2007:25). One hazard however, is that criteria for imputing unconscious meanings and thoughts are less clear than those for imputing conscious ones. The researcher has to exercise his subjective authority judiciously lest he wrongly attaches meanings artistes never intended to say.

g) The hermeneutic circle of interpretation

Central to hermeneutic understanding is the notion of the hermeneutic circle which suggests that we understand a complex whole from preconceptions about the meanings of its parts. Ernesti insists that the parts of a text must be interpreted in light of the whole text and both of these in light of an author's broader corpus and other related texts. Such holism is in particular necessary in order to acquire sufficient evidence to be able to pin down word usages, and hence meanings (Foster 2007:5). Human understanding is achieved by iterating between the parts and the whole which they form (Newman 2011:6). We constantly shuttle between message fragments and the wider context which determines the full meaning of separate messages.

Forster (2007:6) contends that the hermeneutic circle is problematic in that, if interpreting parts of a text requires interpreting the whole of the text, then, given that interpreting the whole obviously also requires interpreting the parts, how can interpretation ever be achieved at all? Herder and Schleiermacher in Forster (2007:6) alley the fears and opine that:

since understanding is not an all-or-nothing matter but instead something that comes in degrees, it is possible to interpret the parts of a text in sequence
with some measure of adequacy, thereby achieve a measure of understanding of the whole text, then deploy that measure of understanding of the whole text in order to refine one's understanding of the parts, thereby refining one's understanding of the whole text, and so on.

There is mutual clarification between the parts and the whole. The parts once integrated define the whole, maintains Kinsella (2006). For Heidegger and Gadamer the circularity of interpretation is not simply a methodological process or condition but also an essential feature of all knowledge and understanding, therefore every interpretation relies on other interpretations (Schwandt, 2001 in Kinsella, 2006). With particular reference to this research, the concept of hermeneutics illuminate that lyrical pieces be understood through interrogating the whole song or its parts to come out with meaning.

h) Believes in of suspicion

The concept of hermeneutics of suspicion stems from the understanding that the evident surface meanings and thoughts which a person expresses (and perhaps also certain aspects of his/her behaviour which at first sight seem meaningless, for example bodily posture or slips of the tongue or pen) often serve as representative-but-masking proxies for deeper meanings and thoughts (Forster, 2007). More often than not, we are quick to dismiss a statement as nonsense or not well thought when upon close peeling, layers of meaning unfold. With the same measure, we may be too swift to assign meaning to meaningless statements. The lesson derivable for this research is the researcher’s need to swim deep for depths of meanings and refrain from reckless conclusions on anything. Music is one such area where it is easy to prejudicially apportion labels given the telegraphic nature of music lyrics. Musical lines are not as elaborate as prose narratives and without due caution in the process of interpretation of meaning it is easy to prejudicially assign meanings.
4.1.2.2 Basic hermeneutic questions and authorial assumptions

Spaceships of Ezekiel (2014) outline some of the basic questions and assumptions about the author in any hermeneutic enquiry. These are critical questions and precautionary guidelines that help in appreciating hermeneutic processes. Legitimate questions in hermeneutic inquiry could be as follows:

- What is the 'formal' interpretation of this text?
- What is the 'official' interpretation of this text?
- How do people interpret the text who are experts on the history, politics, culture, life, times, customs, etc. of the writer?
- What did the author intend to say?
- What message did the author intend to convey?
- Is the use of a particular word, grammatical construction, verb tense, etc., significant in this instance?
- Who were the author's readers or listeners, culturally, etc.?
- How was the text interpreted by the author's contemporaries?

4.1.2.2.1 Precautionary authorial assumptions

Hermeneutics has well considered precautionary authorial assumptions which are critical preconditions to be considered prior to interrogating any work of art by an author or an artiste. These assumptions are as follows:

**Table 1: Authorial assumptions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>benefit of the doubt</strong></th>
<th>Unless there is evidence of untrustworthiness, every author is given the benefit of the doubt on truthfulness, accuracy, etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>reasonably</strong></td>
<td>The author is reasonably intelligent. He is neither a genius nor an</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unless there is evidence to the contrary, in any hermeneuticendeavour the researcher should assume . . .
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>intelligent idion</td>
<td>idiot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reasonably educated</td>
<td>The author is reasonably educated by the standards of his time, place, occupation, and station in life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reasonably knows topic</td>
<td>By the standards of his time, place, occupation, and station in life, the author is reasonably knowledgeable about his topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reasonably worldly</td>
<td>By the standards of his time, place, occupation, and station in life, the author is reasonably knowledgeable about how people act, what motivates them, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reasonably informed</td>
<td>By the standards of his time, place, occupation, and station in life, the author is reasonably knowledgeable about science, literature, religion, politics, community activities, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reasonably normal</td>
<td>Just because the author lived in ancient Egypt or Greece or Rome or Israel doesn't mean he lacked wisdom, intelligence, reasoning, common sense, curiosity, a sense of humor, or healthy skepticism!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reasonably accurate</td>
<td>The author is neither excessively sloppy nor excessively accurate in his recital of information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not totally neutral</td>
<td>It is virtually impossible to write about something without leaning toward a particular viewpoint.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reasonably trustworthy</td>
<td>A person with an interest in the outcome of an event can still present an accurate account! Consider:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Does the author seem to present the facts &quot;warts and all&quot;?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Does he admit weaknesses in his case?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Does he try to respond to his opponents' arguments?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                      | - Does he try to distract the reader with personal attacks on his
| opponents that have nothing to do with their arguments?  
| - Does he blatantly misrepresent his opponents' positions?  
| - Does he use "straw man" arguments that misrepresent his opponents' positions and then disprove the misrepresentations?  
|  
| **reasonably error-free**  
| The author has not made any blatant errors in interpreting or reporting information. He made reasonable efforts to verify and report information but did not get ridiculous about it.  
|  
| **not lying**  
| By definition, a "lie" is a statement which the author represents as being true although he believes it to be false. No matter how blatant or how stupid it is, an error is not a lie.  
|  
| **internally consistent**  
| The author didn't intend to contradict himself and in fact did not contradict himself—even though, at first glance, there is an apparent contradiction.  
|  
| **harmonious interpretation**  
| 1. A section of a document can be interpreted two ways.  
| 2. One interpretation contradicts another part of the document or another of the author's writings.  
| 3. The other interpretation is consistent with other text.  
| 4. Both interpretations are fairly reasonable.  
| The interpretation that produces consistency should be used even if it is less likely or less reasonable.  
|  
| **consistent in truthfulness**  
| If a person has a reputation for exaggeration or lying, all statements from that person are of doubtful reliability, even those that sound okay.  
| On the other hand, if a person is shown to be reliable in most things, he is assumed to be reliable even when it can't be proven.  
<p>|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>consistent in philosophy</th>
<th>A trustworthy person does not constantly change his views. If an author has presented a particular viewpoint in previous writings, he probably still holds those views.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>actions and words will be consistent</td>
<td>If an author's actions are contrary to his words, the reliability of his words is questionable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>won't lightly act against own self-interest</td>
<td>The author would not act against his own interest without good reason. If he makes a statement that is likely to expose him to ostracism, ridicule, public scorn, humiliation, contempt, pain, imprisonment, or death, the statement is likely to be true.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>character by association</td>
<td>You can tell a lot about the author's character by the company he keeps, the reliability of his sources, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>things proceed normally</td>
<td>Actions, events, etc., follow their normal course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reasonable assumptions ok</td>
<td>The reader can make reasonable assumptions consistent with logic, common sense, and known circumstances. (An assumption is not based on the text, e.g., a person gets hungry and sleepy every day.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reasonable inferences ok</td>
<td>The reader can draw reasonable inferences from the text and known information. (An inference is partially based on the text.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>must prove unusual</td>
<td>The burden of proof rests on the person alleging something out of the ordinary, not on the person claiming the ordinary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>generalization is not error</td>
<td>A reasonable generalization is not a lie or an error, even if it uses phrases like &quot;all&quot; or &quot;every&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>simplification is not error</td>
<td>A reasonable simplification is not a lie or an error.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sarcasm, etc. is not error</td>
<td>Sarcasm, obviously blatant exaggeration, for emphasis, etc., is not error. (&quot;They call me 'Elephant' because I work for peanuts.&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>words have usual meaning</td>
<td>Words have their usual meaning. If we start saying &quot;It says '...' but it really must mean '...'&quot;, we are ignoring what the author wrote and substituting our own text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grammar has usual meaning</td>
<td>As with wording, we are not free to &quot;force&quot; an unusual interpretation on a standard grammatical construction. &quot;And&quot; means both. It does not mean &quot;at least one&quot;. &quot;Or&quot; means &quot;at least one&quot;!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uncommon grammar has special meaning</td>
<td>If the author uses an uncommon grammatical construction it probably was intentional, either for emphasis or special clarity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>idioms have their usual meaning</td>
<td>Every language has idioms—phrases whose meaning is different from the words, e.g. in English &quot;a knight in shining armor&quot; means &quot;a virtuous hero&quot;. The Spanish equivalent is &quot;un príncipe azul&quot;, which, literally means &quot;a blue prince&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some words may be jargon</td>
<td>Every field has its jargon. There are two types of jargon:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Words or phrases unique to that field, e.g., a legal writ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Common words or phrases that have a special meaning in that field, e.g., in criminal law a &quot;not guilty&quot; verdict means &quot;the government failed to prove its case beyond a reasonable doubt.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of jargon</td>
<td>Whether a word was used as jargon depends on the intended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>depends on the target reader</td>
<td>audience. If the author is writing to specialists, he probably meant the word as jargon. He probably avoided jargon for a general audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>different view is not error</td>
<td>Just because someone has a different view or interpretation does not automatically mean that person is wrong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aims at average target member</td>
<td>The author is writing for the average reader of his type of material, not someone who is super-educated, super-informed, super-analytical, super-critical, super-skeptical, or looking only for weak points or only for strong points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sufficient, not exhaustive</td>
<td>The author attempts to present enough evidence and arguments to convey his point, not all the evidence and arguments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has particular audience in mind</td>
<td>The author is writing for a particular audience. No one tries to write an article on nuclear physics for both physics professors and second grade students!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tried to be understood</td>
<td>The author was trying to write something his readers would understand. (Of course, this frequently is not the case in wordy legal documents such as insurance and loan agreements!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>target reader realizes these</td>
<td>The author makes similar assumptions about his target reader. He assumes the reader is nearly fluent in the language, can hear, see, is already familiar with the basic concepts discussed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Spaceships of Ezekiel (2014)

These safe conditions are not *stricto sensu*, must-rules for observance, but are critical issues that ensure artistes do not suffer undue condemnation from subjective critics. They ensure that readers and critics be fair in the practice and process of hermeneutic
research. In the context of this study, the author is the artiste while the reader is both the critic and the music consumer. The artiste is assumed to be reasonably informed about the subject he or she sings. This offers a raised platform for the artiste to be seen as a relevant and reasonably knowledgeable commentator of his subject. The artiste is also assumed to be using familiar codes to communicate his or her messages. If they use idiomatic code, the idioms are considered linguistic items the receiver is familiar with as members of the same linguistic community. The reader can also make reasonable assumptions consistent with logic, common sense and known circumstances as both the artiste and the consumer are contemporaries (within the world of similar experiences). These assumptions guide the nature of interpretation and the assigning of context meanings to lyrical data in this research.

### 4.1.2.3 Hermeneutics and qualitative research

In adopting the hermeneutic method, the researcher is aware of the common flow of energy between the method and the qualitative research paradigm. Hermeneutic enquiry can enrich, substantiate and make explicit assumptions about interpretation and understanding that are central to qualitative research. Kinsella, (2006:3) suggests that;

> ...given that the emphasis in qualitative research is on understanding and interpretation as opposed to explanation and verification, and that the parallel emphasis is evident in hermeneutic thought, where for instance Gadamer (1996) demonstrates that understanding (verstehen) is the universal link in all interpretation of any kind, the connection between qualitative research and hermeneutic thought becomes self-evident.

The hermeneutic thought is a largely unacknowledged underpinning of interpretive qualitative research. Most methods of data gathering in the qualitative paradigm use one or two hermeneutic insights from the perception of research and validation of data.

In similar breadth, Gall, Borg and Gall (2010: 630) accentuate that because interpretation is at the heart of hermeneutics, it is little wonder that it has so much
influence on the general approach of qualitative researchers. All interpretive perspectives of qualitative research desire to find meaning in texts

4.1.3 Data gathering techniques

Data gathering techniques are a direct function of the major research paradigm employed in any study, more so, the research design functionally preferable in the study. They help in meeting the goals of the research. Different techniques have unique characteristics that have distinctive ways of confirming the validity of data in research. While the greater part of the research is hermeneutic in essence, a section seeks the views of ‘eminent persons’ to reflect on the music industry. The following research instruments were largely chosen to secure data on the exploration of the music production environment in Zimbabwe. They cover that aspect of the research that seeks to explore the legislative framework regulating music production and consumption in Zimbabwe. This study uses interviews, documents as data gathering instruments.

4.1.3.1 Interviews

Apart from textual analysis the research interviewed purposively sampled living artistes from the 1980 to present in a bid to balance my interpretation of popular music referentiality and authorial intent. Artistes from various musical genres were given an opportunity to reflect on their music and that of others as well as the atmosphere of their music publication. The interview technique was considered because it gave the respondents the latitude to say out their minds about their works, other artistes’ work and the atmosphere of music creation and consumption in Zimbabwe. Consumer views on the sociality of Zimbabwean music were also secured. Prominent music commentators were interviewed to at least obtain considered opinions on the music scenario in post colonial setting. These were considered for their commitment to analysing music.

Nieuwenhuis (2007:87) defines an interview as, “a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about the ideas,
beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participant”. Kvale (1996) adds an important dimension that the interlocutors would be conversing on a topic of mutual interest. The researcher considered that relevant people, who hold a stake in music, are considered for the interview. Besides mutual relevance also considered was the issue of mutual trust in the process of the interview (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011) and this trust ensured participant freedom to empty what is within them. In the context of this research the artists, music commentators and music producers found the interview critical as it debated their day to day business. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011:409) observe that the use of interviews in research marks a move away from seeing human subjects as simply manipulable and somehow data as external to individuals and regarding knowledge as generated between humans, often through conversations. They thus see data as coming out of people and not existing independent of them.

Interviews are considered ideal for the exploration of complex or more subtle phenomena while questionnaires are more suitable on simple and uncontroversial facts (Denscombe, 2010). In the case of this study, intricate feelings of musicians about the political environment of their composition come out clearly as the researcher adhered to the ethics of interviews by guaranteeing participant anonymity.

This research employed “semi structured” interviews which involved a number of open ended questions based on music production, dissemination and consumption. The open ended nature of the questions provided opportunities for both interviewer and interviewee to discuss some topics in more detail as suggested by Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge, 2009.

4.1.3.1.1 Advantages of interviews

- Adaptability is one major advantage of interviews. Skilled interviewers can follow up a respondent’s answer and obtain more information (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2011). The pliability of the interview method the researcher to structure and refocus their question depending on the manner in which the set question had been answered.
An interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest sees the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production—"(Kvale 1996: 14). The method ensured knowledge to evolve naturally in conversations. Views about music flowed unmediated.

The interview is a flexible in that it enables multi-sensory channels to be used: verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2011:409). All these were very critical channels of data and covered the communication options in total. What the verbal failed to capture; the non-verbal did not.

4.1.3.1.2 A cautionary note on interviews

The researcher was fully aware of the possible shortcomings of interviews and astutely plugged their effect on the smooth gathering of data. The following points were considered as cautionary points about interviews:

- cannot provide anonymity for the respondents (Gall, Borg, and Gall, 2010). The intervention was that the interviewer used anonymous symbols like letters of the alphabet to represent interviewees.
- some respondents may not give accurate answers due to lack of relevant information on music and social context and may proceed to give answers even when they have limited knowledge on the subject. The intervention was that the researcher in such cases compared their responses with responses from other interviewees and documented evidence. The interviewer also ensured that he identified relevant people for the interview before they engaged them for the interview.
- interviews can be time consuming. An interviewer cannot control the time spent on any response and it may be discourteous to stop an interviewee midway through their response. Patience and questioning clarity circumvented this huddle. Time concerns were raised with regards to time taken to transcribe and analyse data but such is the nature of the method; what counted in the end was coming out with a clear picture of the respondent’s concerns.
• mere presence of the interviewer may destabilise respondent composure and ‘naturality’. They may not be that free to say out their mind in the presence of a camera, recorder and the interviewer themselves. The interviewer managed to ‘informalise’ the conversation to the extent where the interview remained ‘casual’ yet focused.

4.1.3.2 Document analysis

Document analysis is a technique of data security and validation used in social science research. Documents are written texts that serve as records or pieces of evidence of an event or fact. They are standardised artefacts in such formats as notes, drafts, reports, contracts, letters or expert opinions (Wolff in Flick et al, 2004:284) and Denscombe, (2010:216) adds newspapers, pictures and sound (music) documents to the list. They act as institutionalised traces that may be legitimately used to draw conclusions about activities, intentions of their creators or organisations they represent (Wolff in Flick et al, 2004:284).

Ordinarily, official documents such as pieces of legislation and policy positions are intended to be read as objective statements of fact but they are themselves socially produced and for that reason ought to be objectively interrogated. The study used documentary study in assessing the broadcasting regulatory framework in order to get an appreciation of the legal atmosphere in which musicians are composing their works of art. Documentary studies were considered for their depth and reliability of data (Bowen, 2009). They were particularly useful in this research since they afforded the researcher the opportunity of coming across an official position on music production regulation. The research analysed a number of post-independence broadcasting statutes and assessed their potential in affecting the artistes’ freedom to compose on sensitive issues. Document analysis also involved visiting music libraries and recording companies examining relevant material for the research like release dates. These provided data on when the music was produced and correlated the vital events and social mood of the people under study. It also compared hermeneutically acquired data.
on music as an alternative socio-historical narrative with data from historical documents like text books and other archival documents.

In analysing documentary data, the research was aware of some considerations to be done with regards to the process and selection of documents to be used in the study. Finnegans (1996:146-9) in Punch (2005:185) gives a checklist of some of the pertinent issues to ponder about in the use of documents in research:

- has the researcher made use of the existing sources relevant and appropriate for his or her research topic?
- how far has the researcher taken account of any ‘twisting’ or selection of the facts in the sources used?
- how far does a source which describes a particular incident or case reflect the general situation?
- how relevant is the context of the source?

4.1.3.2.1 Merits

- Documents represent carefully considered input and for the amount of time and due diligence invested in their compilation may present reliable data for the research. Documents such as the constitution are more than just a view by a research subject for instance on the official position regarding freedom of expression in Zimbabwe.
- *Ipso facto*, they save time as they no longer require further transcription like interviews.
- Documentary research provides a cost effective method of getting data (Denscombe, 2010). The research refrains from the laborious processes of data gathering.
- Vast amounts of data can be found in one place and normally in its processed form. Consulting documents like music commentaries affords one access to processed information.
4.1.3.2.2 Cautionary points

- Sometimes the researcher may contract the biases of the document if he/she does not objectively interrogate the source. Denscombe (2010) submits that “documents can owe more to the interpretations of those who produce them than to an objective picture of reality”. For instance, most of the documents by scholars on music may be highly opinionated and one may easily be swayed by such opinions to a point where they cloud one’s independent judgement of raw data. The research had to recourse to the hermeneutic method for balance.

- Some documents may not be easily available and where available there may not be easy to access as they may contain classified information. The National Archives and Zimbabwe Broadcasting Holdings that house the music library and broadcasting regulations are high security area that the researcher had to carry a letter of introduction from the university and book in time to avoid frustrations and needless delays. Prior booking was done to avoid costly formality delays.

- Secondary data might have been produced for purposes other than the one under investigation (Denscombe, 2010) and for that reason the researcher needed to properly domesticate the data to the purposes of the research.

4.1.3.3 Choosing Research Subjects

One of the most difficult tasks confronting any research is identifying those people who would eventually give their views on the main issues of the research. Relevant research subjects are critical that the integrity of the research findings is just as good as their quality and composition. This study secured data from surviving musicians from the 1980 to present. The research also sought the views of prominent music critics in Zimbabwe in order to balance the hermeneutic interrogation of music lyrics. Their views on the music production environment were deemed critical. It also obtained data from consumers of popular music in Zimbabwe.

4.1.3.3.1 Judgemental sampling method

In its pursuit of these ends, the research used the judgemental sampling method, also known as purposive method or the subjective method. This is a non-probability
sampling technique used where direct interviews or observations of all members of a population are generally not feasible. For example, in this study it might not have been possible to interview the entire population of postcolonial Zimbabwean musicians spanning the post independence epoch.

The judgemental sample is one that is selected based on the knowledge of a population and the purpose of the study. Non-probability methods select subjects based on the judgement of the researcher (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011:156). They are used basing on specific characteristics within the sampled population which the researcher sees as critical in understanding phenomena under study. These attributes are rare or unusual or are typically not distributed normally in the larger population. This allows the researcher to obtain data that is from specific sections of society. It has to be used where certain members of a population possess unique traits of interest to the research. For instance, in this research there are known critics of music who have written extensively on music and sociality and those prominent (by sheer volumes of their compositions) musicians whose experience and expertise could be banked on in this research were, ipso facto, chosen as critical experts. The goal is not only to make a generalisation on members of the entire population based on these findings but to explore phenomena based on unique attributes of these purposively sampled persons.

4.1.3.3.1.1 Advantages of purposive sampling

- It allows the researcher to make theoretical, logical or analytic generalisation from the sample.
- Those who are unsuitable or may contribute insignificantly to the research are dispensed with, so the most suitable candidates remain.
- The researcher gets focused data because he is dealing with experts particularly where there is no empirical evidence.
- The procedure is less time consuming since most appropriate people are selected. It means that the researcher was saved the labour to ask every music consumer on the relevance of music to social context.
The results of purposive samples are representative of the population (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison 2011) particularly where a wide cross section of items or people is included in the sample (Descombe, 2010:35).

4.1.3.3.1.2 Cautionary points

Reliability and validity of data should not be sacrificed on the altars of expediency and biased selection. The researcher made sure that he had to use the funds availed by UNISA bursary to visit critical people and secure materials for the research no matter the cost.

4.1.3.3.2 Sampling of music critics

The fraternity of music critics is a finite entity but too robust to include every member. The researcher had to purposively consider for interviews those critics whose works testify fair coverage of music in the epoch of interest to this research. Their views were corroborated with evidence from hermeneutic analysis of Shona popular music.

4.1.3.3.3 Sampling of music

Selection of music for the study uses the purposive sampling method where Shona songs that convey either a social or political message were chosen. Due consideration was given to the year of release of those songs so that the research adequately covers the entire post-independence epoch.

4.1.3.3.4 Sampling of music consumers

In order to validate social and political themes generated through the hermeneutic method, the research chose music consumers through the expert sampling procedure. The researcher used this type of purposive sampling to consider informed participants whose appreciation of music is not at the emotional level but are knowledgeable on how to holistically appreciate artistic products.
4.1.3.4 Transcription of music

All music is generally written before it can be sung but the text is not ordinarily a public document much as the sung music is, hence the need to transcribe the music back to the text form before music can be intelligibly analysed. Mapping spoken language onto written language is not as straightforward as is often thought. Transcribing music into text required meticulous dexterity as this involves alertness to repetition, chore clichés, yodelling and poetic license. Besides that spoken language is a continuous phenomenon made up of potentially unlimited components like tonal inflections. On the other side, written language is idealisation, made up of limited set of clearly distinct and discrete symbols. Artistes usually invert normal word order and other grammatical conventions in pursuit of rhythm. This called for alertness on the part of the researcher in dealing with these ever-appearing challenges in the process of transcription. A faulty transcription could easily result in a faulty translation and sadly a wrong interpretation.

4.1.3.5 Translation of music

Once music has been transcribed the next critical stage before it can be hermeneutically interrogated is that of translation. Music in this research is in Shona while the research is in English. The need to have Shona music rendered in the language of the research therefore became imperative. The researcher was aware of the loss of meaning due to lack of lexical equivalents as the research translated lyrics from the source language into the target language.

Translation consists of reproducing in the receptor language, the closest natural equivalent of the source message (Nida and Taber, 1969). This translation takes place between languages which in turn exist within different cultures. Music expression is usually linguistic and therefore cultural. Music as a cultural product makes clear sense within the language of that culture. Akbari (2013:13) avers that, “what people do with language – narrative, poetry, songs, plays, etc – are soft expressions of culture”. Any effort to translate music willy-nilly potentially distorts its meaning. Culture is an important factor in all translation processes. The target language may not possess enough lexical items or equivalent idiomatic expressions.
The researcher made use of various strategies of translation in order to diminish the problems of translating culturally laden terms and other translation problems in general. The various strategies of translation such as compensation of place, kind and merging were used in order to reduce the loss of meaning and effect on translated text. Compensation of place means making up for the loss of a particular textual effect occurring at a given place in the source text (ST), by creating a corresponding effect at a different place in the target text (TT). Merging means condensing the features carried over a relatively longer stretch of the ST into a relatively shorter stretch of TT while compensation of kind refers to making up for a particular type of a textual effect deemed untranslatable into the TT by using a textual effect of a different type in the TT (As-Safi, 2013).

3.1.4 Data presentation and analysis

Bogdan and Biklen (2003) conceive data analysis in qualitative research as “working with the data, organising them, breaking them into manageable units, coding them, synthesising them, and searching for patterns. Qualitative data analysis aims to discover patterns, concepts, themes and meanings. The research records emerging themes in music using the open coding method. Corbin and Strauss (1990) talk of ‘open coding’ as a process whereby the researcher identifies and tentatively names the conceptual categories of data.

In this study, data gathered is evaluated qualitatively in order to elicit information on the socio-political referentiality of Shona music in post colonial Zimbabwe. Data presentation and analysis takes a thematic format along the aforesaid motifs. Emerging themes like cultural concerns and gender naturally would fall under the sociological motifs while themes like celebration of independence and governance issues would ordinarily fall under the political motif of the research.

Analysis of data is advised by the hermeneutic method as the search for referential meaning of Shona music is done. The hermeneutic interpretation method and the new
historicist, Marxism and Afro-centrism theory constantly blended their insights to give an informed effect on the interrogation of the contextuality of Shona popular music in Zimbabwe. The researcher also blended the hermeneutic data with views from the interviews and relevant documentary evidence.

4.1.5 Ethical considerations

Research ethics are principles of right and wrong that are acceptable to a group of people (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992:49). Because of these ethics, researchers are perpetually bound to the obligation to respect them if their work is to earn the respect of the consumers. Participants in the research have rights to privacy and possess a dignity of their own worth accommodating.

Careful contemplation of ethical considerations is done in order to rid the study of uncouth research practices that would compromise the integrity of the research. Every research instrument has its own unique set of ethics to observe that it was crucial for the researcher to note these before embarking on data collection. The research instruments like interview impose a set of demands on the researcher to observe. As interpersonal processes interviews have ethical issues to think about before one eventually engages the interviewees. One thinks of issues like confidentiality, anonymity, consent and others.

The researcher secures the consent of the interviewees before engaging them for interviews as Christians (2005:144) prescribes. In this research, the researcher informed participants through telephone and in writing prior to engaging them in research. This ensured freedom of participation and booking in advance afforded interviewees time to think over the issues for discussion.

Tuckman, (1994:13); Bogdan and Biklen, (1992:49) also advise that the identity of the participants be not disclosed. They need to be assured that although their ideas will be published, their identities will be protected and remain anonymous. In stead of their real names, numerical pseudonyms are used to disguise interviewee identity. Subjects like
freedom of expression and other political issues in this research obviously restrict people to ‘come out of their shells’ as they fear treading on dangerous ground. Christians (2005) observes that disclosure of confidential information could prove to be most harmful and damaging to an individual’s person. Interviewee participation and confidence is restored by making their identity inscrutable.

The participants also have an integrity of their own which should as an matter of courtesy be safeguarded and as such all research material collected should be kept safe after termination of study as advised by Cresswell (2007). All interview notes and recordings are kept in safe places so that the participants do not get these in undesignated hands.

The research also takes note of ethical issues regarding documents. Just because one is dealing with materials in the absence of the owners of those materials, the temptation to overlook ethical issues is very high; hints McClouch (2011:254). Documents such as the constitution of Zimbabwe and the broadcasting regulations are public documents which however have responsible authorities at law. The research consulted these authorities to verify document authenticity. The researcher was aware that the use of downloaded materials without sufficient knowledge on their authenticity incurs damages to the integrity of the research and therefore made sufficient strides in double checking and cross checking with other documents on the same topic.

Creswell (2009:90) avers that the body of ethical procedures includes the course of gaining the consent of individuals in authority to carry out the research. Some places like the national archives, where vital data are kept are security areas required permission of superiors for one to visit. Booking in advance allowed custodians of the documents amble time to look for them and reserve the documents before the researcher. This released the researcher from the embarrassment and disappointment of finding out that the much needed document is not available.

Besides that, careful handling of fragile documents availed to the researcher is a matter of ethical and professional conduct (McClouch 2011:254). Many people use these
documents and the need to carefully use them is imperative if they are to be used later in good condition.

4.2 Conclusion

The chapter discussed the methods of data gathering that are used in the research. The qualitative research paradigm is used in the processes of data gathering and interpretation of the research. The hermeneutic research design was considered for its meticulousness in arriving at an interpretation of vocal and textual data. Various aspects of the method were considered in order for the research to come out with data that can be relied upon as a close estimation of the referentiality of music. The hermeneutic method was corroborated with data from interviews and archival records. As the research unfolds, chapter 5 explores legal and political referentiality of postcolonial Shona music in Zimbabwe.
CHAPTER 5: LEGAL AND POLITICAL MOTIFS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter explores the legal and political motifs that typify popular music thematic dimensions in postcolonial Zimbabwe. To estimate the referential potential of popular music in Zimbabwe, it is considered obligatory to explore the legislative and political context surrounding music production and consumption. Cognisant that the variety of themes and the prolificacy of music generation is a function of the state of the creative environment in place, this chapter close-reads the legal landscape in which Zimbabwean popular music evolves, as well as explore the major political themes encapsulated in Zimbabwean popular music. Legislative instruments are thoroughly interrogated to estimate their potential impact on music theme selection, stylistics and overall context referentiality. The study thus analyses three legislative documents to ferret out latent contrivances that potentially threaten or undergird the said dimension of popular music. The study also critically interrogates various politically suggestive songs to tease out any context referential overtones in them. Through the hermeneutic critical rigor, the study explores the whole gamut of popular music produced by Zimbabweans locally and in the diaspora in the post independence period as a way of estimating the efficacy of popular music in discoursing critical national issues. To guard against the researcher’s subjective interpretation of music, the study corroborates hermeneutic reading of popular music with interviewee perspectives on various themes on the legislative context and political referentiality. The chapter argues that Zimbabwe’s post-colonial legislation and artiste inhibition constrain the full articulation of sensitive issues though artistes have significantly debated political issues in the postcolonial. On paper, the constitution exudes abundant liberty for artistic expression. However, popular music has tended to skirt contentious issues but artistically managed to communicate censorable messages without detection by the censor.
5.1 Analysis of legal documents

5.1.1 Legislation

With the advent of independence in 1980, it was hoped the new era would usher in a new legal dispensation on music production and composition. The repressive colonial legislation would be replaced by a more democratic legislation that would encourage unfettered production of music, a critical avenue for political and social expression. This was not to be the case as the censorship board did little to open the space for free exploration of themes. This research assesses The Censorship and Entertainments Control Act, a portion of the Broadcasting Regulations Act and the constitutional section that guarantees Freedom of Expression as postcolonial constitutional provisions critical in determining the expressive potential of music in Zimbabwe.

5.1.1.1 Freedom of expression

Freedom of expression is a legal right that is guaranteed by the African Charter and the Constitution of Zimbabwe (Patel, 1998). It is a universal right whose observance at both national and regional level confirms its importance and indivisibility. It has remained imbedded in the constitution of the country, notwithstanding all its amendments since 1980. Article 9 of the Charter provides for the following:

1. Every individual shall have the right to receive information.
2. Every individual shall have the right to express and disseminate his opinions within the law.

This position of the African charter locates common ground with the 2007 version of the law after Amendment No. 17 consolidated on 22 February which pronounces that:

(1) Except with his own consent or by way of parental discipline, no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment of his freedom of expression, that is to say, freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference, and freedom from interference with his correspondence.

(2) Nothing contained in or done under the authority of any law shall be held to be in contravention of subsection
Article 9 of the African Charter item 1 and 2 captures the duality inherent in the freedom of expression, namely, the right to receive and impart ideas and information without interference. This dovetails with section 20, item 1 of the constitution of Zimbabwe which firmly confers on the citizen the unfettered rights to enjoy freedom of expression which is in the same constitution elaborated as the latitude to hold opinion, to receive and convey ideas without hindrance. That constitutional position gives the musician the freedom to compose any theme of their choice and affords them the freedom to disseminate their ideas. The consumer also enjoys the freedom to receive such information or ideas without the threat of that right being taken away from them without their consent. The same act protects undue abuse of the freedom, in the case of minors, by placing such rights under the guidance of the parents. This implies that what the artiste may enjoy as a right to compose, the consumer may still be ‘guided’ to receive depending on the well considered wisdom of the parent. The provisions of subsection (1) shall not be held to confer on any person a right to exercise their freedom of expression where it tramples upon other people’s rights. This agrees with Patel’s (1997:53) observation on the issue of rights overstepping into other people’s rights and he rightly observes:

The interdependence of rights and duties is reflected at a different level in the necessary linkage between individual and collective rights. The individual’s status and rights stem from his existence within, and interaction with, society. Accordingly, his or her position cannot be maintained at the expense of society and, conversely, the collective interest should not be invoked to undermine individual freedoms.

The two-pronged curiosity of the law cannot allow one right to infringe upon the existence of another. The rights and freedoms of the individual are subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest (Patel, 1997). This dichotomy gives the dispenser of justice an awkward task of protecting and extending a right simultaneously. Patel (1997) realises that these provisions, taken together, serve to identify the collective interests, values and criteria that might properly be invoked by the state to justify any abridgement of the freedom of expression. The artiste is thus
operating in an environment where they are free to an extent where they do not infringe the rights of others. They thus may not have all the legroom to abuse their freedom and create compositions that trespass other people’s freedoms and rights without the state encroaching their rights in pursuit of a noble mission to save the rights of others.

The current constitution as crafted in 2013 still upholds the freedom of expression but expands it and combines it with freedom of media. Item 1b of section 61 is of particular interest to this research:

(1) Every person has the right to freedom of expression, which includes— (a) freedom to seek, receive and communicate ideas and other information; (b) freedom of artistic expression and scientific research and creativity.

Item 2 extends the freedom to the broadcasting houses which enjoy freedom of establishment but that freedom is guided by state licensing procedures as stipulated in the Broadcasting Regulations Act. This is an infraction on the very right that had been extended to the broadcaster. Section 61 item number 3 extends the freedom of establishment to the broadcaster which it invokes in the same breadth:

(3) Broadcasting and other electronic media of communication have freedom of establishment, subject only to State licensing procedures that—
(a) are necessary to regulate the airwaves and other forms of signal distribution; and
(b) are independent of control by government or by political or commercial interests.

(4) All State-owned media of communication must—
(a) be free to determine independently the editorial content of their broadcasts or other communications;
(b) be impartial; and
(c) afford fair opportunity for the presentation of divergent views and dissenting opinions.

(5) Freedom of expression and freedom of the media do not include—
(a) incitement to violence;
(b) advocacy of hatred or hate speech;

The regulation of the airwaves is a responsibility the state cannot release to even the government of the day. The state owned media enjoy the freedom to elect their own content and are even allowed to entertain divergent views and opinions. Item 4c
regulates the broadcaster’s freedom of expression to ensure that the state owned media gives the public (the musician included) the leeway to express themselves through their avenue without any hindrance as a result of them expressing what may be perceived as nonconformist content. This section of the constitution is vital for the creative industry since it gives them the freedom to differ or at least to be controversial politically and socially in their content.

The constitution makes it very clear that the rights extended are not without boundary as allowing them unconditionally may result in abuse of the same rights and injury of public and individual dignity as reflected under item 5. One may not be as free as to wantonly incite violence or to stir the public through hate speech. To this extent, Zimbabwean conception of freedom of expression subscribes to the social responsibility theory which Hove and Mukurunge (2014:15) observe that it upholds the freedom of expression “harnessed with social responsibility”. In this sense freedom of expression by individuals and private institutions fulfils the role of public stewardship and is desirable only if it is reconcilable with an obligation to society. These rights cover the artistes’ freedom to express content within acceptable cultural sanction. They also take care of the broadcaster’s freedom of expression which makes them liable for the reckless conduct of allowing music that can be deemed provocative.

5.1.1.2 The Censorship and Entertainments Control Act [Chapter 10:04]

The research has a focused interest on this Act since it wields immense potential to affect music production. The message and the manner in which the message is crafted and disseminated are potentially a function of the legislative control affecting music creativity and reception. This is a trend traceable to pre-independence Zimbabwe (Torino, 2000) and apartheid South Africa (Schumann, 2008) where colonial governments used uncouth draconian legislation to effectively sterilise music’s potential to unite, communicate political sentiments and trigger agency within the African freedom initiatives. In the case of Zimbabwe, the Act is interrogated in order for the research to estimate the extent of independence of production of music particularly in independent Zimbabwe. The interrogation, by extrapolation, is a candid reflection on the concept of independence itself.
Censorship has a double face and the censor in society doubles as protector of societal mores as well as a controller of free expression. Patel (1997:51) observes that:

The role of the censor in any society is inevitably an ambivalent one. Not unlike some socio-cultural barometer, he or she must tussle with the simultaneous demands of maintaining public mores and allowing the free movement of ideas and information.

The Censorship and Entertainments Control Act caters for the following raft of sporadic amendments from the colonial to the post-independence Zimbabwe, arguably, irrefutable evidence of the act being an adulterated continuity of the colonial control legislative framework:


The Act went through eight modifications during the colonial period and has been modified five times in the post colonial period. The Act seeks to;

regulate and control the public exhibition of films, the importation, production, dissemination and possession of undesirable or prohibited video and film material, publications, pictures, statues and records and the giving of public entertainments; to regulate theatres and like places of public entertainment in the interests of safety; and to provide for matters incidental to the foregoing. (Constitution of Zimbabwe 2001:2)

The manifold concern of the Act covers diverse artistic products ranging from films, videos and music, among an array of artistic products. Of particular interest to this research are videos, records and the control of performance places. When something is controlled or regulated the negative sprints to obstruct appreciation of those regulations. People quickly assign synonyms like denial, refusal and blocking to the word control yet the positive may be implied particularly where it refers to the creation of order in a system. However, when art is controlled it loses a very important aspect of its essence and originality hence controlling art could be compared to editing an emotion. It does not happen naturally anymore.
Part II of the Act highlights the establishment and functions of a board of censors. The Act is presided over by the board of censors which is mandated;

- to examine any article or public entertainment submitted to it;
- to make such inquiries as it may consider necessary in regard to any publication, picture, statue, record or public entertainment which is alleged to be or which the Board has reason to believe is of a nature contemplated in section seventeen; (Constitution of Zimbabwe 2001:4)

To imagine a work of art being created with a monitor in mind somewhere, confirms the fear that the deliberate intention is to weaken the creative power of the artiste as they have to cull out vital portions of their work for them to satisfy the acceptable content. Although its task is at the very end of music production process, it potentially has an impact on the objectivity of musical composition as the artiste has to grapple with the ‘diligence’ in their composition not to trespass the censorship danger zone thereby potentially compromising the extent of artistic freedom. The range of topics, depth and ways of expressing them are at the mercy of the act. The Act though it may ban the product, at least item 6 does not prosecute the artiste for offensive content, presumably because the artiste would have lost their product anyway. This is a departure from the colonial version of the Act which saw artistes like Thomas Mapfumo being incarcerated in 1978 for singing politically suggestive lyrics (Eyre, 2001).

The opinion of the board vets the appropriateness of an artistic product to warrant or not its publication. One hopes the opinion is fair, rational and not partisan. The country, the artiste and the consuming public may only trust that that responsibility is bestowed upon fair hands as the same can be manipulated or abused for private and selective application. Selective exclusion or inclusion becomes the prerogative of a board whose neutrality may be compromised by its allegiance to the appointing authority.

Although it is in the power of the board as captured in item 4 to inform individuals whose works have been considered undesirable as stipulated by the statute; there is hardly any such written decision served musicians whose works are said to have been banned. There is no record either by way of government gazette to inform the public of
such works having been considered undesirable. It is the opinion of this research that
the board may not categorically state that someone’s works have been red-marked
since this may expose the state as standing in the way of free expression; an artiste’s
right enshrined in the constitution.

Part IV of the act is of particular interest to this research as it covers musical products
among others. It deals with the following:

prohibition of importation, production and dissemination of undesirable publications, pictures,
statues and records
(1) No person shall—
(a) import, print, publish, manufacture, make or produce, distribute, display, exhibit or sell or offer
or keep for sale any publication, picture, statue or record…
(2) A publication, picture, statue or record shall be deemed to be undesirable if it or any part
thereof—
(a) is indecent or obscene or is offensive or harmful to public morals; or
(b) is likely to be contrary to the interests of defence, public safety, public order, the economic
interests of the State or public health;

The prohibition of the importation of hazardous productions from other regions, in Part
1a of the Act, is rooted in the understanding that some products zones have cultures
and political philosophies that might be quite different from others and allowing those
products without proper screening will only result in cultural clashes and tensions.
Musavengana, (2005:5) observed that the Censorship Board is active behind the
scenes even when most artistes and consumers of musical products know very little
about it “Most people do know, however that the Marvin Gaye song, was sold in
Zimbabwe as “Healing” and not “Sexual Healing” due to the orders of the board.”
However, nowadays it becomes very difficult to police incoming music from foreign
zones given the technical sophistication that goes with cyberspace. Controlling the flow
of such undesirable foreign products into the local market should not be seen as a
desperate attempt at cushioning local artistes from foreign competition but protecting
the consumer from moral corruption.
Subsection IV part 2 spells out the various transgressions of the act such as any products deemed indecent, obscene or offensive to local moral. Any musical product that is likely to unsettle public order and security is considered as warranting censorship:

(2) Subject to subsection (3), an officer may seize any—
(a) publication, picture, statue or record; or
(b) recorded video or film material; or
(c) material which he has reasonable grounds for believing is recorded video or film material; for examination by the Board.
(3) An officer who seizes any article in terms of subsection (2) shall cause it to be forwarded to the Board for examination as soon as possible after such seizure, and the Board shall not retain the article any longer than is necessary for such examination.

This gives the government authority to weed out politically suggestive music. The board also authorizes the seizure of any materials deemed offensive for the purposes of examination by the board. Section 25 of the Act so empowers assigned officers the power to expropriate these materials for the purposes of examination of suitability of content on any expressive modes be them films, records, or pictures. The presence of such legislation, though designed to protect against wanton obscenities and perceived abuses, potentially frightens the artistes’ freedom to explore themes of choice and in the process potentially make them ineffective in negotiating their social and political message.

The Act in section 33 outlines the classes of materials that could be considered obscene and harmful to public morals. A product is considered indecent or obscene if:

(i) it has the tendency to deprave or corrupt the minds of persons who are likely to be exposed to the effect or influence thereof or it is in any way subversive of morality; or

(ii) whether or not related to any sexual content, it unduly exploits horror, cruelty or violence, whether pictorial or otherwise;

(b) offensive to public morals if it is likely to be outrageous or disgusting to persons who are likely to read, hear or see it;
(c) harmful to public morals if it deals in an improper or offensive manner with criminal or immoral behavior

In the context of the African culture we find Zimbabwe in; this section of the act is seen as empowering the local cultural concerns. It protects the consumers from products that may potentially demean, abuse and offend them. However, considering the ambiguous nature of musical content it would be prejudicial to assign meanings that could be tangential to the artiste’s referentiality and on that basis blacklist a product as offending or obscene. The artiste may only be referring to the other not so offensive issue which could be confused for the offensive one.

It must be noted however, that although the Act exists in bold, very few artistes interviewed are aware of the contents and implications on their day to day business. However, arts managers, music marketers and producers are and these have been discovered as an extension of the censorship since they advise artistes what to put in their music in order for it to be marketable without risks of censorship.

5.1.1.3 Broadcasting Services Act

Given the critical role broadcasting services have on music composition, dissemination and reception, the research consideres a pause and reflection on the Broadcasting Services Act obligatory. The dissemination of music has in the past and even today been the concern of broadcasting services (Eyre, 2001). This has been the fastest way of disseminating musical message and raising the profile and popularity of an artiste. Given this critical role of mass media, broadcasting has always been a contested terrain from the nascent stages of colonialism to date. Those who control the broadcast control the people and access to the broadcast is access to people, hence the need to control what the broadcasting service communicates to the people. Musical messages have to be carefully analysed before they are consumed by the public.
In the postcolonial era, the Broadcasting Services Act has gone through a number of modifications since its promulgation in April 2000, through amendments 22/2001, 26/2002, and 6/2003. The Act provides for the terms of reference and operationalisation of the Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe, henceforth, BAZ. It strives to achieve the following: to provide for the constitution of the Authority:

- to provide for the planning management, allocation, regulation and protection of the broadcasting frequency spectrum and the regulation and licensing of broadcasting services and systems;
- to provide for programme standards;
- to regulate and license signal carriers;
- to encourage and develop the creative arts through broadcasting content standards;
- to create a sense of national identity through broadcasting services

Of singular interest to this research is the part that deals with regulation of broadcasting their content standards. The Act encourages the development of creative arts, of which music is one. It is also under the patronage of the Act that the 75% local content was mooted, which policy will be discussed later.

Through section 10, the Act controls the licensing of broadcasting services by private players. Such a provision has an indirect bearing on music production and consumption since allowing many players would mean more songs on air as opposed to a single channel where artistes queue for airplay. Abundance of airplay opportunities is bound to encourage creativity in the music industry. It also has the potential of satisfying a variety of reception tastes which exposes the artiste and their works to different consumers. However given the stringent conditions under which private players may operate, very few have been allowed the rare privilege to possess a license and those that have, have had to ‘diligently’ walk the tight rope lest they trespass the forbidden path as outlined in items 1-10 of section 11 on terms and conditions of license. Hove and Mukurunge (2014:14) observe that, “media ownership in Zimbabwe is not exclusively a state preserve since private enterprise is permitted as long as content is not against the status quo.” Although it would be technically inaccurate to paint Zimbabwe’s media policy as autocratic, the practical and selective application of the policy suggests an acute state-centric inclination. Private radio stations have not been allowed the space to operate and those that have operated have been doing so on a pirate basis.
5.1.1.4 The 75% Local Content regulation

Ever since the advent of broadcast services; music popularisation has been a function of broadcast services. It was compelling for this research to explore some of the topical sections of the Broadcasting Regulation Act (BRA) that have a bearing on the themes musicians are handling in order for them to fit into the regulatory framework. One such BRA section that continues to stir notoriety is the 75% Content Regulation. Caution should be borne that the regulation is not exclusively for music as it caters for other creative and informative products like, film, news and television programmes.

Driven by the objective to check ostensible external themes and the global ‘anti-Zimbabwe campaign drive from about 2000 to 2010, the 75% local content was born. The Act states that broadcasting licensees, be they television or radio, must ensure that 75% of their broadcasting time is reserved for local or Zimbabwean content while 10% of material to broadcast should be African. It was assumed that such deliberate priming of content would help in curving a positive Zimbabwean story in the minds of the consumer of music products. Although the policy covers many issues in broadcasting business, of particular interest to this research is the issue of music. Commenting on the background to this policy and from a musical perspective, Bere (2008:126) proffers that:

African politicians at times treat Western cultural and political influences as contaminating to African political consciousness…I argue that the state fears that cultural penetrability translates into ideological, hence political penetrability. I borrow Browning’s (1998) inverted metaphor that western culture is viewed by the state in Zimbabwe as a contagious Western ploy for political conscientization promoting regime change.

In similar pole Zilberg (2007) observes that the 75% local content was mooted as a strategy to counter the western influence in music which threatened government throttlehold on the production and reception of ideas. Western music is thus viewed as an infectious pathogen capable of contaminating the recipient culture. It is some fencing
off strategy which Bere (2008), in respect of hip hop, contests since the later wields liberatory qualities which the Zimbabwean government must embrace in its struggle to pull down the citadels of neo-colonialism.

The 75% Local Content which was implemented in 2000 and revised in 2004, 2008, 2013 places the following content objectives for existing and prospective broadcasting licencees, be they television or radio, in Zimbabwe that they air programmes:

- reflecting a Zimbabwean national identity.
- respecting community standards and values.
- reporting on matters of local significance.
- promoting peace, stability and national cohesion.
- preserving the national security and integrity of Zimbabwe.
- placing a high priority in the protection of children.
- promoting quality programming.

This indigenisation of broadcasting content has potentially robust implications for the music arts industry as it has the power to regulate the content of creative products and the rapidity of their production. It potentially creates space for those who have distinctly Zimbabwean oriented music to become visible in as much as they also make visible the Zimbabwean subject in their music. When content benchmarks are stipulated for music, music composition has greater potential to be referential to the context of its creation as art is the mirror of society; the Aristotelian view of art as mimetic holds. The content of music becomes less and less self-referential. Music then consistently reflects and “respects community standards and values” and foregrounds “matters of local significance”. The music that is then played on public broadcast would help in promoting peace, stability and national cohesion. Such valorisation of the artistic products elevates the responsibility of music from mere entertainment to a more communicative and socially responsible art that is tasked with driving a national agenda as well as preserving the national security and integrity of Zimbabwe.
Local content policy for radio broadcasting licensees which is of singular interest to this research allocates the following quotas for the music:

- 75 percent quota of Zimbabwean music every week during performance period.
- 10 percent quota of music from Africa every week during performance period.
- 10 percent of total programming broadcast to be in National languages other than Shona and Ndebele

The allocation of a cumulative 80% Zimbabwe and Afrocentric music is indeed a commissioning of the arts to reflect the critical issues that confront and tickle Africans as they respond to the postcolonial issues of the continent, the state, the individual, the family and society in general. The allocation of 10% to African themes and issues confirms Zimbabwe as an extension of the African community which shares fundamental concerns with fellow states. (The move has since been embraced by a regional neighbour, South Africa, who has since May 2016 introduced a whopping 90% local quota regulation for SABC’s 18 radio stations (Dludla, 2016)) However, for some the 75% local content threshold is conceived in the hope that the quality of music and entertainment products are just another blind affirmative action meant to make the government popular. The commissioning of themes has the potential of relieving music from triviality and self-referentiality. The Afrocentric theory becomes critical in estimating to what extent and how the artiste articulates the African concerns in their music.

5.2 Analysis of songs with a political motif

An attentive examination of postcolonial music in Zimbabwe confirms that the music teems with political content. Although it is in the nature of music referentiality not to be unequivocal and explicit, a number of songs audibly articulate Zimbabwe’s postcolonial political trajectory in a way that reflects on the independence in terms of the celebratory mood, postcolonial challenges and rising tensions that have opened musical fodder for the artiste to ruminate. The songs emerge in the context of independence attained after a bitter and protracted struggle. The subsequent political themes reflect a sense of
arrival, achievement and hope which however withers as the years roll on against myriad unforeseen huddles that stalk the nation.

5.2.1 Independence euphoria

The carnival atmosphere that engrossed the advent of independence in Zimbabwe is unmatched in the history of the nation. Artistes have passionately reflected on this immediate post-independence era in a way that is reflective of the mood of the nation at this historical juncture. The coming of independence was a moment of reckoning; an encounter with destiny as the music of Thomas Mapfumo, Oliver Mtukudzi and Marshall Munhumumwe takes stock of celebratory mood of the nation.

Marshal Munhumumwe’s (1981) hit Makorokoto (Congratulations) justifies celebration by comparing and contrasting years of hardships under colonial rule and the advent of independence as a cause for the joy that deservedly grips the nation. The departure of a huge burden is ample cause for merriment. The artiste juxtaposes the picture of oppression against the new frame of independence which is buoyed by expectancy.

Makorokoto (Congratulations)

*Hama takatambura kwemakore mazhinji*  Beloved we suffered for many years

*Hona rugare rwauya*  Behold peace has now come

*Tose tose tofara*  All of us now rejoice

*Zimbabwe yose topembera*  The whole of Zimbabwe now celebrates

*Hinga nhasi tofara*  We are so happy

*Marutenda naZvanyara svetukaiwo mupembere*  Marutenda and Zvanyara jump and celebrate

*Gwenyambira svika pedyo uitewo makorokoto*  The mbira artiste come and congratulate as well

(Munhumumwe 1981)

Lines 6 and 7 are an open invitation to the dancer and the artiste to celebrate and capture in song the mood of the new dispensation of independence. The song invites the musician to ascend the podium and add to the voice that celebrates (*Gwenyambira svika pedyo uitewo makorokoto* / The mbira artiste come and congratulate as well) the attainment of independence which the artiste equates to the dawn of good living (*rugare*) which brings
joy, hence everyone rejoices (*Tose tose tofara*). The use of blanket quantifiers *tose* (all of us) and *yose* (all the people of Zimbabwe) is meant to impel all people into a unified vision of the state. This invitation extended to the artiste fits into this thesis as it is an open invitation for the artiste to be part of the voice that tells the Zimbabwean story. The historian, the poet, the anthropologist and even the politician have done their part. Since every expression of art arises out of particular alternatives of its time, the musician is invited to give their own view of what is happening. This invitation opens space for micro voices to buttress the meta-discourse of independence and celebration of heroic deeds of the freedom fighters.

*Pemberai* (celebrate), by Mapfumo (1980), captures the celebration mood of crossing over from colonialism to self-rule and the reclamation of stolen heritage:

\[
\begin{align*}
Pemberai (celebrate), \\
Pemberai pemberai & Celebrate celebrate \\
Pemberai vanababa imi & Celebrate you fathers \\
Pemberai pemberai & Celebrate celebrate  \\
Zvanhasi ndezvedu & Today it is ours  \\
Nevachatevera vachangozvitonga & Generations to come will self rule
\end{align*}
\]

(Mapfumo 1980)

The revolutionary artiste sees independence as a durable achievement that future generations will continue to enjoy (*Inhaka yababa / This is our father’s inheritance*) for the heritage of independence is an intergenerational treasure. He core clichés *pemberai* to capture the pervasive celebratory mood surrounding Zimbabwean independence. The song is an exhortation for people to celebrate. By inviting fathers (*vanababa*) and mothers (*vanamai*) to celebrate, in some measure records critical characters in the liberation struggle, participants who are scantily recorded as significant in most canonical works. Music thus becomes a vital alternative to other canonical narratives in the history of the independent state.

*Chitima cherusununguko* (independence train) by Mapfumo (1981) is a celebration of an arrival by a people who were under colonial rule for years. The new leadership of
Robert Mugabe is now firmly anchored in power. The train (*chitima*) trope is employed to capture the sense of majority rule. Mapfumo believes Zimbabwe is for the black majority and the white regime should give space to the new government:

*Chitima cherusununguko* (independence train)

- *Ndezvenhando kugunun’una* (It is vain grumbling)
- *Zimbabwe tiri kutonga* (We are ruling Zimbabwe)
- *Ndezvenhando kuchema-chema...* (It is vain complaining)
- *Satani ibva mushure* (Get away from me satan)
- *Hurumende imbotonga* (And allow the government to rule)
- *Zimbabwe ndeyevanhu* (Zimbabwe is for the people)
- *Hatimbodi madhisinyongoro...* (We do not want disorder)
- *Yambiro kwamuri nhunzvatunzva* (Advise to you crooks)
- *Minda vakatipa yokurima* (The government has given us farms)
- *Nzvimbo vakatipa yokugara* (They have given us residential space)
- *Cherechedza ari kutonga* (Look at the one in charge)
- *Pava naVaMugabe* (It is now comrade Mugabe)
- *Gandanga uchariziva here ukariona?* (Would you recognise the terrorist if you saw them?)
- *Riri kutonga Zimbabwe yaro* (He/she is now ruling his/her Zimbabwe)

(Mapfumo, 1981 *Chitima cherusununguko*)

The artiste amplifies the idea of majority rule and black autonomy by reference to Zimbabwe as for/by the people (*Zimbabwe ndeyevanhu*). This contrasts sharply with the erstwhile government by the minority Rhodesians who were not even the owners of the land. By the early 1980s it was too early to suspect any betrayal of the revolution by the new government, hence Mapfumo’s naivety in believing *Ndezvenhando kugunun’una* (It is vain grumbling). At that nascent phase of nationhood there was that palpable aura of hope affirming a good future for the new nation. Initial development programmes like mass education, immunisation and widespread infrastructural development were presage benchmarks for a brighter future. Typical of hegemonic narratives, Mapfumo locates an opportunity to chide the enemies of the state. He equates the enemies of the new state to the devil (*Satani ibva mushure* (Get away from me satan)) to convey a tone of immense revulsion to opposing forces. Now that Zimbabwe is a sovereign state, the new nation
should be allowed to steer its own course without interference from forces of negativity. The use of intimidatory remarks (Yambiro kwamuri nhunzvatonzva Advice to you crooks) rhymes with techniques of compulsion associated with meta-narratives. The artiste makes reference to nhunzvatonva, a term that was applied to sellouts and all those that dined with the enemy of the people during the liberation war in Zimbabwe. To be labelled nhunzvatonzva during colonialism was a fatal indictment. No one wanted to be associated with that label, and its reloading in the postcolonial setting is a stern reminder for any lingering stubborn spirit against the establishment.

The song embraces the concept of self-rule as a realisation of a long cherished dream. It celebrates the early efforts by the government to address the issues of land and space in general (Minda vakatipa yokurima / The government has given us farms). Contrary to what is casually assumed, the first phase of the land reform was in the first five years of the five year development plans launched soon after independence and not later in the late 1990s (Moyo, 2011). These empowerment and development initiatives were spearheaded by the then Prime Minister Robert Mugabe who was generally seen as a terrorist (gandanga) in minority white circles. This reminder (Gandanga uchariziva here ukariona / Would you recognise the terrorist if you saw them) serves to contrast the massive development programmes being implemented by the erstwhile scorned revolutionaries and the tag of contempt associated with them. Sachikonye (2003:13) observes that when Zimbabwe attained independence, there were high hopes for its economic and political future. Early signs of the developmental projectile aroused the spirit of celebration as trailblazing efforts were deployed to radically transform the African education, infrastructure and raising the integrity of blacks.

Pidigori waenda (The acrobat is gone) by Mapfumo (1980) is sung in mockery mood as the nation sees off the colonialist who has been annihilated, notwithstanding his pride:

```
Pidigori waenda (The acrobat is gone)

Pidigori waenda The acrobat is gone
Pidigori waenda The acrobat is gone
Wanga achinyanya kuvhaira He was too boastful
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Vakomana hakuna  
Gentlemen, death does not respect

Vakomamana hakuna  
Gentlemen, death does not respect

Kufa hakuna memba  
Death does not respect the pompous

(Mapfumo, 1980)

*Pidigori* is a pseudonym for a bad, hostile and pugnacious person disliked by society, whose demise is a delight to his victims hence the celebration “*pidigori waenda*”. The Pidigori character represents the anhilated colonialist whose defeat is equated with death. Death is the end to the cycle of life and here it signifies expurgation of unpopular regime. The revolutionary artiste aphorises death as no respecter of the pompous (*mhemba*). The word ‘*mhemba*’ (member) as used in the Zimbabwean context refers to an arrogant and condescending man whom Matavire in *Nyakuchena ganda* (the whiteman) (2012, posthumous compilation) mockingly refers to as *rinodzinga rufu neruoko* (the one who whisks away death by flick of a finger). However, even when surrounded with all death defying antics, death always catches up with them. Death chooses its victims and when it summons every man must obey. The artiste uses death as a metaphor for the annihilation of an oppressive regime which has incessantly terrorised people. The colonialist is referred to as *Pidigori* (the acrobat). The seemingly invincible has been brought to his knees. The song is a mockery for someone who thinks they are clever but end up at the opposite of end their wits either as a result of underestimating their task or overrating their ability to accomplish it.

The fall of the ‘acrobat’ is exacerbated by their arrogance (*kuvhaira*), condescending and patronising manner which highly overstated their potency in dealing with Africans in Zimbabwe. The term *kuvhaira* approximates to effervescence in English, which gives the impression that the white man was beyond boiling point in self-estimation. The use of derogatory and racist terms to depict the whites, as Mutasa and Chigidi (2010) observe in post liberation war novels; shows the extent to which the writers had been liberated to express themselves. Similarly, Mapfumo’s use of the invectives like *Pidigori*, to describe the defeated whites can be seen as the artiste’s confirmation of
independence and freedom to say what they want. Mtukudzi’s (1980) *Zimbabwe* reinforces the idea of overestimating one’s strength by the colonial administration.

**Zimbabwe**

*Mhandu yakanga yatandavara*  
The enemy had stretched out

*Ikaisa muswe nokoko*  
Relaxed carelessly

*Ndokukanganwa kwayakabva*  
And had forgotten about where he came from

*Ikafumura zvinoera*  
Disrespected sacred things

*Handikanganwi varere mumasango*  
I do not forget those who perished in the forests

*Vasina makuva*  
The graveless fighters in the forests,

*Vakafira nyika yavo*  
Who died for their country

(Mtukudzi, 1980 Zimbabwe)

The occasion of independence came against a self-delusion by coloniser. He had rested complacent that he had dealt away with the dispossession of people’s heritage. Mtukudzi in his celebration of independence mocks this complacency. He uses the rich Shona idiomatic expression (*Mhandu yakanga yatandavara Ikaisa muswe nokoko*/ The enemy had lost his tail) to punch the message that, after close to a century of domination of blacks in their own backyard, the enemy had dismissed all chances of black resurgence. Such complacency resonates with Smith’s notorious, defiant declaration that there would not be majority rule at least in a thousand years as Godwin (2007) records; a timeframe that was humbly slashed to a decade and half; yes, 15 years wrong. He underestimated the black chutzpah to wrestle against the hitherto, self-declared independent Rhodesians.

Mtukudzi (1980) credits the life sacrifices of the combatants. The liberation war was costly in human lives (*varere mumasango...vakafira nyika yavo*). It is estimated that the liberation struggle accounted for the deaths of as many as 30 000 soldiers and civilians (Moocraft, 1990). The songwriter is cautious to remind that the celebration is coming courtesy of the human sacrifice. He takes an opportunity to figure out liberation luminaries like Josiah Magama Tongogara (Liberation war commander) and Herbert Chitepo whose contribution to the liberation struggle has been lucidly noted in works by Chung (2006), White, (2003) and Mhanda, (2011). These are gone but the revolution
they watered with their blood is an ongoing one. In *Pane Asipo* (Someone is Missing) Simon Chimbetu (2002) locates an occasion to invoke a reminder that as we celebrate and enjoy the fruits of the struggle we should not lose sight of those who sacrificed their lives to make our independence desires a reality. He thus sings:

*Pane Asipo* (Someone is Missing)

- *Ungano ramaita iri,*  
  This celebration we are enjoying
- *Pane vamwe vasipo.*  
  There are others who are missing
- *Mabiko ataita aya,*  
  This feast we are having
- *Pane vamwe vasipo.*  
  Others are not here
- *Kuguta kwataita uku,*  
  This satiation we have
- *Pane vamwe vasina.*  
  There others who are hungry
- *Jojo akasarako kusango…*  
  Jojo died in the war
- *Mweya wadzungaira…*  
  The soul is wandering
- *Kukanganwa takoniwa…*  
  We have failed by forgetting these comrades…

(Chimbetu, 2002 *Pane Asipo* (Someone is missing))

As the nation celebrates, there is a danger of those now reaping the rewards thereof, of forgetting those who died for this independence, especially given that some of the self-proclaimed leaders of independent Zimbabwe are nothing but impostors (Vambe 2004). The words *ungano* (gathering) and *mabiko* (feast) convey a twin reference to celebration which then is contrasted against neglect or absence of those who ironically made the same gathering and feast a reality. The culture of gluttony that has engulfed yesterday’s freedom fighter subsists against a loss of memory of those who lost their lives in the war of liberation; thus the artiste reminds that we have failed by forgetting (*Kukanganwa takoniwa*) those who sacrificed their lives. That their spirits continue to wonder (*Mweya wadzungaira/* The spirit wanders) in the forest is a call for deep reflection by fellow comrades as they feast on the fruits of their labour. By reminding the leadership and the ordinary people to remember those who sacrificed their lives, Chimbetu appeals to them to take stock of their actions in satisfying the independence expectations of the victims of the struggle.
5.2.2 War memories

A number of artistes have committed space to reflect on war events in the postcolonial period probably to reawaken the spirit of sacrifice, patriotism and celebrate the heroic deeds of those that voluntarily offered themselves. Simon Chimbetu, Mbuya Madhuve, Elliot Manyika and others have eloquently articulated the mood of the war and events that typify war encounters.

Simon Chimbetu’s (1988) *Hatikanganwi* (We will never forget) is the artiste’s graphic depiction of those ghastly war incidents when a mortally wounded fighter conferred their aspirations of the struggle on surviving colleagues, implying that what was taken from them was life not the spirit of the struggle. Chimbetu dramatises a sad parting incident when a liberation fighter was about to die, probably from fatal injuries incurred in a fierce battle;

*Hatikanganwi* (We will never forget)

\[
\begin{align*}
{Ndarangarira \text{ musi watisiya gamba}} & \quad \text{I remember the day the cadre died} \\
{Mwana wenyu amai imi} & \quad \text{Your own child oh, mother} \\
{Amire panguva yakaoma...} & \quad \text{When in a perilous moment} \\
{Akashevedzera ndokushevedzera} & \quad \text{He/She shouted and shouted} \\
{Katanurai zvikasha zvangu zvose} & \quad \text{Untie my bag of ammunition} \\
{Muende mberi nehondo} & \quad \text{And continue fighting} \\
{Rambai makashinga komuredhi} & \quad \text{Remain strong comrade} \\
{Muchiti ZANU ZANU} & \quad \text{Singing ZANU ZANU}
\end{align*}
\]

(Chimbetu, *Hatikanganwi* 1988)

The artiste opens his song with a reflective phrase *Ndarangarira musi watisiya gamba / I remember the day a cadre died*, to ignite a sense of retreat into the war and probably encourage those who did not experience the war to migrate into the past and grasp the much needed war experience. The artiste affords the listener a mental picture of a war fired cadre at the point of death (*Amire panguva yakaoma / In a perilous moment*) mustering enough strength to bequeath a charge on the survivors. With that fading strength, he encourages the surviving cadres to be resilient (*Rambai makashinga komuredhi / Remain...*)
vigilant comrade). Resilience is one quality the African people are blessed with as it helps them navigate the vicissitudes of life (Mudzanire and Gondo, 2014). Such parting words are a bold inscription that death cannot deflate the fighting resolve in a battle hardened cadre. Death has taken life but has not dampened the fighting spirit in the soldier. The dialogic song symbolises the bestowal of charge by the dying on the living, a very serious commission among Africans. A person’s last words are not put to waste among African people and have the power to delay death until they are spoken to the right audience as Mhaka (2014: 375) observes. Africans do not temper with the spoken word, particularly the last verbal testament. Chimbetu deliberately employs this technique of ‘last words’ to give immortality to the charge of continuity with the struggle. Independence has come on the blood drenched apparels of the heroes and heroines. The song continually reminds the nation never to lose focus of the aspirations of the struggle. If death can not take away that focus, that conviction and that patriotism, what will?

Edna Chizema, also known as (a.k.a) Mbuya Madhuve’s (n.p.d) *Ndega ndega* (On My Own) is an encounter-narrative of moments in the struggle where some of the fighters were mauled by lions (even imagery for real enemies) on their way from Mozambique, where they were trained. They encountered many heart-rending huddles that however, failed to discourage the mission to liberate their country.

*Ndega ndega* (On My Own)

-Taive gumi nevaviri, tichibva kuMoza— We were ten of us coming from Mozambique

-Vamwe ndokudyiwa neshumba— Then the others were devoured by lions

-Ini ndikaponera mumuti— I climbed up the tree

-Mhondoro dzemuno mandirasa— Ancestors of this land you have deserted me

-Kundisiya ndega ndega— You left me alone on the way

-Senzungu yakadonha panzira— Like a seed fallen by the wayside

-Mhondoro dzemuno mandiramwa— The spirit mediums of this place area

-Have rejected

(Mbuya Madhuve n.p.d. Ngega Ndega)
Such were the challenges in the ‘bush’. She narrates with sadness the memory of this tragedy where incidentally she was the only survivor. Some were bitten by snakes and other creatures of the wilderness. She musters the courage to confront the territorial spirits; *mhondoro dzemuno mandirasa* (Ancestors of the land, you have deserted me) implying that the territorial spirits had abandoned their responsibility to protect their children. Among the Shona people when calamity strikes, it is usually considered that the ancestors would have been angered by some wayward behaviour or some unfulfilled rite. What compounds the fighter’s predicament is the ancestors’ seeming connivance with the real enemies of the revolution.

To imagine one being left alone in the jungle serves to excite the listener’s imagination on the palpable loneliness (*Kundisiya ndega ndega* / You left me alone on the way) and trauma those who survived such tragedies were subjected to. There were so many negative forces that worked against the liberation struggle but the latent message is that all that was not enough to flatten the spirit of the liberation fighter. One may see this personal narrative as affording a refreshing detour from officially rehearsed singular narratives that hide from view the role of non combat factors in accounting for war casualties as Rwafa and Vambe (2007:71) argue that, “for the first time in war songs freedom fighters die not from the firepower of white Rhodesian soldiers, but from being eaten by lions, from hunger and fatigue, or snake bites.” One may however view this encounter-narrative as a metaphor for problems encountered during the war. The snakes and lions may be signifiers of the military mighty of the Rhodesian forces.

ZANU PF campaigns, even thirty years into independence, nostalgically draw strength from wartime songs, probably reminding the nation of the critical issues of the revolution. The likes of the Mbare Chimurenga Choir (2010), Elliot Manyika (2005) Dickson Chingaira (2001), and many more have revisited the past to reinvigorate the dying ambers of the revolutionary spirit in postcolonial Zimbabwe. Elliot Manyika sings:
Nora (Norah)

Mhururu kuenda nekudzoka mhururu; Ululations to and fro, ululations
Zvinoda vakashinga moyo… It needs those with brave hearts
Kune vamwe vakapanduka; There are some who have rebelled
Mhururu kuenda nekudzoka mhururu; Ululations to and fro ululations
Nepamusana pekusafunga. Because of being stupid
Toraika vanhu vakadai; Take such people
Mhururu kuenda nekudzoka mhururu Ululations to and fro ululations
Dzidzisai gwara reZanu. Teach them Zanu-PF’s ideology
Dharuweni kune magamba; In Mount Darwin there are heroines/heroes
Vakafira iyoyi Zimbabwe Who died for this very Zimbabwe

(Manyika, 2001 Nora)

The song is a war time tune revisited in the war for restoration of the land birthright. The artiste, a cabinet minister in president Mugabe’s christened ‘war cabinet’ locates a platform to remind the nation of the need for endurance, hence Zvinoda vakashinga moyo / It needs those with brave hearts. Though the song sounds celebratory by the refrain Mhururu kuenda nekudzoka mhururu Ululations to and fro ululations, such celebration comes out of sacrifices and pains (Vakafira iyoyi Zimbabwe / Who died for this very Zimbabwe). Just as Gondo (2011) alludes that every social event among Africans, from inception of life to death is punctuated by celebration; Manyika’s ululation to and from Mozambique confirms the struggle as a complex celebration. The pungwe/ night vigil done during the war, as Pongweni (1982) observed, was a celebration meant to boost war morale. The same celebration was experienced after the war. To those who have rebelled, corrective remedies should apply, hence dzidzisai gwara reZANU. They ought to be schooled into in the party ideology. Invoking war songs in the Land reform period is an attempt to remind the nation that the revolution is still on. If these songs were sung during the liberation struggle and resung three decades later, the reminder is that it is war time again and people should brace themselves for a rough ‘faring’.
The strategy to invoke war memories is a well contrived one given that a significant portion of the Zimbabwean population has either had direct war traumatic experiences or were not yet born at a time when war stories were/are being passed on to them by those who went through the experience. Graphic accounts of war experiences, enough to terrify the most daring are still indelibly engraved on the hearts of many that the mere mention of these is intimidating enough to castrate any lingering spirit of rebellion against the establishment.

5.2.3 The call for unity

Unity is a spirit of life traceable to early African communities as they confronted common threats in life. It is through unity that formidable resistance to external threats was forged. It worked during the war of liberation and in the postcolonial, many artistes continue to invite the nation to reflect on it. Dickson Chingaira, Black Umfolosi and Thomas Mapfumo, among others have discussed unity in some of their publications.

Dickson Chingaira’s (1986) Zvikomborero (Blessings) is a call for reconciliation and unity. The yesteryear marshal musician sees unity as attracting a blessing on the new nation. He thus equates it with ‘blessings’ (zvikomborero).

Zvikomborero (Blessings)

Tinobvunza vose vachtura kubatana
We ask all and they agree to unity

Tinobvunza vose vachtura
We ask and they say

Yeeeh yeeeh zvikomborero kubatana
Yee blessings come from unity

Yeeeh yeeeh zvikomborero kuva pamwe
Yee blessing is being together

Kwete kubva mukuvenana...
It is not about hating one another

Kwete kubva murovana
It is not about fighting another

Kwete kubva mukunyimana
It is not about denying another.

(Chingaira 1986 Zvikomborero)

The artiste castigates all processes that reverse the gains of independence which signify absence of unity. The blessings only come when there is no internal bickering (Kwete kubva murovana), hatred (Kwete kubva mukuvenana) and denying one another (Kwete
This was in keeping with the socialist masternarrative pursued by the postcolonial state which encouraged sharing. The artiste strikes a clarion call for unity as development can only come when people flow together and have a shared vision as was hoped in the Unity Accord of 1987 (Mashingaidze 2005). The hostilities of the 1982-1987 tribal disturbances had to end and give way to a common path of development. Black Umfolosi’s ‘Unity’ further cements the inseparability of unity and development when the choral ensemble declares;

No unity; no peace
No peace; no development
No development; no jobs

Typical of metanarrative stylistics, Black Umfolosi uses suggestive and prescriptive lingo that equates unity to peace; peace to development and development to jobs in a simplistic and linear fashion. The effect of prescriptive techniques is the development of linear and regimented minds that easily fit into the meta-narrative. The context against which the song emerges was such that the nation needed hope refreshioner after those tribal disturbances appeared to dent the promising nation less than five years into independence.

Thomas Mapfumo (1994), in *Vanhu vatema* (Black people), implores Africans to unite as a way of maximising their potential to recoup what the white man has taken from them.

*Vanhu vatema* (Black people)

*Vakomana kana tiri tose* Gentlemen when we are together

*Tinokunda nhamo dzakawanda...* We overcome many problems

*Africa kana tiri tose* Africa, if we are together

*Tinokudza mhuri yedu yose* We raise our family

*Africa kana takabatana iwe* Africa, if we are united

*Mhuri yedu yose inoguta...* Our family will be sustained...
The *Chimurenga* artiste rallies black people to a unity crusade as a weapon to stave off the neo-colonialist incursion. Unity is an African cultural fingerprint traceable to pre-colonial times. Africans from pre-colonial times have a history of working together. In working together they derive confidence and strength (Mudzanire and Gondo 2014). This is why Mapfumo chirps on the notion that unity is victory (*Tinokunda nhamo dzakawanda... We overcome many problems*). The artiste fervently believes all of Africa’s problems can be overcome if Africans are united. Sustenance comes from unity (*Mhuri yedu yose inoguta*) and so does growth (*Tinokudza mhuri yedu yose*). Mapfumo believes in pooling of resources and grouping around a common economic block presumably along the lines of European Union (EU). He thinks of ‘putting our money together’ (*Kana mari yedu ikabatana*) as a way of amplifying African strength. Regional economic blocs have long been seen as providing formidable partnerships and enhancing economic cooperation among member states. They also cushion economies from gratuitous exploitation by major world economies.

Mapfumo (1994) implores Africans to speak with one voice so that countries abroad can hear them when they adopt common positions. The current practice of grouping along colonial hangovers as seen in such ‘nostalgic affiliations’ as Franchophone or Anglophone countries is an unfortunate postcolonial development. Lumumba (2015) is probably right to suggest that “our dominant default instinct is to behave as if we are the people who colonised us”, no wonder some even brag that they were colonised by better colonisers. Some countries have failed to cut off the umbilical cord linking them to their colonial masters (Mapuva and Chari, 2010:1). Africans share common colonial
histories (nevermind who was colonised by who) of domination, exploitation and alienation. As such they need to speak with one voice when it comes to protecting their interests and participating in global platforms. This is a scenario that pushes the artiste to sing:

\[
\text{Tikatura nenzwi rimwe} \quad \text{If we speak with one voice}
\]

\[
\text{Nyika dziri kure dzinotinzwa} \quad \text{Countries abroad will hear us}
\]

The West has capitalised on the disunity among African states and their different levels of development to atomise them as a strategy to access their resources. They use aid and ‘soft and pardonable’ loans to win their cooperation. The West patronises some members of the African community forcing them to pursue their political interests. Oya and Pons-vignon (2010:9-11) alert that African countries have been subject to the good governance ‘conditionality framework”, which regrettably sacrifices sovereign positions on the altars of economic aid. This shrinks policy space for independent decisions.

Simon Chimbetu (1985) in “One Way” and Dickson Chingaira, in \textit{Vanhu vose veAfrica (All the people of Africa)} have laboured to put across their call for unity and so has Thomas Mapfumo in \textit{Zimbabwe Mozambique} and \textit{Vanhu vatema (Black People)}. Chimbetu’s One Way is a self-descriptive call for one unity, one vision among African states through the continental board, then Organisation of African Unity (OAU) rechristened African Union. Chimbetu thus sings:

\begin{verbatim}
One Way

One way
One way for Africa to be the conquer
One from Cairo to Cape woye
OAU is the way
Explorers came one way
From Madrid to Cape of Good Hope

(Chimbetu, 1985 One Way)
\end{verbatim}
Just as “explorers came one way from Madrid to Cape of Good Hope” in one resolve to conquer Africa through the Cape to Cairo empire dream, African nations in the postcolonial should team up to fight for development. The call is a volte-face on the hegemonic tendencies in the Cape to Cairo escapade by the imperialists. Just as the European forces in one swoop colonised Africa, African nations needed to join hands and deal with effects of colonialism and its neo-colonial slaugh (Mudzanire, 2013). For this to be realised, it is through Africans uniting under the banner of OAU (Later AU).

Yvonne Chaka Chaka's (2000) *Kana Wochema* (When You cry) is a rare voice from a neighbour, singing in your language, restating the need for Africans to understand that they are one, nevermind the geographical boundaries that separate them. Chaka Chaka reminds Africans that they share a common ancestry, pigmentation and history. If the colour of our skin and hair is the same, then we are wrought from the same source.

*Kana Wochema* (When You cry)

*Ganda rako rakasvibirira* Your skin is black

*Bvudzi rako rakafanana nerangu* Your hair is similar to mine

*Ukama hunotibatanidza* The relationship that binds us

*Ndehwemakore akawanda* Is a long one

*Kana wochema* When you cry

*Ndinonzwa moyo wangu kurwadziwa* It pains my heart

(Chaka Chaka, 2000 *Kana Wochema*)

Gondo (2011), Kwasu Wiredu, (2004), Ngugi, (1987) and Chinweizu et al (1980) sustain the skin pigmentation politics arguing that the colour of one’s skin influences how someone interprets their environment and is an index of similarity of lived experiences, challenges and destinies hence *ukama hunotibatanidza ndehwemakore akawanda* / the relationship that binds us is a long one. Such challenges are shared experiences which push Africans to feel for one another thus *Kana wochema ndinonzwa moyo wangu kurwadziwa...* (When you cry it pains my heart) This is the spirit that encourages regional intervention efforts to help colleagues in war situations. The artiste takes us through a typical war
situation in Africa which should provoke fraternal sympathy among African people. A mother and her child have been killed in one of the many self-sparked or externally fomented wars Africa perennially endures. Chaka Chaka sings:

*Mai nemwana varere vakafa musango*  Mother and child lie dead in the bush

*Apo mumwe murume ari padambudziko*  Another man is in a predicament

*Muzita rehondo*  In the name of war

The artiste gives a lifelike situation that should naturally remind a sense of betrayal for anyone to ignore African brothers and sisters in similar circumstances. Such graphic depiction of a war situation serves to prickle one’s imagination and provoke sympathy which then pushes one to intervene. Such scenarios have pushed Zimbabwe into peace and conflict resolutions initiatives in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Nkiwane, 2001) and have equally ignited the intervention of SADC in managing political crises in Zimbabwe and Madagascar as Cawthra, (2010) appraises. Peace and unity are the necessary preconditions for any development. One nation can not thrive when its neighbours are either warring or not sharing a common vision. For Yvonne Chaka Chaka, a South African artiste to sing about co-operation is some pay back for regional states who have invested so much in the liberation of South Africa.

*Vanhu vese vemufuAfrica*  (All the people of Africa) by Dickson Chingaira (1986) primes the essence of humanity and unity in the face of injustice and unfairness as befitting homage to the heroic sacrifices of the freedom fighters and the contribution of the friends of the Zimbabwean struggle. If Africans failed to unite, they would have betrayed the efforts of their of Asian and Latin American friends who supported the liberation struggles of many African states. The artiste makes an impassioned appeal to African nations to heed to the call for unity as a way of complementing the efforts of those who supported them during their liberation struggles. Chingaira sings:
Vanhu vese vemuAfrica (All the people of Africa)

Vanhu vose vomuno muAfrica
All the people of Africa
Tamirira kuchipedzisa zveutongi hwemhandu
We are eager to end colonialism
Dai tachibatana tikunde...
It is high time we were united
Ngatisimudzire mbiri dzenyika idzo
Let us raise high the fame of those countries
dzekuAsia neLatin America
Of Asia and Latin America

Chingaira, 1986 Vanhu vese vemuAfrica

Russia and China, among others, contributed material and human resource support for the liberation struggle (Chigora and Goredema, 2010). Such a call by the artiste is a micro-narrative that assembles audience opinion into the socialist ideology; a perfect pay back to colleagues that helped Zimbabwe. The song considers unity as the final and critical resource that would complete the decolonisation process. Thus he sings:

Tamirira kuchipedzisa zveutongi hwemhandu
We are eager to end colonialism
Dai tachibatana tikunde
Let us unite so that we conquer

The artiste summons all the people of Africa (Vanhu vose vomuno muAfrica / All the people of Africa) to unite for the same purpose of fighting the enemy (Dai tachibatana tikunde / Let us unite so that we conquer). The fight is not an unprovoked assault but of defence. Thomas Mapfumo (1988) in Zimbabwe Mozambique implores African armies and people to unite as a way of defending their countries from the destabilising forces that saw the killing of Samora Machel in 1986. Such collaborations should see the military assistance in of supplying arms (Tumirai zvombo) to complete the liberation of southern Africa, by helping to fight alongside the people of Azania and Namibia.

Zimbabwe Mozambique

Kubatana kwemasoja eMozambique neZimbabwe...
The unity between Mozambican and
Zimbabwean soldiers
Kubatana kwevanzo veMozambique neZimbabwe...
The unity between Mozambican and
Zimbabwean people
Kubatana kwenyika dzedu dzemuno muAfrica...
The unity among African states
Unity is called to obliterate the culture of supping with the enemy as seen in the case of Mozambique. Samora Machel's death was alleged to be as a result of a conspiracy between South African Apartheid regime and Malawi (O’Malley 1996) while some authors like Robinson, (2006: 48-51) impute it on the divisions within the FRELIMO party. Mapfumo (1988) sees lack of unity as affording Africa’s enemies an aperture for interfering with internal processes. He makes a suggestion that if Africans were united, Samora Machel would not have been killed.

already there is a conspiracy theory that Machel was murdered at Komatipoort/Mbuzini by the South African government, interestingly when he was coming from a meeting on the liberation of Southern Africa in Lusaka (Mozambique News Agency, 1986). FRELIMO accused Malawi and South Africa for supporting or basing RENAMO insurgents within their boarders, hence the accident was conceived as a conspiracy by two nations to eliminate Machel. It was unthinkable for an African state like Malawi to work in cohorts with the Apartheid regime.

Zimbabweans and Africans are thus summoned to unite in order to fight, defend and share a common vision against common odds. Popular music in Zimbabwe is thus used as a voice of reason and a voice of solidarity in the unity crusade.

5.2.4 Exploitation of the subaltern

Throughout the greater part of the 1980s, the Zimbabwe government continued to mount social programs aimed at reducing social inequalities within its citizens. The government worked to redress the racially skewed labour practices that encouraged
selective and racially slanted social mobility. However, about a decade into independence, the socialist dream of equality nursed from the days of the liberation struggle was fast receding into an illusion. The capitalist tendencies of the dislodged regime proved immortal as they came back to haunt the mindset of the new state administrators and corporate management structures. It eroded all traces of socialist reflexes in the way they handled and managed the worker and resources. That coupled with the capitalist greed which crept into various levels of management left the worker and the ordinary person terribly exposed to the resultant economic problems. A number of artistes have debated this disturbing scenario.

In typical Marxist dialectic, Hosiah Chipanga (2006), in *Kushandiswa sebadza* (To be abused like a hoe) laments the rampant exploitation of the subaltern by the emerging bourgeoisie. The postcolonial has ushered in a new dispensation of neo-colonialism. In the socio-political setup, the artiste decries the wanton abuse of the poor by the rich:

*Kushandiswa sebadza* (To be abused like a hoe)

- **Zvinorwadza Mwari baba**
- **Kurarama semanyowa kuti vasvinhu vasvibire**
- **Votandavara kuno nekoko**
- **Vachipikata michero**
- **Iwe sare uri mvhu...**
- **Zvinorwadza Mwari baba**
- **Kushanda sebadza**
- **Kuti vasvinu vadye zvavo**
- **Vodya chino nechocho**
- **Vachinanaidza matumbu**
- **Pasina chebadza**
- **Zvinorwadza Mwari baba**
- **Kubatwa sekatapila**
- **Rinovhurira mugwagwa**
- **Votamba kuno nekoko**
- **Vachishaina nemotokari**

It is painful father God
To be used as stepping stone for the enrichment of the clever ones
They live lavishly
As they reap the fruits
While you achieve nothing
It is painful father God
To work like a hoe
So that the wise may prosper
They eat what they want
As they push their stomachs
As nothing is left for the hoe
It is painful father God
To be treated like a caterpillar
Which paves the road
So that they can travel wherever they want
As they brag with their vehicles
Iro risingapafambi

While the caterpillar is denied use of

The road

(Chipanga, 2006 Kushandiswa sebadza)

The artiste cries Zvinorwadza Mwari babakurarama semanyowa kuti vasvinhu vasvibire (It is painful father God to live like manure so that the wise are enriched) alerting that exploitation is beginning to rear its feet into the classed society. The artiste draws on the rich Shona agricultural similes to articulate the exploitative relationship between the have- and have-nots (Kushanda sebadza kuti vasvinu vadye zvavo to work like a hoe so that the wise may eat). The hoe tills the land but does not enjoy the product of its labour. Chipanga’s crying voice is flowing counter to the socialist narrative that the state is scripting. In the socialist state they work together for their total benefit; in the capitalist they labour for the benefit of a rich few. Typical of counter-narrative diction, Chipanga uses incisive similes to depict the nature of the exploitative relationship. The hoe tills the land but is forgotten when the farmer enjoys the proceeds. He uses the hoe and the farmer to knock home the sense of alienation. The trope rhymes with the way the rich exploit the poor in the postcolonial dispensation. The phrase Vachinanaidza matumbu/ pushes their stomachs is a vivid portrayal of a proud and lavish lifestyle that results from the effort of the hoe. The artiste clichés the exploitation sense though the caterpillar imagery. The caterpillar (katapila) paves the way for other vehicles to drive through but cannot be allowed to use the same road while other vehicles are allowed to drive through.

Chipanga’s allegory rhymes with Freedom Nyamubaya’s in the poem, “The dog and the hunter” where the dog that catches the hunt is given the hunter’s left overs. The song and the poem ably emblazon the disingenuity of the relationships that subsist between the farmer and the hoe on one hand and the hunter and the dog on another. He uses masked messages that convey multiple interpretations probably to evade censorship as he chooses to detour the conventional narratives of the state.
Jonathan Moyo’s (a government minister) (2004) pet song project Pax Afro song *Working under the Mine* equally decries the exploitative tendencies of the capitalist production system.

*Working under the Mine*

All week long I am shafted underground  
To bring the wealth underneath  
I just go down like another tool  
Digging deep and deep down beneath  
As I go deep, I feel the pain  
As my labour goes right down through the drain  
Working under the mine;  
Mining what is not mine  
All the day long I am at work, five to nine  
I get home tired like a dog  
My romance has since become more boring  

(Moyo 2004: *Working under the Mine*)

Sung in Marxist melancholy, the artiste reflects and bewails rivers of sweat expended in vain ventures. The worker endures weeks of hard labour under the ground only to harvest pain (As I go deep I feel the pain). He burrows the ground all day long for someone to harvest from his sweat hence, “mining what is not mine.” He deliberately puns mining and mine to semantically contrast two similar grammatical constructions to convey acute alienation of labour investment and proceeds. The punning has the effect of creating irony and wryness which invites the audience to concentrate their analysis on the consuming contrast. This creates immense graphic impact in the audience to convert their ear into an eye. The one who mines does not benefit. His labour goes “...right down through the drain”. The artiste uses a metaphorical inference that conveys images of wanton waste. As he further narrates his consequential romantic flop (My romance has since become more boring) the audience is left with a picture of an impending
family disintegration as the capitalist system threatens the whole social set up. Here language is used as an image forming agent (Kadenge, 2012), a transmitter of realities (Ngugi, 1986) where the artiste appropriates the rich Shona traditional resources of metaphors to convey accurate visuals that help comprehension of the exploitative system. However, a stubborn poser in this context is who is it that the government minister is pointing his finger at, when he should be an agent that controls the very exploitation he sings about. It seems the culture of exploitation is an extension of the neo-colonial agenda which the postcolonial state is hostage to and his government has no control over. This may explain why Jonathan Moyo’s government later promulgated legislation to wrest a stake in mining.

Leonard Zhakata’s 1994 Mugove (Portion), in typical Marxist dialectic, equally chirps the message of exploitation. The song is a proletarian lamentation against oppression by those in the upper echelons of power.

**Mugove (Portion)**

*Vakuruwe ndipeiwo kamukana kaye* **Honourable, allow me that opportunity**

*Ndinyevere vaye vaye* **To advise those ones**

*Vakawana mukana wokukwirako kumusoro...* **Who got an opportunity to go to the top**

*Kwave kuchitora mukana uyu sehuchenjeri* **Then they took this opportunity as cleverness**

*Votanga kutsikirira vari pasi* **They started to oppress those who are down**

*Votanga kusvipira mate vari pasi...* **They spit on those who are down**

*Ndinokumbirawo mugove wangu ndichiri kurarama Tenzi I ask for an opportunity while I am still Alive Lord**

*Tarisai ndosakadzwa sechipfeko nevane mari...* **Behold I am being torn like a cloth by the rich**

*Ndinongotsikirirwa ndichingoshandiswa nhando...* **I am being oppressed and**

*Ndichingofondoswa* **Doing hard forced labour**

*(Zhakata, 1994 Mugove)*

It emerges that Zhakata addresses his request to those above (vakuru elders) that he may be given an opportunity to address those who are abusing the opportunity of
getting to the top who now use this opportunity to oppress others (Votanga kutsikirira vari pasi). At this point of the ongoing revolution, the artiste is still seeking an opportunity to advise (Ndinyevere vaye vaye vakawana mukana wekukwirapo pamusoro/That I may advise those who got an opportunity to get to the top). Having ascended the thrown, the leaders now take this opportunity to suppress, oppress and look down upon those beneath. The artiste thus laments:

Votanga kutsikirira vari pasi They start to oppress those who are down
Votanga kusvipira mate vari pasi... They spit on those who are down

The worker is now abused and exploited by the capitalist system. Zhakata employs similes that lucidly parade the vice of exploitation of the havenots by the haves. The persona laments that he is being torn to shreds like a piece of cloth (ndosakadzwa sechipfeko). Mugove is a counter-narrative voice that disrupts notions of feigned normalcy that official singular narratives usually peddle. In keeping with the counternarrative traditions, the soloist uses allegory as a technique that accurately projects the exploitative scenario without calling names of people but shaming their practices. Composed more than ten years after independence, the song is both a warning and a protest against the escalating exploitative tendencies by those in diverse professions of management. The song is crafted as a prayer of appeal to God (Tenzi) who is considered the court of last appeal for the oppressed; implying that those who were supposed to correct the situation are probably supping with the oppressor. The largely unpopular Economic Structural Adjustment Programme, henceforth ESAP, mooted in the early 1990s left the vulnerable proletariat at the mercy of the private corporates. (Raftopoulous, 2008). Moreso, Parson, (2007) in Muzumara, (2012) observes that ESAP failed miserably and led to decline in job security in the public sector and winding up of some industries. It removed the responsibility of government to provide for the ordinary and left the worker exposed to the exploitative private employer. Such abnegation of responsibility was an unfortunate volte-face by a revolutionary government. Five to ten years later, political and social developments in Zimbabwe proved Zhakata a virtuoso of great vision and prescience as demonstrations, strikes, and violent confrontations later defined the worker-employer terrain.
Leonard Dembo’s (1992) *Chinyemu* (a teaser) is in Marxist terms a worker protest against exploitation in the new socialist-turned-capitalist economy. In this new economic order there is worker alienation which robs the worker of their dues. The mood of disenchantment with the working conditions is pervasive through out the song hereunder:

*Chinyemu* (a teaser)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Vana vangu vanoda kufara</em></td>
<td>My children want to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Kana ndauya nenyama kuti vaseve muto</em></td>
<td>When I come home with meat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Vana vangu havana mutaro</em></td>
<td>My children have no joy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ndovapeiko muchindipa muchinditorera...</em></td>
<td>What do I give them when you give and take away from me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Kupai kune chinyemu?</em></td>
<td>What manner of giving is this teaser?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Zvakawanda kune vasina kuzvishandira</em></td>
<td>You give much to those who did not work for it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Ini mushandi muchinditorera...*</td>
<td>As you take away from me the worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ini ndoora mwuyo</em></td>
<td>I lose heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ndisunungureiwo; ndirangariireiwo</em></td>
<td>Please release me from this exploitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Kushanda ndinoshanda asi ndinoshaiwa simba</em></td>
<td>I work but my strength is sapped</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Shona translation of the song)

*(Dembo 1992 Chinyemu)*

*Chinyemu* is a diminutive noun derived from *nyemu*; an ideophone that captures the action of arousing the interest of a receiver and simultaneously withdrawing what was extended to them as a present. The joy of the receiver is ephemeral. This contrasts sharply with the joy that comes when the father brings home bread. The withdrawal has the net effect of depriving his/her family of their dues hence *Vana vangu havana mutaro / My children have no joy*. Consequently the artiste rhetorically asks *(Ndovapeiko muchindipa muchinditorera?* (What do I give them when you give and take away from me?) What boggles the mind is the warped and inequitable distribution of labour proceeds where those who
work the most get the least and vice versa (Zvakawanda kune vasina kuzvishandira / You give much to those who did not work for it).

By extrapolation, the artiste seems to be referring to the high taxation that robs the worker and benefits those who did not labour. The worker’s payslip indicates clearly the gross salary, the bulk of which does not get into the worker’s pocket. This is why Dembo equates this scenario to the mockery of chinyemu. The worker’s family is dependent on the worker for sustenance and eagerly looks up to the worker for basics. The tax regime weighs down more on the poor employee as the rich easily evade paying tax (Mandizha, 2014). The artiste’s perpetual use of the rhetoric question Kupai kune chinyemu? sustains the mood of frustration and disappointment with failure to meet even a minimum of conditions of service dreamt of during the liberation struggle. The song contests the hypocrisy of socialist government that robs the worker whom it is supposed to serve. The artiste’s children can not afford to be happy anymore since the breadwinner cannot bring anything home because the salary is now inadequate to cater for daily essentials. In the late 1980s high taxation and heavy borrowing became government’s fulcrum position to sustain the massive development projects in motion then. The Human Development Report (1998:2) suggests that researches indicate that:

...the high public spending was financed by high taxation, international grants and borrowing. The expansion in provision of services in education and health also led to an increased civil service which had to be financed from public resources. The redistributive policies also entailed subsidizing consumption through state enterprises (parastatals).

The dilemma of populist policies is that every time someone receives something for free; someone is paying the price somewhere. The worker had to carry the burden of taxes. These problems were full blown in the decade of crisis 2000-2010.

The crisis of expectation is a recurring motif in Chimbetu’s music. He painfully reflects on the liberation struggle and the still birthing of promises made during the liberation struggle as frustrating. In Simba nederere (surviving only on okra) he asks;
The artiste allegorises the dialectic of postcolonial betrayal through reference to everyday renegation of promises in relationships. The whole political treachery comes out in the metaphor of a woman/man who breaks a standing promise. The use of the word *ingga* (by the way) serves as a reminder of one’s promises made during the liberation struggle. He constantly uses rhetoric questions to prick the betrayer’s conscience. The artiste revolves around the idea of betrayal of promise where the one who promised of a good future has now rebelled from principle (*Saka wapanduka sei? / So why have you rebelled?). Leadership can no longer identify with promises they made during the liberation struggle. One senses, like Chirere (2015), that with fear of betrayal: “the issue is no longer about people but about individual gain…This is more painful when seen in the context of previous excitement with shared ideals and journeys made together for the benefit of the collective”. The total effect of such betrayal is poverty and depressed confidence in the system. The song title thoroughly captures this. *Simba nederere* is metaphor that expresses complete dependence on okra relish. In Zimbabwe *deree* is a relish of last resort. The most basic version of *deree* grows on its own and for the artiste to cite it in a counternarrative is to express that he has been reduced to primitive gathering devices for survival. The coming of independence was celebrated
as a dawning of a platform for the realisation of long cherished dreams. Sadly some promises never materialized resulting in frustration by the ordinary people.

The net insinuation by the artistes is that the alienation of one’s labour has become so rampant in the postcolonial state that it would be unintelligent to construe the state as a socialist one anymore. These images epitomise the capitalist tendencies that have seized the postcolonial state. Babu (1982) observes this development and puns; “African socialism or socialist Africa?” to deride the emerging scenario where the gulf between the rich smacks of capitalist tendencies of wealth accumulation at the expense of the poor. The question emerges whether to treat this scenario as some kind of socialism unique to Africa or is it the real socialism manifesting in Africa.

5.2.5 The land question

Zimbabwean economy being predominantly agrarian; land has become the resource around which Zimbabwe, pre- and post-independence politics revolve. Land is a site of struggle and opportunity. It has stirred diverse emotions within the nation and even beyond. Its full discourse has attracted a multiplicity of voices and modes of expression and musicians have joined the chorus of debating voices. Musicians have looked at the land issue from different perspectives. Contrasting positions on land in the postcolonial period have produced two schools of popular music: the “dominant or master narrative” (Bamberg 2004:359) that celebrates and affirms the reallocation of land and the counter narrative which affords the listener an alternative reading of the land reform programme.

Chimbetu’s Zuva raenda (The sun is setting), released in 1996, is a musical rendition of the impatience and restlessness that characterised the prolonged wait for the land restitution programme. The song is a metaphorical insinuation that the land reform by then should have been actuated as promised during the war of independence:

\[\text{Zuva raenda (The sun is setting)}\]

\[\text{Mukoma zuva raenda...} \quad \text{Brother, the sun is setting}\]

\[\text{Mukoma nhongai nyama} \quad \text{Brother, pick your share of meat}\]
In Shona traditional culture elders are charged with the responsibility of sharing whatever resource there is with the family and family in the extended sense. The young have to wait for the elders to do their culturally assigned prerogative. The same goes for picking one’s share when eating with elders in the same plate. Chimbetu implores elders to *govai nyama* / Share the meat because *takuvara nehoomba* / We badly crave for meat. It is customary among the Shona people to allow elders to pick (or share) meat from the plate first. More than a sign of order, it is a sign of respect. The lyricist entreats the senior politician to distribute land (*Govai nyika*) to those who have been denied this resource and have been waiting for the resource for many years. The 1980 independence proclamation had not won the black person unfettered authority to take back the land immediately. There was a willing buyer-willing-seller clause that forced Zimbabwe to adopt a market based land distribution approach (Mutasa, 2015) where government would buy land from willing buyers for resettling the restive land hungry peasants. This proved a painstakingly slow process as Moyo (1995) observes. From the mid 1990s there was heightened expectation on the government to deliver land into the hands of its rightful owners. For the artiste to say *zuva raenda*, is to imply that people are getting frustrated for it is taking long for the government to distribute land. In the Shona cultural chronometer, the sun is an index against which all work is planned and executed. Work has to be done against the sun’s movement and when people work against time, it calls for extraordinary speed to do work in the shortest space of time hence the accurately coded ‘Fast Track’ Land Reform Programme. Extreme situations demand extraordinary interventions and Zimbabwe’s land hungry citizens demanded land at the earliest. This would explain why they ‘invaded’ the land. They had waited for twenty years after independence to regain their land, courtesy of the 1979 willing buyer willing seller clause where the white farmers were expected to voluntarily cede any land
to blacks (Moyo 2014). The so called land invasions where pioneered by the Svosve people who left their barren land to occupy more arable land in Marondera.

Oliver Mtukudzi’s (2001) song Murimi munhu (the farmer is the person) is a celebration of the importance of farming in the post independence era. The artiste eulogizes the farmer with lyrics that extol the virtues of farming (Mavunga, 2007). The artiste places farming at the centre of life activities and urges the farmer to take up his/her place to produce for the nation’s sustenance. It emerges that people are intricately connected to the farmer for them to live, hence the metaphor murimi munhu (the farmer is the person). Employing the same parallelism, the artiste equates country (nyika) with land (ivhu) to capture the inseparability of the two structures.

*Murimi munhu* (the farmer is the person)

* Nyika ivhu... The country is the land
  * Ivhu ndonyika... The soil is the country
  * Ivhu ivhu The soil can only make sense
  * Riine murimi If there is a farmer to till the hand
    * Murimiwe tora kapadza urime: Farmer, please take the hoe and till the land
    * Mvura nevhu zvoyanana Rain and soil will then mix
    * Nehunynanzvi hwako torarama With your expertise we live
    * Kuve muvhimi kudya To be a hunter is through eating
    * Kuve munyori kudya To be an author is through eating
    * Kuve musori kudya To be a spy is through eating

(Mtukudzi, 2001 *Murimi munhu*)

The phrase ‘nyika ivhu; ivhu ndonyika’ (the land/soil is the country and the country is the soil/land) sustains the ZANU PF’s meta-narrative of ‘the land is the economy and the economy is the land’ which underscores the centrality of the land in all economic activities. This is not mere political rhetoric as throughout the era of colonial rule Zimbabwean economy had been agro-based. Zimbabwean economy being agrobased, other economic activities are dependent on agriculture. To be a hunter (muvhimi), an author (munyori) and even a spy (musori) is because of farming. These professions have
to rely on the farmer’s proceeds. Subsoil assets like Zimbabwe’s enormous mineral wealth attest to the aphorism, land is the economy; the economy is the land. By choosing to equate the land and country as inseparable, a statement is made such as would not allow Zimbabweans to accept nominal independence without that critical resource that defines their nationhood (Mugabe, 2001). The catchphrase would then stress and impress the background and resultant urgency in the implementation of the land reform programme in Zimbabwe. The song celebrates the success of the land reform programme. It conveys an undercurrent that those who have been given farms should now use the farms profitably through engaging in productive farming. The farmer is reminded of their duty in feeding the nation as all other professions rely upon their activities.

Music that encouraged resilience comes in the form of jingles played on radio or television. One is reminded of the song *Rambai makashinga* (Remain resilient), a wartime song revived to invoke the indefatigable resources of tenacity in the face of adversity in the agricultural revolution. Tambaoga’s (2002) jingle propped the spines of many against seemingly insurmountable challenges courtesy of sanctions induced economic meltdown. He thus says:

*Rambai makashinga* (Remain resilient)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rambai makashinga</th>
<th>Remain resilient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Makashingawe rambai makashinga...</td>
<td>Remain resilient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivhu iri takaritora nehondo</td>
<td>We took this land through war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takaritora nehondo</td>
<td>We took it through war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mvura ikanaya chete</td>
<td>If only it may rain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gore rino tichazadza matura</td>
<td>This year we will have a bumper harvest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Tambaoga, 2001 *Rambai makashinga*)

The chorus *Rambai makashinga* / Remain resilient prods the Zimbabwean people to look inward for tenacity against a marauding economic menace; conditions precipitated by the European and American responses to the land reform move. However, one may see Tambaoga’s jingle and other micro-narrative jingles like “*Kuri kwedu majembere*
“aipururudza” (had it been in our home, the elderly would ululate) are contrived as little stories that are assembled to support and sanitize the land meta-narrative. This would explain why these jingles enjoyed unlimited airplay. Hove, (2012:75) observes that Zimbabweans could not access medication, school fees, electricity and transport fares to go to work. They had to be strong for a good cause; for land was the reason for the struggle (Mugabe, 2001). The song justifies the use of force in the reclamation of heritage hence war was used to return the land to the people (ivhu iri takaritora nehondo). The artiste like any farmer seems to bank on providential occurrence of rains for a good harvest, hence Mvura ikanaya chete gore rino tichazadza matura (If only it may rain this year we will have a bumper harvest). However, one may take it as tacit admission that the land is also dependant on other factors. This admission cushions the government from blame should the equation, land equals prosperity not balance.

Dickson Chingaira’s (2002) Hondo yeminda (The war of land repossession) is a historical narrative that attempts to put the land reform into a sympathetic perspective write Gonye and Moyo (2012). It christens the land reform as ‘war’ (hondo) in order to reflect on the need for total participation and instilling a sense of resilience to the resultant pain from the process of land reform:

**Hondo yeminda** (The war of land repossession)

1. *Iyo hondo yakura ndodiniko?*  The war is hot; what shall I do?
2. *Iyo hondo yatandavara*  The war has spread everywhere
3. *Hondo yakura muZimbabwe*  The war is hot in Zimbabwe
4. *Hondo yeminda...*  The war for land repossession
5. *Hondo yevanhu*  The popular war

*Panguva pananguva yanaMbuya Nehanda* During Mbuya Nehanda’s times

*Vanababa nanamai vairohwa*  Our fathers and mothers were beaten.

(Chingaira, 2002 *Hondo yeminda*)

The song was composed at the height of the land reform when the exercise was misconstrued and fiercely contested. The artiste thus opens his song with a rhetoric
question that shows intense desperation; *Iyo hondo yakura ndodiniko?* The war is hot; what shall I do? Indeed many suffered from sanctions induced economic problems as the opponents of the reform process teamed up to scheme sanctions as a way of discouraging the land revolution. But the land reform was irreversible. The ordinary person was caught in between biting economic conditions and the pressure to repossess their heritage. The question ‘Ndodiniko?’ graphically expresses the indecision to proceed with the revolution or not.

The use of the word ‘*hondo*’ (war) in place of ‘reform process,’ arguably, cushions players in the land reform from blame for using force to reclaim their heritage. It further justifies the suspension of rule of law or the use of unorthodox means to achieve one’s goal. It gives room to Machiavellian methods where the means justify the end. Wars are usually used as emergency routes to desired but opposed goals. To give legitimacy to the process of land reform, Dickson Chingaira refers to it as *hondo yevanhu* (a people’s war) to impress on its popularity and because it is a popular war; it should be a necessary war worth participating in.

In *Chikopokopo* (Helicopter), Dickson Chingaira (2013) justifies the repossession of land given the harsh methods that were used by the whites to frustrate liberation efforts and defend illgotten wealth.

*Chikopokopo* (Helicopter),

*Vavengi vanonyepa vachiti Zimbabwe yakanganisa* The enemies lie that Zimbabwe has transgressed

*Muvengei anonyepa achiti VaMugabe vakanganisa* The enemy lies that Comrade Mugabe has transgressed

*Kuva nenhaka kukanganisa here?* Is taking one’s heritage wrong?

*Kuva neminda kukanganisa?* Is taking one’s land wrong?

*Chaiti chouya chikopokopo* A helicopter would come

*Kutenderera kuseniseni* Hovering early in the morning
The whites used various methods to wrestle Africa’s heritage and retain it at all cost. They vigorously repelled black efforts at repossessing their wealth through the use of heavy artillery, military aircraft and even skewed legislation (Hill and Katerere (2002) to deprive Zimbabweans of their heritage. They have paddled accusations of human rights abuse allegedly to confuse the international community and justify economic assault on Zimbabwe. The use of force to take back what is rightfully yours, in light of the various methods used by the enemy to weaken the war of liberation, is under the circumstances justified. The artiste opens his song by dispelling a misposition (Vavengi vanonyepa vachiti Zimbabwe yakanganisa) that had been commonly used to justify economic sanctions and the negative publicity that characterised Zimbabwe’s projection at the height of the land reform. President Robert Mugabe was specified in the Zimbabwe Democracy Bill passed by the American government, ostensibly to chastise Zimbabwe for human rights abuses and a clique of other frivolous charges (Freeman, 2014). Chingaira sees the president as paying the price for returning land to its rightful owners in stead. President Mugabe has been blamed for sanctions induced economic problems (Muvenzi anonyepa achiti VaMugabe vakanganisa / The enemy lies that Comrade Mugabe has transgressed). Is it wrong to take back your land? Is it wrong to claim your heritage? These are legitimate questions to ask as one confronts spirited efforts to dodge restitution and paste blame on the ones the enemy has robbed.

Bryn Taurai Mteki (2004), in Mwana wevhu (son of the soil) justifies the refusal by government to buy back what rightfully belongs to its people. Land was commandeered from blacks without any compensation and when justice plays out, no one should cry foul. Mteki applauds the stubborn defiance by government not to compensate white farmers. He uses a venerated Shona dictum ‘nhaka haitengwi’ (inheritance can not be purchased) to justify compulsory acquisition of land.
Mwana wevhu (son of the soil)

Akaramba mwana wevhu The son of the soil refused
Nhaka yatateguru haitengwi Ancestral heritage can not be purchased

(Mteki 2004, Mwana wevhu)

The ancestors simply bequeath their heritage through lineality. There is no monetary exchange in it. Refusal to compensate as implied by the soloist conspires with the the grand narrative of compulsory land acquisition. To demonstrate the defiance to buy one’s heritage back, the artiste seals the soil as intricately related to the inheritor. The statement Akaramba mwana wevhu (the son of the soil refused) serves to register a bold declaration that ties the inheritor to the inheritance. The soil becomes the parent and the inheritor, the progeny. This creates an indestructible relationship of blood between the two. The song is a little voice that feeds into the main state narrative. Zimbabwe was released from the constraints of the Lancaster House Agreement by 1990, through the 1992 Land Acquisition Act sought to engender restorative justice on Zimbabwe land politics by redressing inequalities in land distribution (Coldham, 1993:82). The Act enabled compulsory acquisition without compensation. It was measure for measure. Counter-narratives of the land reform saw it as 'land invasion' to register their distaste of the programme as a total disregard of property rights or as appropriation of the land by 'incompetent people'. Some artistes have recorded some of these sentiments which can arguably be seen as counter-revolutionary. Thomas Mapfumo’s (2001) Marima Nzara (you have sown hunger) is an incisive ridicule of the land reform as a calamitous venture by the national leadership. The 'Chimurenga Rebel' castigates the land reform as akin to 'sowing hunger'. The musician aptly captures the current mood in the contemporary working class mind. The thinking that the land reform chased away competent white farmers, replacing them with inexperienced black farmers (Voice of America 2016) is common among many people. Mapfumo reflects:
Marima Nzara (you have sown hunger)

Kutaura muchinyanya  You are just good at talking
Baba mairasa  Father, you have missed it
Kudzinga vanorima  You have chased away those who can farm
Marima nzara  You have sown hunger
Urombo mahukoka  You have invited poverty
Nzara maikoka  You have invited hunger
Kudzinga vasevenzi  You have chased away workers

(Mapfumo 2001 Marima nzara)

Mapfumo alleges that the leadership is good at rhetoric but poor on delivery. To say Kutaura muchinyanya / You are just good at talking is to castigate the habit of empty talk and to remind that farming is not a talk show but a practical enterprise. The Chimurenga artiste sees the eviction of white farmers as a mistake (mairasa) by the state leadership whom he refers to as baba (father) to reflect that traditional role of making good decision for the family traditionally constituted in the father. The economic problems that confronted Zimbabwe have been interpreted in some quarters as emanating from the manner in which the land reform was done (Freeman, 2014) while some see them as originating from sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe over compulsory acquisition of land. Mapfumo attributes the unfortunate economic development to the vindictive and chaotic nature of the land reform. In a strange unAfrocentric voice (not expected from a Chimurenga icon) he mocks black empowerment initiatives as futile. For all their attempts at farming, they have achieved the opposite; that is, hunger, hence Marima nzara / You have sown hunger. In what can be read as Afro-pessimist mockery, black empowerment efforts are thus derided as impoverishment escapades as the artiste equates such moves to inviting hunger and poverty. Mapfumo accuses:

Urombo mahukoka  You have invited poverty
Nzara maikoka  You have invited hunger
Such a blanket mockery of the land reform mocks sincere efforts by new farmers to restore the bread basket status to the nation famed for agriculture prior to the 1990s and beyond economic crisis.

In *Maiti kurima hamubviri* (You thought you were experts at farming) Mapfumo (1993) scathingly mocks the land reform effort as an unwise ambitious venture. Farming requires implements and resources which the government does not have or fails to manage. The artiste seems to remind the ambitious government that embarking on the land demands resources not mere wishful thinking. The artiste mocks:

* Maiti kurima hamubviri* (You thought you were experts at farming)

* Maiti mombe hamushayi* You thought you would not lack draught power
* Muchiti gejo munaro* You said you had the plough
* Maiti kurima inyore* You thought farming was easy
* Maiti kurima hakunetsi* You thought farming was not difficult
* Maiti mombe hamushayi* You thought you would not lack draught power
* Muchiti gejo munaro* You said you had the plough

(Mapfumo 1993 *Maiti kurima hamubviri*)

The new farmer does not have draught power (*mombe*) or the plough (*gejo*) to till the land. The new farmer does not have materials probably because of years of denial of access to wealth (Vengesai, 2012) and to simply mock that they have nothing is in the opinion of this research unfair. The new African farmer probably needs resources more than mere scorn. The artiste employs acute Juvenalian satire to ridicule government lack of insight in taking land without thoroughly examining their preparedness and resource position. Mapfumo represents a significant portion of the Zimbabwean population that wished whites should have continued holding on to the land as implied by writers like Thorncroft and Laing (2015). This is unAfrican as the black artiste seems to run counter to the restoration agenda that the afrocentric fraternity is advocating. It flows counter to the *heru* principle of afrocentric thought which agitates for the “resurrection and
restoration of African people with confidence” (Gray, 2001:96). Mapfumo’s tone sounds mocking and dissuasive. It is counter-revolutionary. He uses energy-sapping references of lack in a way that leaves the farmer dispossessed of the willpower to farm. The afrocentric discourse encourages agency. The artiste discourages black initiatives at farming by mocking such efforts as futile.

However, hermeneutically, one may see it as a devil’s advocate provoking the revolutionary government to stare the realities of the revolution in the face. The artiste also lampoons the rhetoric associated with the land reform. This is a reality check. Before embarking on the revolution one should have found out what one had. It seems the soloist is arguing that those who took over farming possess not the critical wherewithal for farming. But Marxists acknowledge that reclamation of pride, dignity and possession may require the bravado of Machiavellian politics where the end justifies the means.

Hosea Chipanga’s (2004) *Ivhu redu nderipi?* (Which one is our loil/land?) sees the land reform and the liberation struggle as having failed to bring back the land to the people and asks *Ivhu ratakatora nderipiko?* where is the land we took? The land was taken but people are struggling to get decent accommodation and the same land that was taken is now being commercialised.

*Ivhu Redu Nderipi?* (Which one is our Soil/land?)

*Ivhu ratakatora nderipiko?* Where is the land we took?
*Ivhu ratakafira nderipiko?* Where is the land we died for?
*Nhai Mbuya Nehanda, Sekuru Kaguvi...*Hey Grandmother Nehanda and Grandfather Kaguvi

*Kuroja kudai kushaya pokugara* Lodging and failing to get accommodation
*Kunzi ndiri sikwata munyika yababa* To be a squatter in your father’s land
*Ivhu mudhorobha rinitengeswa* Land is sold in towns
*Nhai chimbwido newe komuredhi* Hey you chimbwido and comrade
*Ramakatora nderipiko?* Where is the land you took?
The rhetorical inquiry; *Ivhu ratakatora nderipiko?* (Where is the land we took?) sums up the artiste’s condemnation of the land reform as an exercise fraught with futility. The question is directed at the heroes of the First Chimurenga 1896-7 (Nehanda and Kaguvi), Second Chimurenga 1960s-1979 (Ziyapapa and Nkomo) and probably to convey a sense of betrayal of a long struggle. The artiste mocks the idea of being labeled a squatter (*kunzi ndiri sikwata]*) to be called a squatter) on your own land and the whole irony of failing to secure dwelling space when land is now in the hands of blacks. If some people are celebrating the success of the revolution, the artiste asks, show us the results; *ivhu ramakatora nderipiko?* Urban residential stands are beyond the reach of many. One hopes Chipanga is not suggesting assigning a zero price tag to urban land as this would mean the same land suffers the tragedy of the commons. The artiste is probably protesting prohibitive prices of urban space, otherwise “freely acquired” (*ramakatora*). The land question is a site of grand debates as artistes and historians in general are not agreed on the efficacy and justifiability of the programme. There are micro-narratives that mock the programme and quite a number that feed into the meta-narrative of the revolutionary government.

5.2.6 Corruption

As the socialist and communist ideologies, long dreamt in the war, proved less userfriendly for the new government; the people’s craving for public resources increased. This became the genesis of what became a topical dialectic in postcolonial Zimbabwe; corruption. A number of artistes have grabbed the bull by the horns to articulate issues most people thought were unsayable within the Zimbabwean legal and political terrain.

Thomas Mapfumo’s *Nothing for Nothing/Corruption*, released in 1989 condemns the practice of corruption that has quickly engulfed the new nation. Corruption is
ubiquitous and the artiste adds voice to the debate that has occupied agenda status in most postcolonial African states. He sings:

Nothing for Nothing/Corruption

Life is so hard these days my friend
You can’t get something if you can’t give away
In the streets there is corruption
Everywhere there is corruption
Some of us are corrupt
Something for something
Nothing for nothing
Corruption corruption
Corruption in the society
You can’t get away with corruption
Watch out my friend, they gonna get you
You can’t run away from justice
I work so hard to make a living
Everyday for a little
Everyday like a slave for my family

(Mapfumo 1989 Nothing for Nothing/Corruption)

Hardly ten years down independence lane, life has become so unbearable (Life is so hard these days) that it has pushed people to devious devices for a living. They have seen corruption as an escape route from the biting economic realities. In order for anyone to get something; they have to release something, hence:

Something for something…
Nothing for nothing

The ogre of corruption is ubiquitous (Everywhere there is corruption). It is spreading like a cancerous wound. Furthermore, what seems to bother the artiste is a system that
rewards the wayward underhand dealers while emaciating those earnestly working for their families. Thus he says:

I work so hard to make a living
Everyday for a little
Everyday like a slave for my family

They reap so little from investing their time and strength. Reward is inferior to invested effort. On one hand, the big fish, a term applied to the rich and the uncouth political leaders; seem not to care for those struggling. Vambe, (2004:178) observes that “Mapfumo realized that the material interests of the masses and their leaders were diverging, and a rift was widening between the aspirations of the povo and the chefs.” The first high profile case of corruption was the Willowvale scandal (1988) in which some greed government ministers betrayed the code of conduct to abuse privileges to access special vehicles from Willowvale Mazda Motor industry which they later on sold to third parties at a profit. This ‘easy life’ contrasts sharply with the ordinary worker who works “like a slave” for their family. A slave works not for his/her profit but for his/her soul. The revelations provoked a lot of trepidation in a nation that was treading on the path of socialism in whose dream laid an egalitarian society.

Excited by the same scandal, Solomon Skuza (1988) in *Love and Scandals* castigates the practice of abuse of privilege by the government ministers. He asks:

*Love and Scandals*

How can someone buy a car and sell it again?
Everybody wants to know!
Even the *povo* wants to know!"

(Skuza 1988 *Love and Scandals*)
For Solomon Skuza, it is unthinkable for someone (and the ‘someone’ is known) to buy and resell a car. The rhetorical enquiry, How can someone buy a car and sell it again? sums up the artiste’s perplexment. He sees it as normal for the people to want to know (Even the povo wants to know). The ordinary person on the street wants that question answered. The leadership owe people a response. In Marxist discourse, the leader is accountable to his people and since the people would have placed their trust in them, the people have a right to interrogate them (Everybody wants to know!). By exposing the corruption, the artiste is not the opponent of the government; rather he is co-fighter with the same. He is Gondo’s (2011) and p'Bitek’s (1986) artiste soldier who fights for his people through the artillery of art.

The dismissal and shaming of the culprits in the Willovale scandal was a positive signal everyone hoped would set precedence for future cases. Mapfumo (1989), in Corruption, was subsequently disillusioned to think that no one would get away with the crime of corruption. He thus naively believes:

You can't get away with corruption
Watch out my friend, they gonna get you
You can't run away from justice.

The statement, You can’t run away from justice inspires people’s confidence in the third arm of the state, the judiciary and subsequently the state. People may engage in corrupt practices but the artiste reminds that (Watch out my friend, they gonna get you) the long arm of justice will catch up with them. At that moment the artiste and the nation believe so deeply in the inviolability of the judiciary yet in the immediate future the system would sag in to corruption.

In a song apparently meant for the president’s attention, Tambaoga’s Huori (Corruption) produced at the height of the decade of crisis in 2008 reminds the obvious problems that have been nagging the nation since the closing stages of the first decade of independence. However this time the problem had attained critical mass status to merit
a crisis tag. Corruption has been visible as early as the late 1980s but by the 2000s had become fully institutionalised.

Huori (Corruption)

Ngana naNgana vari kuita hurowori So and So are practising corruption
Atora chake ari kuisa muhombodo Who takes their own puts it in their pocket
Ndiko kunonzi kuondonga nyika nokuita huori This is destroying the country through stealing
Kutsiura vanaNgana havanzwi Even to advise then, they do not listen
Zvinoka nguva yakwana yokuti Now is the time
VanaNgana tivavharirire mutirongo To imprison them
Mamwe mapurisa ari kuita huori Some police details are corrupt
Asunga wake ari kuisa muhombodo The are arresting officers are bribed
Mamwe mashefu edu ari kuita huori... Some of our bosses are practising

Corruption

Vamwe vafundisi vave kuita hupombwe Some pastors are adulterous
Wavateurira wose vari kuisa muhombodo Everyone they pray for pays
Kutukisa Mwari nokuita hupombwe They put the name of God to shame because of adultery.
Kutsiura havanzwi They do not listen when they are reprimanded
Zvino yakwana nguva yokuti muvavharaire mugehena It is now time to lock them in hell.

(Tambaoga, 2008 Huori)

The artiste raises issues of stealing (Atora chake ari kuisa muhombodo / Who takes their own puts it in their pocket) from the work place where policemen ‘dribble’ justice through bribes and personal enrichment through diverting state dues (Asunga wake ari kuisa muhombodo The arresting officer is bribed). What is even worrying for the nation, the law enforcement agents have been implicated as engaging in corruption when they should be the people controlling it. The artiste suggests that it is high time that offenders be incarcerated;

Zvinoka nguva yakwana yokuti Now is the time
However, Tambaoga seems to forget that the very authority that is officially assigned to enforce the law is complicit in its trespassing. Traffic police officers and the force in general have been censured for defeating the course of justice through bribes. Corruption is very high in the churches, where the moralists have succumbed to their own hamartia. Adultery cases have dominated church news. Tambaoga is correct to lampoon these despicable acts by men and women of the cloth. He parades their vices to people:

- *Vamwe vafundisi vave kuita hupombwe* Some pastors are adulterous
- *Wavateurira wose vari kuisa muhombodo* Everyone they pray for pays

Their cases have inundated local courts on various allegations such as theft of parish money, infidelity and other cases. The 2013 legal year has been littered with Pastor Robert Gumbura cases of rape and infidelity, with the accused eventually being sent to jail (Nehanda Radio, The Herald, Daily News and the Newsday have extensively covered the Martin Gumbura Rape Court Proceedings). Tambaoga sees these acts as tarnishing God’s image. Because they do not heed to warnings; the only option is to send them to jail (*gehena*). He recommends an earthly penal institution which is an approximate equivalence of hell. They do not have to wait for Armageddon to seal their fate but to languish in earthly prisons.

### 5.2.7 Political violence

Zimbabwean music from independence to the closing chapter of the 1980s had been supportive of the government totalising script whether out of fear or pure respect. As patience waned due to declining conditions of living, intolerance soared against dissenting voices and so rose voices against violence. This created a tense atmosphere in which people from different political parties took it upon themselves to violently engage one another in duel for control of political and economic space.
Mapfumo’s (1993) *Hondo* (war) is an unambiguous message against politically motivated killing where the innocent poor die as the political bourgeoisie goes scot-free.

**Hondo** (war)

*Hondo isu takairamba kare*  
We have rejected war long back

*Kunofa varombo hona vapfumi vachisara*  
Only the poor die while the rich live

*Kunofa vasina hona vanazvo vachisara*  
Only the poor will die while those who have are left

*Tafirenyika hona wafira chigaro*  
Behold Tafirenyika has died for the post

(Mapfumo 1993, Hondo)

It has become endemic in the Zimbabwean political landscape for the ordinary party supporters to be sacrificed in the struggle for political power. Dambudzo Marechera’s (1984:107) *Oracle of the Povo* caricatures the poverty and frustration that stalks the ordinary person from the liberation through to independence. The proverbial expression *kwakatsva matemo mipini ichisara* (the axe burnt while the axe handle survived) underscores the severity of war effects on people.

Many people died during the liberation struggle and there is no need for further bloodshed in the postcolonial era. The artiste then says *hondo isu takairamba kare* / We have rejected war long back to register his abhorance for internal strife, civil war, violence and probably anything that seems to destabilise the war earned peace. The artiste seems suggest that war targets the already vulnerable. The poor (*varombo/vasina*) or defenceless masses are sacrificed during the war. The ‘scum of the earth’ have throughout history been the food for gunpowder. From Europe (World War 1 and 2), Iraq (1981-7, 1991 and present day non-international armed conflicts to post-exilic Israel-Palestinian conflicts, the ordinary people have been victims of armed conflict (Report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, 2015). It is the artiste’s submission that people are killed as a result of power struggles *Tafirenyika hona wafira chigaro* / Behold Tafirenyika has died for the post. Those who are in power want to maintain the status quo at all cost, while those who want to get in desperately attempt to arrogate it. This usually results in violence.
Mtukudzi (2001) in Hatidi Hondo (We do not want War) punches on the same anti-violence sentiments. Composed at a time when MDC and ZANU PF were involved in ugly scenes of interparty violence, the song is a solemn request that the war path be avoided at all cost hence the refrain; hondo hatidi. He condemns war as an option to resolution of conflict. Bellicosity is not a solution to conflicts.

Hatidi Hondo (We do not want War)

Ngoromera ingoromera Black fighting magic, oh black magic
Harina zvarinoshanda It will not serve anything
Zuva nezuva haritongi matare ngoromera It will not decide cases daily
Harina zvarinoshanda It is useless
Haringabatsire It is helpless
Zuva nezuva hachitongi matare chibhakera A fist does not preside of courts
Hachina zvachinoshanda It is useless
Hachingabatsire It will not help
Zuva nezuva haritongi matare gonamombe Extreme authority cannot decide cases
Harina zvarinoshanda It is useless

(Mtukudzi 2001 Hatidi Hondo)

People should engage each other and talk their differences away as a way of solving conflicts on a daily basis. Ngoromera in Shona belief system is a muti (charm) that not only enhances one’s ability to fight but which makes one more and more pugnacious. The Shona people believe in peaceful conflict resolution hence ngoromera harina zvaringashande/It will not serve anything. They do not believe in fighting to determine cases. In Shona there is a distinction between solving matters through corporal means and through dialogue. The fist (chibhakera) will not settle a conflict.

The veiled protest mainly comes from secular artistes who package their distaste of violence in a non-confronational manner where the artiste does not point the finger at
the culprit but condemns their act. Artistes who employ such strategies come in the ilk of Thomas Mapfumo and Leonard Zhakata whose lyrics are polysemantic. However, a hermeneutic reading of their music allows such interpretation of the works as protesting political violence. Hermeneutics as an interpretive method dispenses with the concept of objectivity andforegrounds the situated location of our subjectivity. The meaning assigned veiled political protest is drawn from the researcher’s location within the contemporary political situation in which the music is produced. Polysemy cushions the artiste from censorship as they cannot be perceived to be anti-government.

Thomas Mapfumo’s (1991) *Jojo* (George) is a warning to those who may dare enter into politics that it is a dangerous hard hat zone.

*Jojo* (George)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zviri</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Nyaya dzenyika Jojo chenjera</em></td>
<td>Jojo beware of political issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ndakuyambira Jojo chenjera</em></td>
<td>I advise you Jojo beware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Siya zvenyika jojo unozofa</em></td>
<td>Leave politics, you will die</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Haiwawa Jojo...</em></td>
<td>No no, Jojo...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Unozofa...</em></td>
<td>You will die</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Kufire nyika...</em></td>
<td>You will die because of politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Jojo unoroiwa</em></td>
<td>Jojo you will be bewitched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mwana wenyu waenda musingafungire</em></td>
<td>Your child has just died unexpectedly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Zvenyika wapondwa musingafungire...</em></td>
<td>Zvenyika has been killed unexpectedly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ndakamboukuudza siya zvenyika...</em></td>
<td>I once told you to leave politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Vazhinji vakaenda pamusoro penyika</em></td>
<td>Many died because of politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Vakafunda vakapondwa pamusoro penyika</em></td>
<td>The learned have been killed because of politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mhuri dzakatsakatika pamusoro penyika</em></td>
<td>Many families have died because of politics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Mapfumo, 1991 *Jojo*)

As early as in 1991 when this song was released there already were signs of politically motivated deaths in Zimbabwe (Onslow 2011). The song is then a cautionary note on the dangers of entering politics in Zimbabwe. The words *chenjera* / beware and
ndakuyambira/ I have warned you are words of solemn warning which should be adhered to. The Shona believe in warning before calamity strikes. The artiste has clearly marked politics a danger zone infested with life sucking menaces. He uses a variety of terms to refer to politically motivated killings; unozofa-kufa (die), vakapondwa- kuponda (murdering), vakatsakatika- kutsakatika (disappear) and vakaenda- kuenda (going). These terms impress on the various ways violence lets out life for others are gruesomely murdered, beaten to death or dissolved (in sulphuric acid) or simply disappear.

Political violence takes many lives and the learned have not been spared (Vakafunda vakapondwa pamusoro penyika The learned have been killed because of politics). The artiste seems to be basing his warnings on the liberation struggle where many people lost their lives or simply on what is obtaining in the postcolonial period. Already the Matabeleland Massacres had shown that politics was not a mere promenade. Intermittent cases of political violence in the early 1990s prove the artiste as credible witness of his milieu. Amuta (1989), a Marxist critic, approves that artists, as mediating subjects compose their works within their society’s milieux. Mapfumo seems to appropriate Chidi Amuta’s version of a context bound artiste in his timely reflective political protest song, Jojo. Mapfumo’s Jojo comes barely ten years after independence when tendencies of intolerance to dissenting voices were noted particularly when new opposition parties like the short-lived Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) participated in the 1990 elections. Nyakunu (2005:8) alleges that;

His song Jojo was banned outright from the airwaves because it was deemed to be sympathetic to the opposition Zimbabwe Unity Movement and it spoke to an attempted assassination attempt on a ZUM prominent personality indirectly.

Restricting the reference to one incident would be tantamount to limiting the song’s potential to speak to all similar cases. What is instantly recognizable is the artiste’s caution to entry into politics. The admonition is that people should avoid endangering themselves through entry into politics.
Although the revolutionary artiste records the culture of politically motivated killings and violence in postcolonial Zimbabwe, he seems to discourage entry into politics as a solution when it should be, from a Marxist perspective, a way of pursuing one’s freedom (Siya zvenyika Jojo unozofa/ Leave politics, you will die). The Marxist orientation encourages fighting for one’s freedom for art is a weapon of war (Gondo, 2011 and Ngugi 1996). For the Marxist, the slave has nothing to lose in a political contest except their chains. The song in that regard can be seen as discouraging fighting the dominant class. If people abstain from fighting for their freedom then the status quo is at best not challenged but sustained. Mapfumo may however, be speaking for that publicly held view of politics in Zimbabwe as a dangerous game (Kagwanja, 2005). Furthermore, exploiting hermeneutic ambiguity, one may be privileged to see the artiste as alerting caution to entry into politics. The word chenjera may serve to remind those fighting the system of the need to be vigilant and aware of the huddles that lurk in their way. It forearms them for the contest.

Leonard Zhakata’s (2005) Bhora rembabvu (A physical match) from his banned album Hodho (Short gun) on ZBC (Munyaradzi Hwengwere however vehemently denied it was ZBC policy to restrict any music, Zhakata (2005) is a classic veiled anti-violence protest song allegedly constricted for being politically incorrect. A political song disguised as a love song carries political nuances. The artiste takes love as a contested terrain where one needs to be strong since there are some who may also be after the lady/man. The artiste reduces the contest to a physical game (bhora rembabvu). Mbabvu (ribs) in Shona symbolises stamina and if a team is playing a physical game; they are playing bhora rembabvu.

**Bhora rembabvu (A physical match)**

*Nyaya yerudo rinotove bhora rembabvu* The issue of love is like a physical game

*Yambiro imwe yandinokupa zvangu* This is the advice I will give you

*Nyaya yehushefu rinotove bhora rembabvu* The issue of leadership is like a physical game

*Rega kurivara uchiti ndave makonya* Do not relax and consider yourself a boss

*Uyo ari kure anoda kuswedera padyo* The one who is far away needs to come nearer
(Zhakata, 2005 *Bhora rembabvu*)

The song did not appear apparently political as it seemed to discourse daily social issues remotely linked to politics but the public broadcaster allegedly assumed its mandate of ensuring that materials deemed politically offensive are not allowed on air.

Tongai Moyo’s (2008) *Kukanda nekuvhika* (reportedly banned on state media (Fawn. 2009) exploits the love ambiguity as a front to convey the subject of politically motivated violence but in this case urges reconciliation after violence. The song also warns those in power that they are not in power for ever; *Mangwana zvinhu zvinosanduka wani / Tomorrow things will change*  

*Kukanda nekuvhika* (Striking and blocking)

- *Shamwari mukutamba tose umu*  
  My friend in our playing together
- *Tombosvika mukuburana*  
  We may cross paths
- *Undiregere tisvike pakunzwisisana*  
  Please forgive me so that we come to an Understanding
- *Mudiwa mukudanana umu*  
  Beloved in our love affair
- *Tinombosvika mukukavana*  
  We may disagree
- *Shamwari mukutonga nyika iyi...*  
  My friend in ruling this country...
- *Tosvitsana kumatalks*  
  It will take us to ‘Talks’

(Moyo, 2008 *Kukanda nekuvhika*)

The artiste, like Zhakata, uses a love theme to probably sandwich a political message where a political rival is presented as a lover who apparently is trying to reconnect after some misunderstandings. The use of love songs with oblique references to political violence is probably meant to confuse the censorship chip. The comflouging plot employed by the artiste may have been sensed by the censor resulting in the song’s alleged unfortunate asphyxiation.
MDC artiste by the pseudonym Dread Reckless (2011) (disguised for fear of victimisation by state agents as one MDC supporter selling his CD, in an impromptu interview in the street, intimated) uses Maronda (Wounds) to reflect physical injuries as well as psychological scars stemming from political violence. Reckless sees violence as inflicting pain and injury on the victim. It emerges from the song that people lose lives and property through political violence.

*Maronda* (Wounds)

Veduweka ndine maronda Dear I have wounds,
Mwari wangu ndine maronda My God I have wounds
Musoro wangu une maronda My head has wounds
Musana wangu une maronda My back has wounds
Muviri wangu une maronda My body has wounds
Mwoyo wangu une maronda My heart has scars
Ndakarohwa ndine maronda I was beaten and I have wounds
Inga nyika ino ine maronda By the way, this nation has scars
Nyika ino inoda kurapwa This nation needs healing
Misha yedu yakaparara Our homes were destroyed
Mombe dzangu dzakaparara Our cattle disappeared
Upfumi hwangu hwakaparara My wealth is gone

(Reckless 2011 *Maronda*)

Recklers narrates the ordeals of political violence in post independence Zimbabwe. He takes the occasion of music to chronicle the physical scars of violence. Violence has maimed people. They have scars on their back (*musana*), head (*musoro*); in fact the whole body (*muvin* ) is scarred. Physical violence has had a residual effect on the victim’s psyche (*Mwoyo wangu une maronda* / My heart has scars) and they are trying to come to terms with the eventuality. Property (*upfumi, mombe, misha*) was either destroyed or confiscated in politically motivated violence. The overall message is that since every
one has scars from political violence then the whole country has scars too and is in dire need of psychological restoration hence nyika ino inoda kurapwa. The nation needs healing just as happened in post apartheid South Africa. Victims of human rights violations were invited to give experiential testimonies of apartheid. Like a nation that has been ravaged by war, the country needs healing.

Paul Madzore’s (2008) Mupata (The valley of Jericho) takes contesting ZANU PF as wading in a danger-infested terrain because of political violence that the party has been associated with. The song reads:

_Mupata (The valley of Jericho)_

_Vanamai muri kufamba nepamupata weJericho_ Mothers, you are walking through the valley of Jericho  

_Baba musimbiswe murege kudzokera sure_... Oh may you be strengthened that you do not get discouraged

_Tsvangirai ari kufamba nepamupata weJericho_ Tsvangirai, you are walking through the valley of Jericho  

_Baba musimbiswe murege kudzokera sure_ Oh may you be strengthened that you do not get discouraged

(Madzore 2008 _Mupata_)

He uses the Biblical valley of Jericho trope to portray how lethal it is to get in a political duel with ZANU PF. The valley of the Shadow of death (Psalms 23) is associated with the narrow and steep road as one walks from Jericho to Jerusalem. It is here where a man was attacked by thugs as he moved from Jerusalem to Jericho (Luke 10vs25-37). The valley was considered danger infested. In the Zimbabwean context participating in political contests is as dangerous a wading through the biblical valley of Jericho (_kufamba nepamupata weJericho_) because people are being murdered for political differences. Even the opposition leadership of Tsvangirai has not been spared by politically motivated violence, hence, _Tsvangirai ari kufamba nepamupata weJericho_ (Tsvangirai, you are walking through
the valley of Jericho). It seems there is a very thin democratic space for opposition political parties to operate in the postcolony. The artiste asks for resoluteness in the struggle and urges those those wading through the dangerous path never to give up (murege kudzokera shure). The artiste’s use of biblical references seems to portray the opposition as holy front and the ruling party as the axis of evil. Such imaging has the power to appeal to the spiritual dimensions of the masses thereby pushing them to put their lives on the block to fight the forces of darkness head on.

It seems from the MDC’s perspective the culture of politically motivated violence is endemic in ZANU PF. They seem to be alleging that the culture has a long history here and is used internally to get rid of undesirable elements from the party. Dread Reckless’s (2011) Zvandaona (what I have seen), in no holds barred fashion literally equates ZANU PF to a party of witches as it has come to be associated with murder.

Zvandaona (What I have seen)

Musatamba neni vakomana Don’t joke with me
Maekisidhendi ndinoita okuruka I craft accidents
Bvunzai Tongogara, Manyika, Mahachi kana Boarder Gezi Ask Tongogara, Manyika, Mahachi And Boarder Gezi
Ini chinanzvaropa Me the blood licker
Mukataita zvokutamba neni If you want to play fun with me
Ndinokugadzirira sikisi fiti dhipi zvesaizi yako... I will consign you to the grave- six feet deep
Varoyi veZANU The witches of ZANU
Kumwe kusanyara vakomana How shameless some people are
Varoyi veZANU The witches of ZANU
Varoyi veZANU vakomana The witches of ZANU gentlemen
Nezvidhoma zvavo... And their ghosts
Kamwe karume vakomana The other one is male
Kane ndebvu pano pamhuno And has a beard below the nostrils
Kakaruma bhonzo... He is abiting a bone
Within Shona and Zimbabwean culture in general, a witch (*muroyi* pl. *varoyi*) is the most abhorred person as they are associated with life-deleting practices. The opening statement (*Musatamba neni vakomana / Don't joke with me*) in the song is the most feared statement from a witch as it is just as lethal as a bullet. Once a witch issues such a warning shot, one ought to watch their step henceforth. The party is then read as a cruel and heartless lot which will not hesitate to spill blood (*chinanzvaropa*). As the song unfolds, what follows is a resume of an alleged ZANU PF’s ‘curriculum vitae’ of murder as captured in the statement “Bvunzai Tongogara, Manyika, Mahachi kana Boarder Gezi” all of whom allegedly were murdered through schemed accidents. The persona brags about his/her ability to eliminate through planned accidents. Public opinion generated from pro-opposition newspapers in Zimbabwe such as *The Daily News*, *Newsday*, *The Standard*, *The Zimbabwean* and a host of oneline publications like *Nehanda Radio* seems to suggest that ZANU PF has been scheming mysterious accidents as a way of eliminating potential enemies from within.

The artiste refrains from pointing out openly who the alleged culprit behind these schemes is but his description (*Kane ndebvu pano pamhuno And has a beard below the nostrils*) approximates the leader of the party, Robert Mugabe. The trademark beard below the nostrils mentioned in the song is associated with the visual rendering of Robert Mugabe. Although counter-narratives are normally fearless and open, Reckless’s choice not name the culprit is motivated by lack of explicit evidence nailing either Mugabe or his party to the alleged murders. It is simply alleged that most of these accidents revolve
around victims trespassing the man’s fine political and personal boundaries. The accidents could also be linked to intra-party differences.

The analogization of ZANU Pf to witches (Varoyi veZANU / The witches of ZANU) and their ghosts (Nezvidhoma zvavo / And their ghosts) is meant to portray the party as an axis of evil, an image that corroborates its opponents’ perception of the extremism of its brutality. In a polarised nation like during the 2000-8 period such labels portray the intensity of hatred that coloured the political space. The nasty muroyi image probably is employed to whip people’s emotions against the ruling party. The language of hate extended to the MDC formations which were gratuitously labelled zvimbwatsungata, alleging that they were like dogs that wagged at their foreign handlers’ instruction.

According to Gramsci (2003:12) coercive force is one of the hegemonic tactics of securing direct domination. Hegemony operates through the social institutions of civil society like the arts and counter-hegemony operates through the same. Musical space has been appropriated as an instrument to challenge hegemony but such counter-hegemony appears to be mere facile rhetoric which has not produced any tangible changes on the political platform.

5.2.8 Political polarisation

Never have party politics been as intense in steering the course of the nation in the postcolonial period as during the Third Chimurenga era. The era was characterised by extreme emotions that divided the country into two conflicting camps; those for the ruling party and those against it. As emotions swelled, so did the mood of discourse between the parties. The stage was set for explicit expression as seen in the music that characterise the era. Political parties evolved their own music which unlike ordinary music gravitated towards open verbal rants.

Paul Madzore, an MDC Member of Parliament (then) turned musician, in unremitting viciousness, found occasion to deride the leadership of Zimbabwe. He composed critical diatribes against the person of Robert Mugabe and some of his political leaders over alleged dictatorial tendencies. Madzore’s (2008) Mhenyamauro is an invective
against Robert Mugabe (*Bhobho* for Bob), seen as an archetypal modern African dictator by the opposition. In a militant and slogan-ladden piece, Madzore rants:

*Mhenyamauro / evening lightning*

Chinja! Change
Maitire The way to do things
Chihurumende chembavha This government of thieves
Bvisa Remove
Chihurumende chehuori...chemhondi...This government of corrupt and murderous people
*Mhenyamauro waiona* You will see it Mhenyamauro
*lye iye mhenyamauro waiona* Yeh yeh you will see it Mhenyamauro
Afrika wakaita sei unozvara zvakadai? What is wrong with you Africa you bear such nuisance?
Aiveko Amin, akaveko Abacha, ndokuveko Mobutu There was, Amini, then Abacha, then Mobutu
Zimbabwe ndimi masara Zimbabwe you are the only one left
Vaitongwa nedemo paMalawi... They were ruled by an iron fist in Malawi
*Liberia Charlie akadzingirirwa nevanhu vakange vatsamwa*...In Liberia Charlie (Taylor) was
Chased away by angry people
Akatizira Nigeria asi hazvina kubatsira... He tried to seek refuge in Nigeria but it was invain
Takati tinoda mutungamiriri asi nhasi wave kutitonga We said want a leader but today you rule us
Chero ukafa nhasi neguva rako tichatonga Even if you die today we will judge even your grave
Vadzvanyiriri vemuAfrica ibvai apa Get away you dictators of Africa
Sekuru Gabhu chibvai nokuti vanhu havachadi Uncle Gabriel please resign
*Iwe Bhobho chibva* Bob please resign

(Madzore 2008 *Mhenyamauro*)

*Mhenyamauro* is a Shona word for a calamitous evening lightning which strikes and leaves a trail of disaster. It can also be extended to the red MDC regalia, particularly their famous red card which symbolises rejection and expulsion of unpopular regimes
(Baller, Mierscher, and Rassool, 2013). The red card trope is derived from the discipline of soccer where a player who crudely fouls another is expelled from the match for unsporting conduct. Similarly those governments who subvert the will of the people should be removed from power. The red card or Mhenyamauro coupled with the slogan Chinja Maitiro (change your behaviour) symbolises MDC’s mission and resolve in Zimbabwean politics; the desire to jettison ZANU PF from power. The song starts with a counter-hegemonic slogan that demands change and removal of government which apparently has been the sworn mission of the Madzore’s party; to unseat the government of Robert Mugabe (Bob) which the artiste regards as a government of thieves (Chihurumende chembavha), a government of corruption (Chihurumende chehuori) and a murderous one too (chemhondi).

The artiste places Robert Mugabe (popularly known as Bob) (Bhopho) among the ranks of unpopular dictators of Africa; in the breed of Idi Amini (Uganda), Sani Abacha (Nigeria) and Mobutu Sese Seko (Zaire, now Democratic Republic of Congo). Madzore alleges that dictatorship is endemic to Africa (Afrika wakaita sei unozvara zvaka-dai? What’s wrong with you Africa you bear such nuisance) as shown by other examples of alleged dictators. These unpopular leaders faced the wrath of their people and were summarily dislodged. These cases are presented presumably as a reminder to the government of Robert Gabriel Mugabe in Zimbabwe that the same fate awaits it, hence Zimbabwe ndimi masara (Zimbabwe you are the one left). Madzore suggests that the prescription for all unpopular regimes is ‘caesarean’. If the nation cannot be delivered from the dictator through conventional methods (by way if a plebiscite) then it should be through a coup or mass action (caesar). That is the only way to reclaim power. Mhenyamauro comes after three successive futile attempts by the MDC to seize power from ZANU in the 2002, 2005, and 2008 presidential and parliamentary elections. The elections became a site of intense contestation (Matlosa 2002). In all cases there was a deafening outcry from the opposition that the elections were rigged in favour of the ruling party.

The artiste makes a distinction between leadership and ‘rulership’. The Zimbabwean people’s sovereign call for a leader is underscored in the statement,
There is an acute semantic distinction between these two often confused words that capture diverse styles of governance. Leadership (*kutungamirira*) is more to do with inspiring and influencing people towards a shared destination whereas ruling (*kutonga*) is more to do with driving people to a personal destination. Folarin (2010:6-7) reflects on the two:

Leadership without a vision is actually not leadership but rulership. Vision means focus…The African ruler, unfortunately, is there either by inheritance because he is the heir, or by default through military coup or its civilian version, namely election rigging…

The artiste’s juxtaposition of leadership (*kutungamirira*) and rulership (*kutonga*) in one breadth is meant to show Mugabe’s departure from the popularly preferred mode of governance; in this case people centred management. In contrasting tone, the ZANU PF choir, Mbare Chimurenga Choir’s (2011) *Nyatsoteerera unzwe kutonga* (Listen carefully and recognize good rulership) celebrate *kutonga kwaBhobho* (the rulership of Bob (pet name for Robert Mugabe)). The choral song refrains:

*Nyatsoteerera unzwe kutonga* (Listen carefully and recognise good rulership)

*Nyatsoteerera unzwe kutonga*  Listen carefully and recognise good rulership
*Nyatsoteerera unzwe kutonga*  Listen carefully and recognise good rulership
*Haaa muofisi muna Bhobho!*  In office is Bob.

(Mbare Chimurenga Choir, 2011 *Nyatsoteerera unzwe kutonga*)

The song is a hegemonic narrative that fetes the rulership of Mugabe. The use of the pet name Bob is meant to reflect affection for the leader and his style of government.
The song comes amidst calls by the MDC’s for the ZANU PF leader to leave office since, they allege he has failed to steer the nation to success.

Equally contested is the legitimacy of the leader as seen in Paul Madzore’s (2008) *Famba Tsvangirai* (Move on Tsvangirai). The artiste believes that the elections are rigged as the Registry (kwaMudede) connives with the ruling party.

*Famba Tsvangirai* (Move on Tsvangirai).

*Vagoni zvenyu makangwara* You the clever ones
*Ivhu munopana pamadiro* You give each other land at will
*Mavhoti motenga kwaMudede* You buy the votes from registry
*Makwikwi mopinda makakunda* You enter into elections have won already
*Kukama mukaka wakakora kare* Milking prepared milk (sour milk)
*Inyaya inodzimba vakuruwe* Is a disturbing issue

(Madzore 2008 *Famba Tsvangirai*)

The Zimbabwean registry is jestingly referred to as *kwaMudede* (at Mudede), presumably to reflect Registrar General Mudede’s overstay in the office. He, like Mugabe, assumed office in 1980 and has been accused of falsifying voting records to ensure President Mugabe remains in power. The use of the possessive prefix /kwa-/ suggest Mudede now owns the registry. If he owns the institution, it now means he can do whatever he likes with the institution. It is generally alleged that the ruling party rigs elections through the manipulation of the voters’ roll that by the time elections are conducted the ruling party would have won already. This, to Madzore, is reminiscent of milking prepared milk (*kukama mukaka wakakora*). It is akin to betting a delayed match whose results are already known. By the time elections are conducted, the ruling party would have won (*makwikwi mopinda makakunda*) already as it is connected to registry.

The MDC sees the presidency as centre of conflict since his election has been fraudulently decided, while ZANU PF sees him as the choice of the people and no one
should contest when the people have spoken. Tamabaoga’s *Mutungamiriri weZimbabwe ndiBob* (The leader of Zimbabwe is Bob) sees the Robert Mugabe as the leader nevermind the process that brought him into power.

*Mutungamiriri weZimbabwe ndiBob* (The leader of Zimbabwe is Bob)

*Patakavhota takasainirana agirimende...* When we voted we signed an agreement

*Kuti mutungamiri weZimbabwe ndiGabhuriyeri...* That the president of Zimbabwe is Gabriel

*Saka musatinetse, musatishupe MaBhuritishi* So please do not bother us you the British

(Tambaoga 2002 *Mutungamiriri weZimbabwe ndiBob*)

Tamabaoga, in ‘Agreement’, certifies the retention of Mugabe as president as tacit confirmation by the electorate of his leadership credentials and no one should question the decision by Zimbabweans. The artiste seems to address the British and like minded opponents of the Mugabe regime that when the people of Zimbabwe voted for Mugabe, they accepted him as their leader (*Patakavhota takasainirana agirimende/* When we voted we signed an agreement) hence the call for them to hold their peace (*Saka musatinetse, musatishupe MaBhuritishi/* So please do not bother us you the British.) Apparently Britain and her colleagues, in post 2000 Zimbabwe elections, had been criticised for ‘crying louder than the bereaved.’ They were alleged to have complained about absence of rule of law, violence and voter intimidation more than the Zimbabweans themselves. In the eyes of Gary Busch (The Herald 2013), it was an irrelevant Western reaction to the Zimbabwe elections. It was therefore an issue Zimbabweans ought to have decided.

In *Kure Kachana* (It is Far Away), Chimbetu (2002), probably to discourage any chancers, imaginers or even genuine contenders to the throne, devotes some space to remind them it is not easy to get the top. He restates the obvious bravado narrative of the journey to self rule but this time, probably to justify why those who have liberation credentials should continue their hold on power.

*Kure Kachana* (It is Far Away)
The journey (rwendo) motif, contrary to what Maganga, Tembo and Dehwa, 2015) see as alluding to the journey towards national independence, seems to point to the journey to the apex of power; the state house. The artiste seems to deliberately con(fuse) the national struggle for/into a journey to a personal destination. A national journey to independence is then read as a journey to a position of power. The support rendered by Nyerere, Samora, Seretse and Kaunda as recorded in the song and in history is then interpreted as leveraging some individuals to ascend to power. State House, though geographically very close, symbolically, the concept as used by the artiste may suggest how difficult it is for people who have not fought in the liberation war to ascend to the throne, hence the artiste’s clarification; Rwendo rurefu rusingade makombi / A long journey not to be travelled on minibuses. It is probably meant to mystify the presidency. The artiste takes time to chronicle the journey to the state house. He seems to add voice to the popular ZANU PF pronouncements that no one without liberation credentials will rule Zimbabwe. This has the net effect of discouraging those who did not participate in the liberation struggle from throwing their interest into the power contest. However, a hermeneutical inference may absolve the artiste of any contrived intentions as state house may also symbolise attainment of autonomy; a crystallisation of the liberation struggle or an actualisation of black rule.
Party music accurately depicted the polarisation of national politics and equally rhymed with the highly polarised electronic and print media. Just as there was government sympathetic press and anti-government press; there arose government sympathetic and anti-government music. This avant-garde anti-government music was an interesting project by courageous party artistes prompting Musiyiwa (2013:68) to observe that the music proffered “an alternative interpretation to the chimurenga narrative and makes vigorous contestations with the state over its meaning(s)”. In that sense the music was refreshing. Gone was the culture of veiled protest as seen in the first two decades after independence where the music tended to be more polysemantic. Emergent was the open protest, cash talk and unbridled confrontational political expression by party artistes from the opposing political divide. It was a hard talk type of music. Both pro-ZANU PF and pro-MDC party artistes rose to either prop up the soiled image of their party or express the state of the nation from their party perspective. Music was used to express the unfolding political and economic processes albeit along partisan lines. So polarised was the political terrain that there was hardly any middle of the road or non-aligned position with regards to political opinion.

5.3 Analysis of interviews

Through interviews, the research secured reflective insights from a mixed group of respondents comprising music critics, artistes, arts managers and music fans who were purposively sampled as outlined in Chapter 4 on Methodology. These reflected on the context of music production and consumption as well as the referential potential of music themes generated through the hermeneutic method of interpretation discussed in the preceding chapter. Consulting a variety of interviewee classes ensured the research would be insulated from subjective and opinionated interpretation of music. To conceal interviewee identities respondents are represented by numerical symbols while interviewees responding to themes generated from the hermeneutic method have been assigned letters of the alphabet; in no particular order.
5.3.1 Profile of interviewees

Interviewee 1

Interviewee 1 is the Director of the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe (NACZ) whose interaction with the artistes was considered vital for this research. The study secured critical data from the perspective of arts management in a bid to get data from a source that is closer to the production and consumption of music.

Interviewee 2

Interviewee 2 is an artiste whose music profile spans over three decades and has 63 albums to his credit. He has graced the regional and international music concerts and has distinguished himself by winning regional and globally acclaimed awards in music. With such a robust musical profile, his views on postcolonial music were considered critical for this research.

Interviewee 3

Interviewee 3 is the manager of an arts centre which is the brainchild of musician and philanthropist who incidentally happens to be an artiste considered for interview in this research. The manager has more than 30 years in the arts industry and his views were considered critical in reflecting on music arts.

Interviewee 4

Interviewee 4 is a University of Zimbabwe professor of psychology who has written extensively on music production and consumption in Zimbabwe. Besides, he is an artiste of repute with an album tally of 8, stretching from the 1960s. The research was privileged to solicit his views both as a critic and as an artiste. He is credited for mooting the 75% local content policy.

Interviewee 5

Interviewee 5 is a music lecturer at the University of Zimbabwe’s Department of Teacher Education whose experience as a music teacher educator was considered
critical for scrutinising the atmosphere of music expression in the postcolonial period. He has witnessed the flow of various genres of music in Zimbabwe from the colonial period right into the postcolonial period. He has written many journals on Zimbabwean music and music in general. It was prudent for the research to solicit his views on postcolonial music in Zimbabwe

**Interviewee 6**

Interviewee 6 is an entertainment editor with The Herald newspaper. He has contributed significantly to the visibility of artistes through the print media. He has reflected on Zimbabwean artistes and their music in a number of publications of his stable. His regular interaction with various artistes and their products was considered critical for this research.

**Interviewee 7 and 8**

Interviewee 7 and 8 are music lecturers stationed at one of Zimbabwean’s premier music institutions, Zimbabwe College of Music. They are artistes who have produced music on their own. This qualifies their consideration as critical respondents who bring in significant music capital into the research.

**Interviewee 9**

With a career record barely 10 years, interviewee 8 is a renowned local music promoter who has marketed top music brands in Zimbabwean music industry and helped groom upcoming artistes. An assessment of music promotion was found important given the potential promotion has in inducing creativity and sustaining the livelihoods of artistes as well as marketing of their performances.

**Interviewee 10**

Interviewee 10 is a music education lecturer at Great Zimbabwe University in the Department of Teacher Education. He has written a number of articles on music which have been widely consulted in this research.

**Interviewee 11**
Interviewee 11 is perhaps one of the most controversial artistes to emerge from Zimbabwe. He has courted controversy as a gospel, political and social satirist. His music dates back to the colonial to the post-independence era. He has produced a number of political as well as social songs that have been considered for this research.

**Interviewees A, B, C, D, and E**

Interviewees A, B, C, D, and E are Master of Education in ChiShona Students who from their Shona Culture and Literary Critics in ChiShona courses were socialised on the art of critically reflecting on cultural products. They were considered solely on that basis. These reflected mainly on themes emerging from Zimbabwean music as ‘informed’ music fans whose appreciation of music is beyond emotional attachment.

**Interviewee F and G**

The two interviewees were selected on the basis of them being Zimbabweans in the diaspora and as such were suitable for assessing the precision of artistes in negotiating diaspora discourses. Interviewee F is domiciled in the UK and G is in South Africa. The two regions were considered as popular international and regional migration destinations.

**5.3.2 Interviewee responses**

**5.3.2.1 Freedom of expression**

Freedom of expression is a fundamental right every person would readily welcome as critical in every area of life. Yet it is one of the most violated and denied rights as culture and legislation constantly connive to dispossess people of their most crucial right. It is one thing to know one’s rights and quite another to have one’s rights as they exist in a constitution. Possession of that right may exist independent of knowledge of the constitutional provision of that right. This research sought to record public sentiments on their assessment of the extent to which freedom of musical expression in Zimbabwe exists.
On the question *how free are musicians to express themselves in Zimbabwe*, **interviewee 1**, an arts manager observed that, “musicians are very free to express themselves but the freedom is curtailed by resources and not the legislation. Resources stand as a stumbling block between the artiste and the freedom to express as absence of these stifle artistic ingenuity.” Interviewee 1 categorically expressed there was freedom of expression in Zimbabwe. His sentiments probably stem from his knowledge of the constitution of Zimbabwe which allows for freedom of expression but can be contested by artistes like **interviewee 10** who alleges that his music was taken off air in the presence of a constitution that purports to safeguard the same right. It seems there exists an authority higher than the constitution which imposes restrictions regardless of the constitution affirming the right. He sees, like **Interviewee 4** that:

The concept of freedom of expression as a universally acknowledged right can be guaranteed on paper but in practice, it withers away. It is cagey. The Zimbabwean constitution recognises this right but has a censorship act traceable to colonialism which can be invoked to regulate dissemination and consumption of content deemed injurious to the citizen.

He makes an interesting observation of a situation where an act ‘steals’ what another has put on the table. What the constitution guarantees as an inalienable freedom to express, the Censorship and Entertainment Control Act interferes with.

**Interviewee 1** passed the buck on the dearth of resources as constraining artistes’ freedom to express. The view by the arts manager sounds escapist. He seems to deflect blame from government to resources. This, however, does not trivialise resources as inconsequential in artistic expression. These, however, impact on the artiste’s expressive potential not on the freedom to express.

Artistes fully explore their creative potential where they are free to express their ideas, comments and criticisms. As such this interview sought to establish the artistes’ assessment of freedom of expression in the country. **Interviewee 2** was of the opinion that
musicians are 110% free to sing what they want but politicians find it difficult to express themselves freely. There is no legislation that hinders musicians from singing what they want. There is no subject I cannot sing.

For interviewee 2 context elasticity, that is, the potential for music to refer to more than one context:

is a sign of good music; it should allow different people to interpret it differently. Such music is neither ageless nor tied to specific times as it appeals to generations after your own. The purpose of a song is to give life and heal broken hearts not simply expressing. Some compositions express but do not reach the heart.

This view however is oblivious of the need for music to correct, instruct and to reach the intended audience, in this case those who are supposed to correct the situation. At least, Brecht’s views in Askew (2003: 633), holds that, art is not just a mirror held up to reality, but a hammer with which to shape it.

Interviewee 5 sees freedom of expression as a relative term. “There is no instrument with which to measure freedom of expression; it is relative. We cannot really measure to what extent a person is free to say what they want.” He dismissed the notion of complete freedom of expression as utopian preferring, instead to use acceptable levels of freedom. Unfettered freedom of expression is hard to locate. Artistes have an option to use metaphorical language to bust censorship. In addition to this, government continues with its dual posture of claiming democracy and acting authoritarian like Ronning and Kupe (2000) observed in their reflective treatise, “The dual legacy of democracy and authoritarianism” where the government was inspired by the liberation ethos of establishing an egalitarian and free society but the Marxist inspired authoritarianism directed the practical course of governance.

Interviewee 6 admits that although the artiste can be constrained by real or imagined censorship, they can still resort to the use of social media and access to the internet. Musicians are now very free to articulate the burning issues of their hearts. Songs that were deemed anti-establishment on radio are now being played on social media. Social
media and social networks are a robust platform for breaking the chains of music control and freedom of expression in general. Nikki observes that:

Unlike in the real world, where social etiquette and manners can sometimes seem restrictive and limiting, people feel they have a greater sense of freedom of expression and/or of speech when using online networks even though content can be monitored on these social networks.

Although content is occasionally monitored, at least the public has some little space to access otherwise red marked products. Platforms like Fremuse (an abbreviation for Freedom of Musical Expression) have fully supported the move to evade music blockade through placing artistic products on social media. Social media may have their own disadvantages but for the artiste’s access to an audience, otherwise marooned by the censorship. The disadvantage likely to face the consumer interestingly is corruption from uncensored culturally offensive materials from the no holds access to artistic products.

In the focused group interview, interviewee 7 observed that:

“Freedom of expression is dependent on the theme that the artiste chooses; whether it is love or some other theme. If one goes political, like Dr Mapfumo, you may be exiled. Our musicians know that for them to be on the map, they just have to evade some of those themes deemed political.”

Probed further to explain whether the avoidance of sensitive material is not indicative of absence of freedom, interviewee 7 extrapolated:

“This means they are not that free. Musicians like Zhakata (Bhora Rembabvu), Mtukudzi, (Bvuma/Wasakara) and Mapfumo (Mvemve) have had their songs taken off air as their lyrics were considered critical of ZANU PF leaders and their management stances.

However, a close study of ZBC records by this researcher did not show any evidence to suggest that the implied songs were officially redmarked but the allegation that they were taken off air does not fall away as the broadcaster may not have made their
withdrawal a public record. Allowing that would have negatively portrayed them as standing in the way of free expression. When artistes avoid sensitive themes or hide their intention, it confirms the absence of their freedom to express. Theme selection may not necessarily reflect the leeway the artiste has in their business; it may potentially reflect the presence of huddles one has to avoid.

5.3.2.2 Censorship

Self-censorship has been cited as an internal control mechanism that inhibits the creative independence of artistes. The general motion of thought among interviewees points to fear, one’s cultural allegiance and audience psychology as controlling the degree of explicitness of content and the general freedom to express. This is in line with the observation by Nyathi (2005:2) about artistes’ awareness of the existence of an act that censors music. He avers, “I will outrightly say that from my research, most musicians have not been aware of even the existence of such an act, let alone its requirements”. Artistes interviewed in this research simply talk of censorship but none professed knowledge of the stipulations of the Censorship and Entertainments Control Act or the functions of the Censorship Board, let alone its existence. This suggests that artistes compose and sing ignorant of the Act. Interviewee 6 remarks that government has not banned any music; they have left it to the artiste to self-regulate. They are simply bridled by fear as Eyre (2001) observes:

A substantial number of artists and musicians in Zimbabwe are afraid to express themselves, particularly those who hold and wish to express views critical of the government. Some artists may be so accustomed to living in an environment of intimidation that they do not even recognize it.

This would explain why some artistes may not even feel there is any exterior force modulating their freedom to compose any theme.

Interviewee 1 cited the issue of social values as some of the controlling factors that may regulate what the artiste ends up singing. On the subject of self censorship,
interviewee 1 explained; “a gospel artiste can not sing controversial lyrics like ‘Munotidako’ (a song by Jacob Moyana which could mean, ‘you need us there’) which may be regarded as offensive to the Christian ethos.” That the artiste chooses to exploit ambiguity in the Shona language to insert obscenities in his composition is unfortunate. Music does not give us the liberty to run away from our culture. The interviewee went on to say:

There are also issues of our culture which remain enamoured in us. These refuse to go away. I cannot shade away the colour of my skin wherever I go. Music and our beliefs are those parts of our culture that refuse to go away.

Our cultures sanction or forbid certain modes of behaviours and no matter the artiste has unlimited freedom de jury to express, the artiste’s affiliation to a cultural group will potentially affect their expressivity. Interviewee 5 observes that artistes because of cultural ethics like ubuntu can self-censor. Themes that are not in tandem with one’s culture are avoided in the artiste’s work. Interviewee 6 further confirms the element of culturally controlled productions that:

If you chose to sing vulgar, people will choose whether to ignore you or not. If you sing crap, they ignore you. When Masikiri went vulgar, his career took a tumble. People stuck a bad boy tag on him and they boycotted his music.

Culture controls the artiste and listener's as both are not permitted by culture to compose or listen to culturally offensive products. In this case Masikiri is alleged to have gone against culturally sanctioned codes. As if that tag was not enough, the ‘bad boy’ went on to release an explicit album “Bad Boy which exhibits his vulgar rapping prowess” (Mkwesha, 2015). To show that the artiste can by-pass the official censorship machine, the artiste brags, “This is the era of social media and piracy. The album is going to be a hit” (Ibid). Even with the Censorship Board’s good intentions of protecting listeners from corrupted lyrics, artistes can still stubbornly sneak through the social media route.

Market reception was suggested as controlling the variety of themes artistes can articulate. Interviewee 1 suggested that musicians study their market and sing what the
consumers are ready to take in. This view is shared by interviewee 3 who advances that “when you create a song for posterity you must have restrictions in your mind.” He made reference to the case of Oliver Mtukudzi of whom he says it is difficult to find any song by him that praises or ridicules someone directly:

You will never hear him praise ZANU PF in his music. You find the subject Zimbabwe in because ZANU PF is transitory but Zimbabwe is permanent. When you create a song forever; for an artiste; that is your pension. That song will sell for generations to come.

This further confirms the issue of market reception as critical in determining artistic creativity and controlling the range of subjects one can compose.

In this regard, artistes self censor. Interviewee 1 made reference to his experience as an editor in the book industry to draw parallels between the book and music industry. He remarked:

It’s is the height of stupidity for any author to write (because one says there is freedom) lampooning the editor (no matter how good the story) who sits in the chair to determine whether your story should be published. You will go nowhere.

Self censorship is a part of the Shona life. In the Shona culture, registers inform us on how to behave in different contexts. One is compelled to act as demanded by a particular context. That is art. Probed on how the artiste can navigate the cultural curve, interviewee 1 observed that, “an artiste is a person who is so skilled and talented that they can insult someone and they will smile back without noticing they are being insulted, because the artiste has the skill to mask their attack.” He gave the example of Animal Farm where George Orwell skilfully navigates the concept of a revolution without being detected as offensive by those in authority. The respondent sees as lack of artistic manoeuvres for any artiste to openly criticize those who are in authority. “It is reckless for any artiste to openly castigate Mugabe (the president of Zimbabwe) or Tsvangirai (Zimbabwean opposition leader).” This may sound pro-government particularly coming from a government employee, but openly lampooning those in
authority may only invite stiff resistance from those loyal to them. That work will not see the break of day. He further contends that:

an artiste is the most intelligent person. He understands people’s psychology and sociology...By the way an artiste is a teacher; he is a psychologist, a sociologist and a philosopher. That person knows how to get to the hearts and minds of the people without them realising his mission.

He makes a telling distinction between ordinary censorship and self censorship. The difference between the two is:

when one talks of self censorship, they are talking of the application of sociology, psychology and philosophy in the production of the art. It should be distinguished from censorship when the product is now there and someone says it should not come out.

The triadic domains of psychology, philosophy and sociology are presented as influencing the artiste in their compositions in that there are issues of society, issues of their own individuality and philosophical considerations that the artiste cannot ignore. Self censorship is about the internal control as opposed to censorship which is external to the artiste. However, Eyre (2001) notes that some artistes deliberately write songs in a way that allows for different interpretations as part of their artistic style in conformity with Shona and African artistic traditions.

On being further probed about his views with regards to the ‘bolekaja’ kind of musicians who bare-knuckle their political punch through music, he dismissed such people as true artistes pointing out that real artistes deal with soft issues not hard issues:

In computer technology they talk of software and hardware. Software is not tangible but hardware is. If I threw software at you, you do not get hurt but if I threw hardware at you, you get hurt. Likewise an artiste’s work does not hurt anyone. Art facilitates things to happen but when art starts to do the negatives then it is something else.
To him the *bolekaja* type of musicians are not real artistes, they are politicians using the art of music to advance their agendas. This observation can be refuted however, as art means different things to different people; there are those like Ngugi wa Thiongo and Chinweizu, Jamie and Madubuike who have a more militant approach. This group does not subscribe to the soft version of the arts manager as for them art should address the burning issues of the moment. How else can the burning issues be addressed expeditiously when the artiste takes an indirect approach to the expression of critical issues.

The arts manager also noted that there has not been any revolutionary constitutional developments save for the amendments to the 1967 Censorship Act. In principle, he remarked, independence only brought many playing options as musicians could have their music played on other platforms other than the state broadcaster.

**Interviewee 5** makes a very interesting observation where he alleges that self-censorship can also be linked to the genre one is affiliated to. “Artistes in the dancehall genre rarely think of culturally oriented products. Their music is associated with violence that is ignited by their provocative lyrics.” The link between genre and expressive freedom can be appreciated when one observes that some genres originate from cultural and political zones that afford them the radicalism that typifies their expressivity. Reggae, urban grooves, dancehall and hip hop originate from Jamaica and the United States of America where confrontationality is a norm. On the contrary, genres like kanindo and rhumba, originating from Congo and East Africa tend to avoid politically charged themes. These themes express love more than they do politics. If ever they import political messages, usually such music is politically veiled than direct.

From the focus group interview, **interviewee 7 & 8** observed that it is mainly for economic reasons that artistes can self-regulate. Commissioned artistes are not at liberty to sing what they want. They are afraid that if they sing anti-establishment songs they may be denied airplay and if they if they sing pro-government they will be assured of airplay. **Interviewee 11** opined that some musicians are controlled by the fear of raising the ire of the sponsor if they flow “against the signal of the choirmaster”
5.3.2.3 Reflections on Independence

There is no consensus from interviewees on how Zimbabwean music discourses independence. The mood that popular music released immediately after independence is celebratory in nature is pervasive right through the diversity of interviewees. However they differ on the object of the celebratory streak in popular music with some justifying and others mocking the celebration.

Asked on whether music in the post colonial reflects on the issue of independence, interviewee 6 said:

It is two pronged; there are musicians who are questioning the independence itself and those that are embracing it. The former are lamenting unfulfilled promises of the liberation struggle while the latter are celebrating the gains of independence.

Asked, how the concept of independence is reflected in Zimbabwe music, interviewee 1, observed that “the concept of independence is reflected in two ways, namely; the opening of a platform where artistes can express themselves freely and in the veritable themes that discuss the concept of self-determination.” Probed to explicate concrete examples of songs that discuss independence, the arts manager referred to the examples of Thomas Mapfumo’s ‘Zimbabwe’, ‘Nyarai Kana Makundwa’ and ‘Pemberai’:

These celebrate the concept of independence. There are some that interrogate the same independence without directly referring to the phenomenon. To talk about independence is to talk of the distribution of wealth, discourse of power, celebrating love and interrogating critical issues in independent Zimbabwe. So, you may not hear an artiste directly shouting ‘independence’ in their music but discussing issues that unfold in Zimbabwe as a reflection of that independence.

This view is critical in interrogating the concept of independence from a variety of perspectives. Interviewee D observed that:

Early Zimbabwean popular music was marked by celebration of the coming of independence after a protracted struggle against the British imperialists. It was
only normal for artistes to celebrate considering the amount of human sacrifice, the pain and the obnoxious inhumanity served on Africans for close to a century. It was not folly to celebrate repossession of lost pride.

Such an observation answers back to the accusations of political blindness that have been blamed for the celebratory streak in early postcolonial music. This attack is generally premised on the alleged betrayal and abnegation of national responsibility against what was promised during and after the war of liberation by the revolutionary party.

The critic, interviewee 5, further remarked that “the subject of celebrating land cannot be disentangled from the pursuit of war promises and the restoration of national heritage.” However, one may see the same music on land as commissioned or state instructed as pointed earlier by interviewee 6. Music that questions the issue of power is located in apartheid South Africa as recorded in the music of Chicco and the poetry of Mzwakhe Mbuli whose music has been consistently seeking justice and exposing bad governance (De Saxe, 2010). It is within music’s power to ask hard and frank questions about contentious issues in its background without fear or compromise.

Interviewee 3 agrees that the postcolonial popular song discourses independence but makes a distinction between artistes singing independence along generational lines:

You will find that (singing independence) located within the old generation of musicians not in the new one; here there are responding to pressure and tensions in their lives. They are not comfortable. There is an element of protest and controversy in their music.

Asked to explain why the old generation would sing independence while the young deliberate protest, the arts manager responded:

The old generation was still disillusioned by the celebration of the partial realization of promises of the revolution while the young generation felt they were not bound to the same promises and had to ask critical questions of their time.
Yes, that could be true of some few old artistes but there are some old artistes like Thomas Mapfumo, Oliver Mtukudzi and Hosiah Chipanga whose music arguably quiz Zimbabwean independence and emerging warped management styles.

Land is one of the major reasons the war of liberation was fought and its acquisition in post indepence Zimbabwe is an issue meriting attention. Interviewee 5 observed that:

Post-independence music celebrates issues like the land reform, empowerment of women and development of ordinary people. Music that interrogates the concept of power, ownership of resources is indeed reflecting on independence. When you listen to the music of Leonard Zhakata, you easily locate that consistent pecking voice that looks for an answer to social and political problems bedevilling society.

Interviewee 6 is of the view that:

There are gluts of musical pieces reflecting on the positive post independence developments like land reform and black empowerment. However, a lot of music on land reform was government engineered or commissioned to give a positive picture of the programme. The music was not really initiated by the artistes themselves. The government funded the production and airplay of music by Mbare Chimurenga, More Fire Crew, Dickson Chingaira and Tambaoga. Most jingles and government sympathetic songs like ‘Hondo yeminda’, (War for the acquisition of land) ‘Chave Chimurenga” (It is now a revolution) by Dickson Chingaira and most Mbare Chimurenga songs are the ruling party’s image building projects presented as ‘politically innocent creations’ to the unsuspecting audience. They are produced at the request of government than independent compositions.

Whether free or commissioned, the fact that the music reflects what is happening in Zimbabwe settles the matter. What only ruffles the peace is the fact that artistic independence is compromised although this commissioning accurately reflects the government’s desperation to recoup soiled image.
5.3.2.4 War memories

Views emerging from interviewees on this theme are diverse but generally point to two perspectives accounting for the thrust to reflect on war memories: protest in retrospect and the need to remind the present and future to put up with past. Some interviewees saw the continued reference to the past as a psychological ploy to intimidate music listeners familiar with war experiences.

Interviewees D and E concur that postcolonial music that centred on war memories was spurred by pre-independence pent-up emotions incubated since the days of colonialism. Interviewee D reflected that:

The artistes ruminate over unfair labour practices, general oppression and inhumane treatment during colonialism. It is not surprising to hear artistes like Mapfumo reflect on *Nhamo yemakandiwa* (The pain of forced labour).

As for why they could not sing such protest during the war, interviewee E opined:

They could not vent out their emotions during colonialism because of extreme censorship. Independence afforded them space to protest. In a way, it was not protest in retrospect but a moment of expressing what was avoided during the tenure of colonial rule in Zimbabwe.

These views concatenate to suggest that artistes who reflect on war memories suggest it was not merely about delayed indignation but some ‘righteous anger’ that could not be vented at the moment of provocation.

It was also hard to forget the insults and pains of war. The artiste had to take stock of the war era. Interviewee A argues that:

Artistes like Chimbetu, himself a war veteran sing about what they saw during the war. Imagine Chimbetu seeing his colleague die in a battle as in *Ndarangarira gamba*. Who would forget such an incident?

It emerges that the artiste is inspired to record familiar wartime experiences, further confirming the inseparability of the past and the present. The mind constantly shuttles...
between the past and the present to reflect on horrendous war scenes that bore the independence we so cherish.

5.3.2.5 National unity

Interviewee reflections on music that discourses unity generally revolve around the need to cement bonds against recolonisation. The arts manager interviewee 1 reflected that:

The music is about a revolution that thrived on unity. With a traditional Shona past that valorized the same, artistes could not help articulate the unity sentiment. When you hear Chimbetu sing one One Way, he is being pragmatically African.

The general cue from that reflection is that to sing about unity is to reconstitute Africa to its cultural DNA. Unity defines Africa. Interviewee 2, however, chose to see it differently. He saw the artiste simply articulating a ZANU PF agenda as a “party commissioned artiste singing for his supper”. That Chimbetu sounds apologetic of the government is not verifiable by his music which is in most cases polysemantic and therefore not restricted in its reference. Unity cannot be a theme personalised to ZANU PF. Interviewee C noted that, “Africans have a common past, threats and challenges that to call for unity is to call for a coordinated approach to African issues.” This has always been the spirit that inspired communal activities throughout pre-colonial Africa as the need to bust external threats encouraged unity.

Interviewee E observed that; “given the variegated ethnic composition of Zimbabwean population, singing unity was seen in the spirit of bringing together people otherwise easily split along tribal affiliations. It is on record that relations between the Shona and the Ndebele were frosty way before whites came and elsewhere pre-colonial tribal hostilities were rampant. So for the artiste to sing unity, in a way, underscores the fragility of tribal bonds worsened by the the colonial encounter hence the need to strengthen the same” The view that pre-colonial tribal hostilities were rampant, however, is contestable and rhymes with ‘protectorate politics’ that celebrate and justify colonialism as a panacea to tribal hostilities.
Although the unity song has been interpreted differently by interviewees, the overall assertion is that it is an audible motif in postcolonial Shona music in Zimbabwe. It is found both at the micro and macro platform of Zimbabwean society; from the family, national and to the international levels.

5.3.6 Exploitation of the subaltern

This theme excited a variety of responses from consumers, artistes and music critics. Reflections centred on crises of expectation, neocolonialism and bad governance. In all the responses there is a cross-cutting sentiment that artistes are not adequately reflecting on the theme with the seriousness that matches the pandemic.

**Interviewee B** remarked:

> Artistes grapple with crises of expectation in the post independent state where yesterday’s promises of equality, access and ownership of resources have been trampled upon. The white oppressor has disappeared and in his place has arisen a comprador bourgeoisie who is busy exploiting his own people.

This reflection traces the roots of protest music to unfulfilled promises which would reveal the artistes’ assessment of independence as vacuous. **Interviewee 6** observed alleges that, “although exploitation is rife in postcolonial Zimbabwe, artistes are probably afraid of protesting this in their music as such expressions can be read as a direct attack on government shenanigans. Musicians are cautious not to disturb the quills of a porcupine”

**Interviewee E** observed that:

> “Kakara kununa hudya kamwe” This concept is deeply ensconced in the post colonial Zimbabwe society. Some Zimbabwean musicians have courageously addressed this issue. Artistes like System Tazvida have laboured to remind the oppressive management on the need to raise the salaries of the workers.

The interviewee uses the proverb *kakara kununa hudya kamwe* (one thin goblin gets fatter by eating the other) to express the culture of greed that has set in. The
interviewee, however, sees the government as the only oppressive force yet there could be some other factors in the whole debate.

5.3.7 Political Party Music

A number of interviewees questioned this music as popular and artistic given the view that its dissemination and purpose hardly satisfies their criterion of the goal of art as entertainment, refined and extending to that nook of self reflection. However, some saw such music as very accurate in presenting issues as they are without any fear.

**Interviewee 1** made a distinction between the artiste and the politician:

> There is a difference between a musician and a politician who uses music as tool to advance a political agenda. Such people find it difficult to say what they want through music because their music may simply fail to get to the people. When you become political you become partisan. What happens to that part of the audience which does not share your political views? They reject your music.

He further suggests that art is not confrontational, bare knuckle nor hard edged criticism. “It is like software that one cannot touch and not like hardware.” The arts manager is against open and confrontational music but does not say music should not criticise. To him it must criticise but it should do so in a veiled way. Probed on whether the aspect of subtlety is not tacit confirmation of the existence of a restriction on music, the arts manager responded, “If you are a musician you must create a song for every season. If you came here and saw a pothole you would not compose a song about the pothole. That song will not sell ten years from now because there will not be any potholes.” He encouraged veiled music for its referential fluidity in that the music is not tied to specific events.

Commissioning artistes along political lines is a way of restricting their freedom to select themes. **Interviewee A** suggests that:

> Commissioned artistes are controlled by the themes of their sponsors. It is unimaginable for an artiste like Paul Madzore or for an ensemble like Mbare
Chimurenga Choir, who are MDC and ZANU PF respectively, not to be swayed by their political ideology

However, **interviewee C** sees Zimbabwean party music as:

the only politically direct art that strikes where it matters most. No ordinary artiste is courageous to sing political music like a politician who has chosen music as an instrument to express political opinion. He is direct and fearless. No artiste can sing the name Mugabe unless the song praises the man. Party music is the only platform to engage the ordinary people into a national debate"

**Interviewee E** saw confrontational music differently. He reflected that:

Such music does not help in peace building efforts. It creates a political rascal in the consumer who eventually is enraged and engages in violent conduct. Much as it captures critical issues in its background, it is guilty of sowing a pugnacious spirit in the listener.

This view resonates with the arts manager’s view on hardware type of art which hurts instead of doing the positives.

Decernible from interviewee sentiments is the general undeviating pointedness of party music. It is emotion laden and there is very little artistic endowment to celebrate in the music but it reaches the target.

**5.3 Conclusion**

The study found out that the expressive space can largely be viewed as ranging from free to fair. From the legislative perspective there is tremendous space to explore any themes of the artistes’s choice yet interviews with some artistes and music critics revealed that musicians are afraid of touching sensitive themes like politics. The study realised that the conduct of the artiste and the audience are largely controlled by two contrasting conceptions of legislative positions; the *de jure* and *de facto* positions of law. The *de jure* standpoint reflects the officially gazetted position of the law while the latter
refers to the actual use or existence regardless of the official position. Against such an ambiguous legislative scenario, a hermeneutic exegesis of postcolonial music in Zimbabwe reveals that artistes have developed subtle linguistic techniques that have enabled them to freely express political messages without being detected by the censor. Some artistes have mustered the nerve to bare knuckle and compose unambiguous songs that call a spade by its name. In any way and by whatever means, the Zimbabwean political story continues to be mediated through popular music. Zimbabwean popular music is an art that tells the truth of its day.
CHAPTER 6: SOCIO-ECONOMIC LEITMOTIFS IN SHONA MUSIC

6.0 Introduction

Postcolonial popular music in Zimbabwe can largely be construed as a significant part of the grand narrative of the major socio-cultural issues confronting most postcolonial African countries. After some hundred years of colonial domination and three decades into independence, this research explores the social and economic issues that excite artistic discourse. The study notes that Zimbabwean artistes generally decry the disintegration of culture and particularly chide departure from ubuntu, true love, and family integrity among others. They also reflect on the collapse of the economy and the resultant flight into foreign lands. This chapter looks at the various socio-economic motifs in Shona music as generated by the hermeneutic method. Views of interviewees on the same themes are examined as a way of validating the hermeneutic inquiry. The overall social picture as depicted by artistic concentration speaks of national lamentation. Things are falling apart and the centre is struggling to hold. The nation is succumbing to local and global forces whose punch the artiste is contesting and reminding the nation about.

6.1 Analysis of songs with a socio-economic motif

6.1.1 Culture

The subject of culture features in most songs examined hereunder. The overall tone suggests artistes’ consternation with the evident flight from one’s culture that has had a destabilizing effect on the existing social fabric. Respect and love for one’s culture and mother language has spurred some artistes to reflect on their effects on the individual and the emerging nation. The research explores some of the songs that have lyrics that discourse the culture theme in the postcolonial era.

Oliver Mtukudzi’s (1999) *Tsika dzedu* (our culture) is a candid call for the nation to valorize its culture. The artiste suggests that a people cannot run away from their
cultures as they are just as inseparable as an object and its shadow hence; *Kusvikira riini tichitiza mimvuri yedu...?* (Up to when shall we continue running away from our shadows). The new supplanting culture has taken away all that defined our humanity, our food heritage and our language. The artiste reflects that:

**Tsika dzedu (our culture)**

*Ngano dzedu dziya dzakaendepi?* Where have our folklores gone?

*Tsika dzedu dziye dzakaendepi?* Where have our cultures gone?

*Kudya kwedu kuye kwakaendepi?* Where has our traditional food gone?

*Nyevhe yedu iya yakaendepi?* Where has our nyevhe (traditional relish) gone?

*Kusvikira riini tichitiza mimvuri yedu...?* Up to when shall we continue running away from our Shadows

*Kusvikira riini tichinyara mimvuri yedu?* Up to when shall we continue shying our Shadows

*Ko zvainongove tsika nditsikewo nemumvuri wacho* But our shadow keeps pursuing us?

*Dada nerudzi rwako, chimiro chako nedzinza rako* Pride in your culture

*Pembedza rurimi pwere dzigoyemura...dzigotevera* Respect your language so that children will Follow suit

(Mtukudzi 1999 *Tsika dzedu*)

Without these cultural essentials Africans are a disarmed and dispossessed people who have lost all bragging rights at culture, hence the artiste’s exhortation *Dada nerudzi rwako, chimiro chako nedzinza rako* / Pride in your colour, staure and ancestry. The artiste marshals Zimbabweans into an image restoration crusade where the citizen is encouraged to embrace a positive self-image. This fosters agency in the citizen as they will realise the power and beauty that is wrought in them. Agency is a critical factor in nation building (Muhwati, 2009). It inspires confidence in one’s potential and gives them the power to order their priorities.
Food is a form of cultural expression. Other cultures have imposed their food varieties on us and we have been weaned from our own hence Mtukudzi is genuinely concerned about ‘food invasion’:

*Kudya kwedu kuye kwakaendepi?* Where is our traditional food?
*Nyevhe yedu iya yakaendepi?* Where is our nyevhe (traditional relish?)

Socio-cultural beliefs and customs have a significant influence on family nutritional well-being. People are designed and sustained by the unique properties of their food and the introduction of new food varieties makes us alien to our environmental conditions and the weight of the outcome tramples their vitality and ability to cope. Oniang’o, Mutuku and Malaba (2003) observe that modern feeding habits have brought a number of life-threatening nutritional disorders to Africa. These include: obesity, hypertension, diabetes mellitus, cancer and cardiovascular disorders. The more one suffers from these diseases; the more one is prescribed to rivert to traditional varieties of food. The people and their shadows are inseparable hence the rhetorical inquiry *Kusvikira riini tichitiza mimvuri yedu...?* Up to when shall we continue running away from our shadows. The incidence of HIV and AIDS has heightened the call for people to return to traditional food stuffs. Most traditional food stuffs have medicinal properties. One is seduced to conclude that, as Africa, we are ailing because we have abandoned our traditional food stuffs hence we need to reconnect with our cultural self if we are to traverse the global village terrain at minimum cost.

Mapfumo’s (1993) song, *Vanhu vekwedu* (Our People), is a sober reflection on the cultural trap of globalisation and neocolonialism. Mapfumo scorns the continued use of European languages in an independent nation like Zimbabwe. There is no need to use the European languages in the postcolonial era:

*Vanhu vekwedu* (Our People)

*Tine urombo baba* 
Father we are poor
*Tine urombo shamwari* 
Friend we are poor
Mapfumo argues that Zimbabweans are poor (Tine urombo) because they have deserted their own languages. They have lost their culture, they are ignorant and hence poor (Vanhu vekwedu havasati vaziva). Poverty is then read as losing one’s culture and this tallies with Afrocentric conception of culture. The only acceptable definition of culture among Africans is one that takes culture as an open-ended resource (Coetzee and Roux, 1999). Mapfumo questions the use of English on Zimbabwean radio stations as putting the African audience at the margins rather than the centre of their experiences. Worse still, this is happening at independence. He equates the arrival of independence to the rising of the sun (Zuva rekwedu harisarti rabuda / Our sun has not yet risen) yet the continued use of English does not signify even the break of dawn. Prah (1993) notes that the continued use of foreign languages in postcolonial Africa attests to the neocolonial submission of the postcolonial state to the conquered metropolitan governments. The metaphor zuva rekwedu haristai rabuda assumes that Zimbabweans are yet to wake up from the slumper of colonial hangover. The sun is a symbolic object in the Shona social universe. More than being the source of heat and light, it is widely used to refer to life situations. Its setting and rising may symbolise fading or clarity of hope. In this context, the symbolic reference of the sun ambivalently captures the farcicality of independence as seen in failure to give space to African languages. It also captures the idiocy of falling for the other languages. Like Mtukudzi who encourages the use and valorisation of African languages (Pembedza rurimi pwere dzigoyemura...dzigotevera /
Respect your language so that children follow suit), Mapfumo discourages the use English language for the African audience. Mapfumo sees the continued use of English against an African audience as a sign of not having achieved independence. He agrees with the Afrocentric conception of the African audience as the target of all artistic expressions. Gray (2001:94-5) talks of the African people as the priority audience in all Afrocentric discourses and if African people are the priority audience the language that carries the weight of their experiences and expectations should of necessity be their own as Ngugi (1986) advances. Ngugi sees language as a summation of one’s cultural being. By extension the Zimbabwean mindset has to be decolonised from Eurocentric subservience.

The Sankofan philosophy of returning to the source (Mukusha, 2014) is visible in Mtukudzi’s *Dzoka uyamwe* (Come back and suckle). Mtukudzi seems to prescribe a journey to the source as panacea to the cultural and economic challenges in the postcolonial and the new socio-economic world order.

*Dzoka uyamwe* (Come back and suckle)

*Mandiona kusviba mati kuora..?* Being black does not mean being wrotten?

*Kuora komunhu kuri mumoyo* Wrottenness is a condition of the heart

*Kusviba kwemunhu kuri mupfungwa* Wrottenness is in the way one thinks

*Huya zvako gotwe ranguwe* Come back my last born

*Zamu rakamirira iwe* The breast is still itching for you

*Kukurumura kwandakaita gore riya* That weaning I did to you that year

*Pawakasiira ndipapo* Come and take over from where you left

(Mtukudzi 2002, *Dzoka uyamwe*)

In harmony with Malcolm X (Karson, 2003) and Martin Luther King (1963), the artiste opens his return to the source journey by contesting the oversold lie that the colour black signifies all negatives (*Mandiona kusviba mati kuora..?* Being black does not mean being
wroten?). He argues like Leopold Senghor (Duckworth, 2010) that being black does not imply being bad in everything. Mtukudzi (2002) contests the black is bad fable. Already there is an overstretched deliberate misrepresentation that the colour black is an emblem of crime, low psychology and futility. Racist studies and media reportage on incidents of crime in USA have helped push the thinking that blacks rank high in crimes yet serialised negative publicity and institutionalised administration of justice creates rascals out of blacks. Entman and Kimberly (2008:5) observe that:

Media stereotypes consist of recurring messages that associate persons of color with traits, behaviors, and values generally considered undesirable, inferior, or dangerous. In the context of crime coverage, there is considerable evidence that media portray blacks and Latinos as criminal and violent.

Mtukudzi contests such thinking and instead argues that skin colour does not signify undesirable character. The heart and the mind potentially harbour obscenities and not the skin colour. He seems to share Martin Luther King’s 1963 seminal and historic caution in his “I have a Dream Speech” that people should “not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character”. Mtukudzi’s view is such an important victual blacks and whites should walk with in the journey towards globalization.

In keeping with hermeneutic ambiguity, Ndafunga Dande could also be seen as a retreat to one’s origins or one’s culture. Mtukudzi is seized with that sense of nostalgia;

\begin{align*}
Ndafunga kwangu \quad & I \text{ miss my roots} \\
Ndafunga Dande \quad & I \text{ miss Dande}
\end{align*}

Mtukudzi misses his home area in Dande; never mind it is considered a remote area. Kahari (1990) and Chiwome (2002) remark that colonialism alienated blacks from their rural homes to settle them in the melting pot of cultures. One’s origin or culture represents what one is familiar with. It is here where one is confident and may cut one’s terms. In a foreign land one may not be privileged to have the freedom to say anything. Mtukudzi’s home sickness dovetails with Chenjerai Hove’s poem, “Up In Arms”, where
the poet resists being civilized in “iron jungles”, in mazes that yawn for his death. As the
song unfolds, the feminine voice invites him to come and refuel (Dzoka uyamwe), find
comfort and rest. This has the reassuring urge that a people’s culture will never give up
on them nor fail to embrace them back if they are willing to. Africans have been weaned
from their cultures (Kukurumura kwandakaita gore riya, pawakasiira ndipapo/ come and pick up from
where you left) by colonialism, forces of modernity and globalisation (Ngugi, 1982) but
their cultures are always a ready to reconcile with them.

Vijana Sounds (1994) in Vabereki (Parents) sees the abandonment of African cultural
practices as due to the absence of moral guidance from elders. Vijana Sounds blames
parents’ inactivity in the wake of cultural erosion in this fast changing Zimbabwe:

Vabereki (Parents)

Nhai vabereki shuwa munodarirerei? Why do you parents do this?
Moringisa isu vana tinozivei You watch us children yet we know nothing
Chinga kare kare kaye maiite ngano By the way, in the past you used to tell folklores
Yaive iri nziraka yokutiraira It was a way of advising us
Kuti isu vana venyu tigozivavewo So that we your children may know
Nzvimbo dzinoera ndimi munodziziva You know the sacred places
Makomo anoyera ndimi munoaziva It is you who know sacred mountains
Madzimbabwe anoera ndimi munoaziva It is you who know the sacred stone monuments
Pasi riya ropinduka here muripo The world is changing in your eyes
Sekuru yeukaiwo chinyakarewo... Uncle please remember our past

Vijana Sounds 1994, Vabereki)

It is a traditionally ordained role of elders to lead their young ones in culturally accepted
codes of conduct and access to important historical events, places and knowledge. It is
an abdication of responsibility for elders to watch (kuringisa/ from moringisa) as
unguided children (isu vana tinozivei?/ we children; what do we know?) grope in darkness.
Interestingly it is the children who remind the elders to reclaim their role of guiding the
young ones. They should guide their children to respect important cultural sites and the whole Shona institutional memory. Mountains (makomo), rivers and caves (mapako) have an important role in Zimbabwe’s endogenous culture. Sacred places are normally regarded as the habitation of territorial spirits and these are never tempered with lest the wrath of these spirits is ignited. According to Alnarte (2006):

The indigenous African cosmovision consists of three worlds: the spiritual, the natural and the human... It is believed that if the people perform the required rituals and ceremonies, the spiritual world rewards the natural world with good rains, good harvest and food security; while if the traditional values and norms are not upheld it can bring famine, war and diseases.

The new colonial culture has destroyed the communication between the people and the spirits. It has tempered with African spirituality as it has stained Shona sacred institutions and places. This has had a devastating effect on the preservation of the Shona culture and cosmovision. With the advent of independence, children are crying to be reconnected with their spirituality. Elders are then reminded to draw their young ones to their tangible heritage. They have to revalue the past (Sekuru yeukaiwo chinyakarewo... Uncle please remember our past). Mkanganwi (1998) acknowledges that among Africans age is an indicator of wisdom. Abandoning their young to grope in darkness is to expose their progeny to alien cultures. The youth have no moral model to follow because the elders are busy chasing after the other culture. They elevate other people’s culture yet no culture can be considered superior to one another for every culture is a coping strategy and a value system for a people and not all people (Maravanyika, 1980). Culture represents the summative personality of any people in space and time. It is a way of interpreting what is around them and the justification of their unique conception of phenomena.

The cultural dialogue by many artistes in the postcolonial era is a legitimate engagement that seeks to define independence as an overarching phenomenon extending even to non political issues. Zimbabwe and African cultures in general have succumbed to the proverbial sucker punch of cultural imperialism (Mudzanire, 2013). The culturescape, in the postcolonial, continues to reflect the unfortunate reality. This is
noted in a number of songs that yearn for the pre-colonial cultural state in a variety of discourse set-ups in a sense that subtly interrogates the social aspect of Zimbabwean independence.

6.1.2 The concept of *unhu/ubuntu*

*Unhu* is the Shona people’s conception of model personality. Expressed as *ubuntu* in many Bantu languages, it is a social philosophy that celebrates virtues of mutual social accountability, mutual assistance, trust, selflessness, self reliance, considerateness and respect for others among other social values. These values are the primary sources of inspiration of communal spirit which shape ways of being and living in society (Nussbaum, 2003). Zimbabwean popular music has managed to discuss critical issues threatening this Shona people’s cultural philosophy of *unhu* in the postcolony.

Zimbabweans treasure the virtue of personal integrity where members behave themselves in ways that match their office, rank, age or social role. Conforming to socially expected role is expected to minimize abhorrent role conflicts in society. Mtukudzi in *Gudo guru* (Big baboon) exploits the Shona proverb *gudo guru peta muswe kuti vapwere vagokuremekedza* (big baboon fold your tail to earn the respect of young baboons) to remind Zimbabweans on the need to behave as instructed by their cultural philosophy. Within the baboon community authority is physically discharged. Humility earns one respect and this truth cuts across all dimensions, from social, economic to political. Mudzanire and Gondo (2014) observe that *Unhu* demands that all members of the community be unassuming and modest in all their endeavours. Decency is a virtue Zimbabweans are drifting from. Mtukudzi’s (1990) *Pss Pss Hallo* (Pss pss Hello) chastises old men who have developed a culture of hurling love proposals to any woman in sight. It is about men’s inability to control their roving eyes on every girl that comes in sight. The artiste advises:
The artiste reprimands the generation of Zimbabweans elders that engage in self-defiling practices. Each time one thinks of doing anything, the Shona people reflect on its appropriateness by asking if is not shameful for them to do it hence to say *Haunyare pese pese* (you are not ashamed everywhere) is to appeal to the conscience of the people to reflect and see if what they are doing is culturally tenable. Old men have developed a penchant for improper relationships and an unbridled pursuit for young members of the other sex. They disregard their age and social positions to engage in trifles tangential from their age instructed roles. They rove around proposing to any woman they encounter. The artiste thus warns them to behave themselves humbly (*dzikama*) in accordance with their age as instructed by *ubuntu* values. In Africa age rhymes with responsibility and members who behave not their age attract the ire of society.

The Shona people have always placed a high premium on the need for hard work leading to self and communal sustenance. Chamunorwa Nebeta (2012) in *Uri pakaoma* (You are in a difficult situation) call for the people of Zimbabwe to work hard and confront life’s challenges head on.

*Uri pakaoma (You are in a difficult situation)*

Mwanakomana funga kuoma kweupenyu... Son, think of how difficult life is

Zvichakutuma kufamba muvivi remote... It will send you to even walk in flames of fire

Asi zvauchazotaura mwanangu... But what you will say
Inhoroondo

Is a long story

Pasi pano hapana chisina nhoroondo

On earth everything has a story

Ukaona wonzi baba vari apo nomukadzi wavo

If you hear people say here is a

Man and his wife

Zvakabva nekure

It came from a long way

Ukaona imba yomira

To erect a house

Inhoroondo

It is a long story

Kurarama kwakaoma zijaya

Life is difficult young man

Zvoupenyu wotosunga dzisimbe

Life demands tightening up yourself

Kana iri nhamo inopera nokufa

As for poverty; it will only end when one dies

Uchi mupenyu wotoshanda nesimba

When you are still alive you have to work hard

Usadzokere shure

Do not give up

(Nebeta 2012 Uri panguva yakaoma)

The artiste sums up life as requiring that critical ethic of unhu; hard work or applying oneself selflessly. To become a father/ kunzi baba, to erect a house/ kumisa imba or achieve any other feat, you need to work hard. These are not instant-coffee results but products of sweat (dikita) and life is full of such challenges (Kurarama kwakaoma zijaya/ Life is difficult young man). The artiste does not urge people to give up easily (Usadzokere shure/ Do not give up). Mudzanire and Gondo (2014) reckon that Unhu virtues discourage members from buckling under the weight of adversity. Perseverance is a virtue the Zimbabweans people need to embrace because life challenges always call for impetuous people. This is the advice in Big Tembo’s (2001) Faka Puresha (Exert Pressure) where the artiste encourages people to keep on fighting no matter the obstacles:

Faka Puresha (Exert Pressure)

Tarisa pasi

Look on the ground

Tarisa mberi kwaunoenda

Look forward where you are going

Pasi apa pane minzwa

On the ground there are thorns

Uchinge wabayiwa

If you get pricked by a thorn
The artiste acknowledges that life is full of hardships (makata nemateru / ups and downs) but all these demand people who are not easily detoured. The artiste deliberately employs colloquialized metaphor faka puresha to animate the application of force to opposing situations. Where pressure is applied there is opposition. This is true in all of the people’s struggles from courtship to war as Tongai Moyo in Chechete (A fruit from a tree that grows on rocky river banks) attempts to explain. He uses a fruit that calls for daring people to demonstrate the hard crust Zimbabwean people should develop if they are to get what they want in life.

The same work ethic reverberates through Leonard Dembo’s (2007) Chiduku chaunacho tenda (be grateful for every little thing you have) where the culture of working hard for one’s life is idolised ahead of envying what others have worked for;

**Chiduku chaunacho tenda** (be grateful for every little thing you have)

_Vana vaunona vaunochiva ava_  These children you envy  
_Ndakawana mukushanda zvakaoma_  I begot them through hard work  
_Hembe yaunona yaunochiva iyi_  This shirt you envy  
_Ziva ndakaiwana nokutukwa_  I got it through hard work  
_kuti uwane kudya uchiguta wotoshanda_  For you to find enough food you have to work  
_wotoshanda, kurara hakuna ndima_  Sleeping does not bring food on your table.  
_Hakuna munhu akakurira rugare_  No one grew up in wealth  
_Tose takakurira munhamo_  Everyone grew up in poverty  
_Chiduku chaunacho tenda mwanawe_  Be grateful for everything you have  
_Usatambe nacho_  Do not despise it  
_Usachiva chemumwe_  Do not envy what someone has  
_chiva chako_  Love what is yours
Dembo’s didactic campaign calls for Zimbabweans to celebrate hard work and conquering adversity through the same. It is the habit of some to envy the products of labour without appreciating that it takes labour to have those things. Food (*kudya*) and clothes (*hembe*) are a result of labour. Children are sired in pain (*vana vaunoona vaunochiva ndakavawana mukushanda zvakaoma*). It takes an effort to have something no matter how small it is, hence *chidiki chaunacho tenda* (Be grateful for everything you have). Because it represents your effort; you need to love it and never to despise it (*Usatambe nacho* / *Do not despise it*). Muhwati (2009) observes that the celebration of human energy and creativity equips Africans to endure the vagaries of survival. In a world where one may not get all they want in one place, they have to be habituated to hard work. This is a necessary attribute of life that has to be nurtured in the postcolony where economies are battling to keep terms with global economic dynamics where they have to compete with established economies of this world.

There are various ubuntu attributes located throught out Shona popular music. In fact every Shona song is a platform for *ubuntu* discourse given the pervasiveness of this philosophy in any aspect of life.

### 6.1.3 Romantic expressions

Love is an oversubscribed motif in postcolonial Shona music in Zimbabwe. Indeed popular music teems with love related themes. Zimbabwean love music communicates social, political and economic sentiment more than mere frill eroticism. Within romantic lines are sandwitched serious social messages that find expression through ‘light music’, a term deliberately coined to separate extreme political music from temperate social issues.
Tongai Moyo (2006), in Kapuka kanonzi Rudo (This little animal called love) defines the axiom that love can only be experienced but not explained as he explores the multivariate manifestations of love.

**Kapuka kanonzi Rudo (This little animal called love)**

If I think of this little animal called love  
Sometimes my heart pounds  
Because of her, love  
Behold many people are happy  
Because of her, love  
Many have families are there  
Because of love  
Behold many are now rich  
Because of her, love  
Behold, some are now working  
Because of her, love  
Some are out of employment  
Because of her, love  
Some have been arrested  
Because of her, love  
You are crying but you have not been scolded  
love will make you cry  
Sometimes love is sweet  
When love is sweet we shout  
Oh its sweet  
Come and witness it  
But when things turn the other way round  
Oh I have been pierced

(Moyo,2006 Kapuka kanonzi rudo)

The artiste makes use of the dimunive prefix /ka-/ which seems to suggest that love is a small thing as is often estimated by many but wait until the artiste begins to unroll its sizeableness. Love remains that difficult to fathom. Danesh (1983:1) advances that,
“given the central role of love in relationships, the many attempts to understand love, to explain its nature to describe its characteristics and to unravel its mysteries are not surprising”. It has the power to do so many things. It is a bundle of contradictions and has so many dimensions.

In this song one line discusses one issue that feeds into another theme in the succeeding line to produce the distinct manifold characteristics of love in life. For instance love brings joy (Vazhinji vacho tarirai vari kufara / Behold many people are happy) and in the proceeding line, the same love is celebrated as the foundation of marriage (Vazhinji dzimba dzakatomira / Many have families). The same technique cascades to other portions of the song to distinguish love as a theme around which all other themes revolve and evolve. Others have been arrested because of love (Vamwe vacho honai vakatosungwa). Damesh (1983) observes some lovers demand or shower their lovers with gifts beyond their means and end up engaging in deals injurious to themselves or others. Some have become very rich because of love (Vazhinji vacho tarirai vakatopfuma chokwadi / Behold many are now rich). Love can be celebrated as a factor raising some people’s economic status. This is true where people are married into respectable families and acquire their resultant status courtesy of love. Johnson (2015) nods to the thesis that girls in Zimbabwe opt for marriage into wealthier families to escape poverty.

Love remains a puzzle. It is an emotion, a state of being in a social contract, and in some cases it brings joy while in some relationships it provokes irresolvable anguish particularly when it has been violated. Tongai Moyo locates an occasion to reflect on the complex manifestations of love. It is the same love that makes someone cry for joy or cry in pain as they reflect on the subject.

He agrees with Chimbetu (1997) in Magobo that love pushes people to look for employment in order for them to please their loved ones. He observes Vamwe vacho tarirai vari kushanda chokwadi (Behold some are now working). Since the family is built around love, the same love pushes the man/woman to look for employment as a way of preserving love. So when people discuss serious issues like employment, politics and education they are looking at themes that off shoot from love! Chimbetu’s Magobo (Stumping)
lumps contemporary social problems like lack of employment in the postcolonial and love.

*Magobo* (Stumping)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chikoro ndakapedza basa ndakadzidza</th>
<th>I have finished my academic and Professional education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asi harisati ramuka muno muChiRungu</td>
<td>But I have not found a job in this city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kunyangwe ndisingashandi hangu lavhi</td>
<td>Even if I am not employed my love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyaya yerudo ichandisvitsa kure kure</td>
<td>The issue of love will take me far away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chokwadi ndichandochera chero makandiwa</td>
<td>Honestly I will (take any odd job) go and dig even</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contour ridges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudo ruchandiuryisa nemagobo</td>
<td>Love will kill me through stumping out trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chokwadi ndichangoshanda nyangwe pane moto</td>
<td>Honestly I will work even where there is fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndovarira kuyananisa nyaya yerudo</td>
<td>As I work to harmonise the issue of love</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Chimbetu, 1997 *Magobo*)

In the early years of the independent nation, the government had tremendously invested in education and training but the industrial base is not expanding (Luebker, 2008), hence education is no longer an assurance of work placement. The artiste justifiably laments; *chikoro ndakadzidza asi basa harisati ramuka muno muChiRungu* / I am educated but I have not found employment in the city. The post-independence product of education and training is failing to secure a job which accords with their status. This comes out in a song on love where the man is concerned that even if they have acquired the right training they can not get a job that would cater for their paternalistic responsibilities in love and family life. They have to take up any odd job to survive hence:

*Chokwadi ndichandochera chero makandiwa* Honestly I will (take any odd job) go and dig even

Contour ridges

The song, much as it discusses the issue of love critiques the postcolonial economic base that renders the investment in education impotent. This seems a subtle and
canvassed way of critiquing the government of the day. That way, political criticism
dresses in a social robe that the government and, sadly, the ordinary person may fail to
interpret as intended by the artiste. This is the beauty and the ugly face of satire. Some
may see what is implied while some may sadly miss it. The artiste probably employs
this canvassed critique to escape censorship which Eyre (2001) hints, is rampant. It
gives artistic work multiple meanings which an overzealous censor may find difficult to
assign a single interpretation and gag it upon that basis.

Postcolonial music also discourses the subject of love in marriage. Love has lost its
traditional meaning. It has become materialistic, yet for some it has become
sentimental. The overall tone in most postcolonial love songs is that love has lost its
founding base. Love is based on sensual and spiritual satisfaction (Damesh, 1983).
Love is a contract of the hearts. Matavire in *Iye Mbune* (Himself alone) refreshes us on
the traditional conception of love in a marriage.

*Iye Mbune* (Himself alone)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hezvinoi zvinondinetsa vatete</td>
<td>Here is what troubles me aunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iyi ndiyo nhamo yandinayo</td>
<td>This is the problem I have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwana asingachemi anofira mumbereko</td>
<td>A child who does not cry dies on her mother’s back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mabatirwo andinoitwa nemwana wenyu</td>
<td>The way your son treats me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kutondifidha zvake sehuku yebroiler</td>
<td>He feeds me like a broiler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zvokudya zvose nezvekupfeka</td>
<td>All the food and dresses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hapana kana chimwe chandinoshaya</td>
<td>There is nothing I lack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vose vanondiona ndichifamba vanoti chidyamafuta asingakori</td>
<td>All those who see me think I eat a Lot but cannot be fat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bva handiko kunganzi kugarika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chikuru rudo munhamo nematambudziko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zviri nane kuswera nenzara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asi parudo ndichiwana runoringana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kusiwa pano ndega nevana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zvinondishungurudza mumoyo wangu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zvaanoita, zvinondinetsa murume wangu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ini handina kuvinga makeke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndakavinga iye mbune</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Handina kuvinga zvokufuka I did not come for dresses
Asi ndakavinga iye But I came solely for him
Pandakaroorwa nemwana wenyu When I married your son
Aive murombo; shuro yaimwa mvura nembama He was as poor as a church mouse
Nhasi musha wake rave dhorobha Today his home is the town
Ndosemesa kwaari ndatove mvemve I am a useless rag before him
Nhasi nokuti wandichembedza Today because he has used me up
Ndave kumufinha semuswe wegwai I am a bother to him
Dai vakadzi vairovorerwa kudya If wives were married for food
Vana vehurudza vazombororwawo here Would the rich's children ever marry?
Zviri nane kufamba ndakashama It is better to walk naked
Asi parudo ndichiwana rwunoringana But receiving adequate love

(Matavire, 1992 Iye mbune)

Matavire’s (1992) Iye Mbune (Himself alone) is a social protest that laments a woman’s trauma of being left by the husband as he pursues off--ramp engagements. In the song, the female persona finds occasion to let out her concerns to her aunt; a culturally honoured protocol in Shona society (Gombe, 1996). The Shona people believe in procedural conflict resolution as observed by Batidzirayi (1998) where people who are traditionally sanctioned to perform certain duties are allowed space to execute them.

The song reflects on the various lame excuses advanced by most husbands not to be close to their wives. Using melancholy as a technique to vent out emotion, the artiste uses the grieving woman as mouthpiece for love-starved women. Materialism is not love, hence even if the woman is well supported; the most critical issue sustaining marriage is love. The lamenting voice has been ‘spoiled’ with all the niceties but these are trashed as the real factors in marriage. The husband has bought her dresses (zvokufuka), cakes (makeke) but these will not satet her cry for affection (Chikuru rudo munhamo nematambudziko / Love is the best thing in all situations). She goes on to remind that marriage is not established on the foundation of wealth but on love. She married him when he was still very poor because she loved him, hence she reminds:
She uses a metaphor *asina nenda pamutimwi* (Literally, without even a louse on the buckle) to show how poor he was. Traditionally, for a louse to stick on a person it meant they had some blood to offer and therefore rich. The poor could not afford, metaphorically, to feed even a louse. Now the distressed woman dismisses materialism as a factor in marriage. She even intimates that it would be better to walk naked but in the consolation of love. She pitches love above every imaginable aspect in marriage probably as a reminder for materialistic people to place love above every other thing. She questions; if people were married for material reasons, would the children of the rich ever get married? People marry because of love. The tendency in the so-called global village has been to raise materialism as the focus of marriage. It also emerges from the song that distance is dangerous for any relationship. The husband is consumed by the city while the wife writhes in ‘starvation’ at home. He seems to think more of his work and less of his wife at home:

\[
\begin{align*}
Nhazi musha wake rave dhorobha & \quad \text{Today his home has become the city} \\
Owoneka kamwe pagore sekisimisi & \quad \text{He is seen once a year like Christmas} \\
Ibasu rudzii nhai vatete & \quad \text{What kind of occupation is it?} \\
risina livhi, otu kana hwikendi... & \quad \text{Without a leave or some weekend?}
\end{align*}
\]

In Zimbabwe, the urban industrial employment has either taken the wife away from the husband or has taken away family time from the home (Kahari, 1990 and Chiwome, 1996) and in the process dealt a heavy blow on love. Work assignments and preoccupation with income earning errands have severely affected relationships. Husbands and wives now spend more time away from home than around their families.

Love music in Zimbabwe is an overwhelming response to changing trends in global interpretations of the phenomenon. Besides global processes like globalisation, independence itself opens new definitions to things we have always seen as static in posture and meaning. In a globalising world where local conceptions of local
phenomena are increasingly receiving an alternative interpretation, the need to redefine love is a motivation that pushes the postcolonial Shona artiste in a number of music compositions. The artiste strives to negotiate space for the discussion of love themes in their variety and plurality. The traditional conception of love has since been overtaken by the global trends in a fast changing socio-economic atmosphere.

6.1.4 Domestic violence

Although there is no universally agreed conception of domestic violence, there are shades of its reference in some pieces of popular music in Zimbabwe. Chari, (2008:101) notes that, “the levels of violence vary from subtle emotional violence to outright physical subjugation”. The two are interrelated as one may lead to the other or is generally located where one is. Mtukudzi’s (2005) Tozeza Baba (We are afraid of the father) chronicles the negative effects of alcoholism which lead to domestic violence:

Tozeza baba (We are afraid of the father)

*Imi baba manyanya, kurova amai*  You father you always beat mother  
*Munoti isu vana, tofara sei?*  How can we as you children be happy?  
*Kana mai vachingochema pameso pedu...*When our mother is always crying before us  
*Hunzi ponda hako ndifire pavana vangu*  She cries, even if you kill me I will not leave my children  
*Ponda hako ndifire pavana vangu*  You can kill me so I die where my children are  
*Tozeza Baba, tozeza baba*  We are afraid of the father  
*Baba chidhakwa*  Our father is a drunkard

(Mtukudzi, 2005 Tozeza baba)

The artiste graphically presents a scenario seen in some Zimbabwean families where the father returns home after some intake of alcohol and starts to instill fear in the children or beats their mother. The father has become a habitual wife abuser (*baba manyanya kurova amai* / father you are always beating mother) and children have become the artiste’s voice of protest against wife abusers. The children’s happiness is eroded because the father is always beating their mother, hence, *munoti isu vana tofara sei?* (How do...
you expect us to be happy as children?). With the resilience typical of African women, the wife would rather die than leave her children hence *Ponda hako ndifire pavana vangu* (even if you kill me I will not leave my children). Alcoholism has been cited as the main cause of spousal gender based violence as Tom and Musingafi (2013) argue. It comes out in the song that domestic violence in Zimbabwe comes in the form of verbal abuse which can be more fatal than physical abuse since its effects are not localised or easily seen but residual.

Tobias Areketa's (1988) *Baba namai* (Father and Mother) abhors the verbal violence that parents engage in before their children and the resultant effects on their education and social life.

*Baba namai* (Father and Mother)

*Baba namai zvamunoita pamusha pano* Father and mother what you are doing at this home

*Munogarotukana vana varipo* You always scold each other before the children

*Hamuzivi here kuti munokanganisa mhuri* Don’t you know that you are disturbing the family

*Ndati shuwa munotadza* Sure what you are doing is wrong

*Nemiwo baba mukanzwa amai vopenga* And when you father hear mother saying nasty words

*Hamuzivi here kuti munokanganisa mhuri* Don’t you know that you are disturbing the family

*Imi semurume mobuda mofamba-famba* You as a husband walk out on your wife

*Ndati shuwa munotadza* Sure, what you are doing is wrong

*Vana voenda kuchikoro* When children go to school

*Mabhuku oramba* Nothing comes out of school

*Vamwe voenda kumabasa* When others go to work

*Basa roramba* Nothing comes out of the work place

(Areketa *Baba namai* 1988)

Tobias Areketa discourses domestic violence with a focus on its effects (*Hamuzivi here kuti munokanganisa mhuri* Don’t you know that you are disturbing the family). The culture of habitual verbal abuse (*munogarokutukana*) disturbs the unity and peace in the family. The artiste
bemoans collapse of conflict resolution in the home. The new nucleated families have suffered due to its detachment from the compound family (Chirozva, Mubaya and Mukamuri (2010). The compound family was an effective conflict resolution centre although it had its own problems. The family in the mirror of music struggles to find a lasting solution to its problems. The father walks away each time the mother shouts at him (*Imi semurume mobuda motamba-famba / You as a husband walk out on your wife*). The problem remains unresolved. Although the problem stems from the home, it tracks the man and the children to their places of engagement. Children can not concentrate at school and the father is stressed at work. Kiren Zulu (2011) in *Murume* (The husband) reinforces this further:

*Murume* (The husband)

Zvamunoita vana vachiona Everything children see  
Zvinokanganisa vana... Disturbs them  
*Chose chaungaite tanga wadzinga vana...* Everything you do, chase children away  
*Tunotevedzera* Because they do after your example  

(Zulu, 2011 *Murume*)

The artiste discourages fighting before the children since this presents a very bad example for them. UNICEF (2016) observes that “children who are exposed to violence in the home may have difficulty learning and limited social skills, exhibit violent, risky or delinquent behaviour, or suffer from depression or severe anxiety.” Domestic violence thus has ripple effects on children. According to Tom and Musingafi, (2013) local statistical evidence confirms the severity of this scourge in society. Bulawayo 24 News (2012) reports on the high incidence of domestic violence in Zimbabwe. The online news channel reports that in a document presented by the council's national coordinator Ms Opper Musumhi-Maravyika, it was also revealed that courts handled 2 040 cases in 2009, 4 906 in 2010 and 2 665 in the first quarter of 2011. This has heightened the need to raise awareness of the predicament even through the route of music.

Mungoshi (1970) in *Makunun'unu Maodzamoyo* labours to bring to life the problem of family disintegration caused by exchange of bitter words. His work is an ironic reflection
on one of the problems that Zimbabwean families live with. The Shona proverb forbids *matukano* (verbal slurs) to be heard outside the home. The Shona people believe in conflict resolution processes that involve members of the extended family (Gombe, 1998). The woman in Kiren Zulu’s (2011) *Murume* (The husband) proposes that *babamukuru* intervenes and negotiates peace in the home “*babamukuru mutsiurel*” (elder brother please reprimand him). The artiste yearns for a return to the traditional African family conflict resolution as seen in the extended family. This could imply that nucleated and individualised families of in the so-called global village are dismally failing to stamp out or at least dowse domestic conflicts.

Daiton Somanje's (2011) *Musha Uyo* (This home) looks at the issue of domestic violence and alienation from one’s labour.

*Musha Uyo* (This home)

*Imba ino ndakaivaka ndini wani.* By the way it is me who built this home

*Musha uwo ndakamisa ndini wani...* By the way it is me who built this home

*Makanganwa motora tsvimbo morova* You have now forgotten, now you take a stick to beat me

*Magara mushe, motora demo motema* You have now properly settled now you take an axe to

Cut me

*Makanganwa motora, demo motema* You have forgotten now, you take an axe to cut me

*Pfungwa dzangu* What I think,

*Pfungwa dzangu mai ndoenda* What I think is that I go

(Somanje, 2011 *Musha uyo*)

The wife has built the home in line with the African traditional proverb *Musha mukudzi* (a home is because of the wife) which regards the wife as the effort behind the home. But after all the effort has been invested, the woman wails that the she has been beaten to the point of contemplating leaving the home. Husbands habitually apply physical violence on their wives forcing them to succumb and leave what they would have
worked for. This way, violence is used as dispossession tactic to alienate women from the products of their sweat.

While the female persona in Tozeza baba will not leave her children no matter the heat (Ponda hako ndifire pavana vangu / kill if you may; i will not leave my children), the wife in Kireni Zulu’s (2011) Murume (The husband) contemplates leaving the troubled home:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ini Ndoenda} & \quad \text{I am going} \\
\text{Babamukuru in ndoenda} & \quad \text{Uncle I am going}
\end{align*}
\]

Running away from home has been reported elsewhere as a solution from gender-based violence (The Gender Equality Network 2015). However, Mtukudzi presents a larger-than-life wife who can stand the heat despite the habitual abuse served her by the husband. The wife represents an idealistic if not rare remnant species of African women who will wither the storm no matter what. Some families in Zimbabwe appear peaceful simply because some wives have developed a leather heart to withstand the pressure of abuse. This crust is usually instigated at culture as Machingura (2012: internet) alleges:

Even if the marriage has proved to be an albatross to the neck of women; respected elderly men and women take the leading role in persuading the woman to persevere as well as preserve the marriage. It is such sad cases where elderly women, aunts persuade the abused married women to stay and endure.

The author, however, cites the voice of culture as the culprit behind abuse without committing himself to establishing why culture encouraged staying the course. Traditional African culture believed in the transience of problems and hence encouraged members to face the problems head on (Mudzanire and Gondo, 2014).
Kireni Zulu deplores violence as a means of solving conflicts and tensions in the home but sees it as leading to incidences of divorce. Such verbal or physical abuses as seen in families may lead to denial of conjugal rights. Social sanctions such as denial of conjugal rights or not sharing the matrimonial bedroom are a sign of weakness in the home. Kireni Zulu agrees with this:

*Mainini* (wife’s young sister)

*Mainini imba hainzarwo* Aunt you can not run a home like that

*Matukana morara mukicheni* When you scold each other you sleep in the

Kitchen

*Imi morara nedumbu* You sleep on your stomach

*(Zulu: Mainini)*

Domestic violence in some cases has led to dysfunctional or nominal marriages where the wife and the husband no longer share the same bedroom or have some semblance of a marriage when they are, in fact, bleeding from within. The metaphor *kurara nedumbu* (sleeping on one’s stomach) euphemises denial of conjugal rights just as sleeping in the kitchen points to the husband and wife not sharing their matrimonial bed.

Mtukudzi in *Todii?* (1999) makes a fly-past reference to spousal rape as an aspect of domestic violence. Oliver Mtukudzi reflects on the pain of marital rape when he asks:

*Todii?* (What shall we do?)

*Zvinorwadza sei kubhinywa newaugere naye* How painful it is to be raped by the one you stay

With!

*Uchiziva kuti unahwo utachiwana* When you know you have the virus

*Zvinorwadza sei kubhinywa neakabvisa pfuma* How painful it is to be raped by the one who

Paid a bridal fee for you!

*Hee Todii?* What shall we do?

*Senzeni?* What shall we do?

What shall we do?
Marital rape is difficult to reconcile with the customary marriage which asserts that a wife cannot deny her husband sex. Until recently, many rape statutes excluded spouses, making it legal for a husband to rape his wife (Domestic Abuse Shelter of Florida Keys). Although the traditional conception was very correct in its context, in these days of HIV and AIDS it becomes delicately unsafe to obstinately insist that a wife has no voice especially when her health is at stake. To reflect on the desperation the nation is facing the question Todii?/ What shall we do? remains unanswered. To reinforce the idea of desperation, the artiste uses tapiwa (we are left with no idea), a metaphor that ably captures the nation’s perplexity. tapiwa implies being at the end of one’s wits.

It emerges that the husband has forced himself on the wife and in the process knowingly infected her with the HIV and AIDS virus. How painful it is for the wife to be raped by an infected partner (Kubhinywa newaugere naye/ To be raped by a person with whom you stay Uchiziva kuti unahwo utachiwana / When you know you have the virus). The Sexual Offences Act of 2001 protects women from abuse and criminalises marital rape (Hansard, 2007). The artiste laments the deliberate infection of HIV and AIDS by people who already know their positive status. The husband to whom the wife looks up for protection suddenly becomes one among the menaces that women have to contend with. Willful infection is a criminal offence according to the Sexual Offences Act of 2003 attracting a custodial sentence.

Not much work has been recorded on violence against men except Daiton Somanje’s (2002) Mai Linda (Linda’s Mother) which refers to a rare case of abuse of men by women. The abuse is usually verbal and not physical. Somanje reflects on the verbal abuse:

\[
\text{Mai Linda (Linda’s Mother)}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Mai Linda iwe unoshupu...} & \quad \text{Mai Linda you are vexatious} \\
\text{Wosvika kumba uchingoshaudha ini murume wako} & \quad \text{You come home shouting at me your} \\
\text{Husband...} & \\
\end{align*}
\]
If I were your wife, I would run away from that Home.

(Somanje, 2002 Mai Linda)

This serves to send a signal that men too are some of the forgotten victims of gender based violence. Although studies have found low statistics of male victims of feminine violence (Mutepfa, 2009), Somanje’s song is a tip of the iceberg. The issue could be more recurrent than is often estimated. Some husbands may nurse a sense of shame or humiliation as a barrier of disclosure about their experiences.

Although the theme of domestic violence has been extensively discussed in pre-independence literature and anthropological studies, its postcolonial articulation in music in popular music can not be discussed outside broader national issues. Political and socio-economic factors play out to exact a heavy toll on social stability and family harmony. Economic problems which are largely blamed on the political developments have spilled into the home to shake marriages to their foundations. The issue can not be discussed outside unfolding globalisation as a process that continues to prescribe unrealistic solutions for African families. Although the causes may not always be local, the effects are local and far reaching. Domestic violence continues to be a serious threat to family security and arguably national security. It is an affront to human dignity.

6.1.5 Divorce

Owing to a number of causes, including domestic violence, divorce cases have given the artiste the impetus to critically reflect on the theme. Mtukudzi, Steve Makoni and others have touched on the incidence of divorce in Zimbabwe, reflecting on the causes, effects and patterns.

Steve Makoni in (1994) Handiende (I will not go away), redone by Oliver Mtukudzi, walks us through the pains and injustices of divorce that most Zimbabwean women go through:
Handiende (I will not go away),

Handiende... I will not go
Makore mangani tiri tose? How many years have we been together?
Vana vangani tiri tose? How many children do we have between us?
Nhasi wondiudza kumusha Today you tell me to go away
Musha wandinoziva ndeuno The only home i know is this one
Dikita misodzi zvakayerera Sweat and tears rolled
Ndinogarira vana vangu I will stay for the sake of my children
Ndofira vana vangu I will die for my children
Handiende... I will not go...
Kana vari mainini ngavauye, togara tese If it is young wife you want to marry, let her come, we
Will stay together
Inga vakuru vakataura kuwanda huuya By the way, elders said being many is good
Museve wakapotera pamuzukuru An arrow missed the nephew
Kuenda handiende I am not going
Nhasi wandichembedza Today you have made me old
Mhuri tayarutsa kani We have raised the family today
Wondiudza kumusha You now tell me to go home
Musha wandinoziva ndeuno.. The only home I know is this one

(Makoni, 1994 Handiende)

In this song the female persona pledges to stay her course in spite of the pressure for her to leave the family and all she has worked for over the years. The song serves as an encouragement for women to stick to their families no matter the heat; a sober afrocentric prescription in marriages (Hudson-weems, 2004). Where some cultures of the world would have encouraged divorce as an option, the former encourages staying the course:

Handiende... I will not go
Kudzamara wondiudza pandimire chaipo ipo ipo... until you tell i know where exactly i stand
Kudzamara wondiudza pandimire chaipo ipo ipo... until you tell i know where exactly i stand
Baba vemwana Father of child
The wife is defiant and will not be cowed into submitting to the pressure to leave a family in which she has invested sweat and time:

*Musha wandinoziva ndeuno* The only home i know is this one

*Dikita misodzi zvakayerera* Sweat and rears flowed.

He takes the occasion to remind the husband that she has contributed significantly to the reality of a home. She has invested effort to establish a home and in Africa in general, and in Zimbabwe in particular a good wife is rightly recognised as the magic behind a home, hence the proverb *musha mukadzi*. She reminds the husband the number of years they have been together in the family (*Makore mangani tiri tose?* / *How many years have we been together*), and time anywhere is a measure of effort. Time is money. It is a marker of investment of strength and should not be expended anyhow. As a product of that time, she also reminds the husband how many children they have had between them. Children are a solid reason for one to stay in marriage. They are sired in pain and are therefore one cannot part with one’s sweat easily, just like any family project. One cannot be separated from the product of their labour for no apparent reason hence, *handiende*. While it is easy for men to count their children, for every woman each child reminds them of birth pains (in some cases, caesarean operations) but which translates to what Emecheta (1979) calls “the joys of motherhood”. How unfair it is for the woman to be told she no longer has relevance in her own home and family? In Africa, marriage takes a woman permanently from her family as she goes to join her husband’s family and for one to send away a woman after many years to her maiden family is akin to throwing out a tenant on a rainy night. A woman in a marriage establishes her home by her own hands. The persona reminds the husband that the only home she knows is the one she has built and cannot be moved away (*Musha wandinoziva ndeuno*). Such bold defiance helps reclaim the woman’s afrocentric role as the mother of the home.

In her melancholy, she wonders whether his husband wants to marry another wife (*mainini*; junior wife) who could be the reason for the divorce. Although polygamy was accepted in the traditional society (Masinire, et al 2013); in the postcolonial society it is considered a vice that cannot be celebrated but the troubled wife sees it as a safer evil
than being divorced. (Demotion is a better evil than retrenchment). She would rather share her husband than be chased away from a home she has established. She is now old and cannot have the strength to establish another home and too old to start another family. The phrase *wandichembedza* (you have used me up) is meant to remind the husband that she is now ‘spent’ and can no longer start a new life elsewhere. Women are more vulnerable in divorce than men. They are socially stigmatised for failed marriages and for that reason they can cling on to marriage even when it is dysfunctional (Gender Across Boarders (2012). When old they may not attract any suitors and when past menopause, are not reproductively active. Most marriages are for children and in this regard women expire when men are considered eternally reproductive hence the proverb *murume ijongwe rinofa richikukuridza* (a man is a cock he crow to his old age).

In some cases pleasure seeking has been cited as the basis of exit from the marriage union. The postcolonial culture has shaken the marriage institution to a point where pleasure outstrips principle. The integrity of the marriage has been challenged by the unbridled desire for materialism. Naison and Simon Chimbetu’s (1985) *Maggie* sees materialism as the cause of divorce:

*Maggie*

*Ndaiwe naye wandaiti ndewangu*  
I used to have someone I considered my own

*Zvakaperanokufamba kwenguva*  
It just ended with the passage of time

*Mazuva ose ndabvakubasa*  
Everyday when I came from work

*Aivhunza zvakawandawanda*  
She would ask a lot of questions

*Maichipovane pemuwani*  
Chipo’s mother has dressed hair

*Murume wavo anemotokari*  
Her husband has a car

*Ndakamutitarimaggie*  
I said listen Maggie,

*Nhomo haitengwiniemari*  
Poverty is not deliberate choice.

*(Chimbetu and Chimbetu, 1985 Maggie)*

Maggie the eponymous character left her marriage because the husband could not satisfy her insatiable appetency for materialism. Chari (2008:100) notes that in
Zimbabwean music, with reference to urban grooves, “women are also presented as parasitic beings with an obsession for material things”. The lady in Chimbetus’ piece divorces her husband because she could not get what other women in her neighbourhood were getting. A lot of families are living borrowed lives and those which can not withstand the pressure easily break. The song dramatises some women’s obsession with materialism; a hallmark of moral bankruptcy. The artistes seek to portray such marriages as untenable in postcolonial Zimbabwe.

The general reflection by artistes is that the current spate of divorce can be traced to the issue of infidelity, domestic violence and materialism, all which have resulted family disintegration and agony of the affected families. Artistes present the effects of such divorce as hitting wives the hardest. They have to suffer loss of love investment in the family and in most cases may not find any suitors as they would have gone past their ‘sell by date’.

6.1.6 The HIV and AIDS conundrum

HIV and AIDS have now attained agenda status in every country, community and family. They have saturated the attention of virtually every sector of society; from the social, political and to the economical. Zimbabwean artistes have also participated in debating the pandemic from the perspective of its perceived causes, effects and solutions. Suffice to say that the issue has become a riddle society tries to find answers to, albeit, without success.

There is a general consensus among Zimbabweans that AIDS is a disease transmitted through prostitution and promiscuous behaviour (Chireshe and Chireshe, 2003, Tsodzo, 2007 and Zinhumwe, 2012) and the position has led to artistes like Matavire (2013) to reflect on it from such a perspective in Yakauya AIDS (AIDS has come). The song parades people’s perceptions and conceptions on the causes and nature of the disease. Matavire opens his piece with an appeal to the elders to counsel their children that AIDS is now an undeniable fact in ‘our midst’:
An appeal to elders (amai nababa, ambuya nasekuru) is confirmation of the African culture as dependent on the guidance of those elders as the ones who have seen it all. Materereke and Mapara (2009) note that among Shona people old age represent wisdom and knowledge. The young are generally experimental, exploratory and generally believe that AIDS is simply a myth to discourage them from exploring their sexuality. Already there is a tenuous assertion that AIDS is an American Idea to Discourage Sex which has helped drive the spread of the disease (Mafundikwa, 2015 and Edgerton, 2004:236). Matavire finds space to contest this view and establish AIDS as a reality rather than fiction.

Matavire raises a clarion call on the incidence of the disease as a fact not to be ignored anymore. The artiste alleges that the disease is caused by promiscuity (Pane vamwe vedu vasingadi kuona rogwe kuti mvee zvaipa... there are some of us who are ever chasing after ladies.) ‘Skirt chasers’ are portrayed as exposing themselves to the risk of contracting the deadly disease. This is so because multiple partners have a higher risk of contracting the disease (Shumba, Mapfumo and Chademana, 2011 and Tsodzo, 2007) and the solution
is sticking to one partner which is a catch phrase in most HIV and AIDS awareness programmes. Matavire sees it as a punishment for sin (MuBayiro wezvivi ndinwo rufu / The wages of sin is death) as outlined in Romans 6v23. The religious interpretation of the disease is hospitable with both the traditional and Christian interpretation of disease as shamhu (literally: a whip/ metaphorically: punishment). Steve Makoni in Vakasasana uses the idiom vadzimu vadambura midya yemberekho (the spirit mediums have torn the baby strapping chords) to show that the ancestors have reneged on their responsibility of protecting the family. Gombe (1998) and Bourdillon (1982) remark that the Shona people firmly believe that their ancestors protect them from harm and for that reason their faith in them is based on functionality. Matavire entreats divine intervention as a solution and divine solutions are generally considered prescriptions of last resort when humanity would have been pummeled to their wits’ end.

Mtukudzi’s (1999) Todii (What shall we do) and Chingaira’s Tapera (We are wiped away) are two songs that parade the fear and hopelessness that have gripped the nation as a result of the disease. For Mtukudzi the disease is an unanswered question that has pushed the nation to the ropes:

*Todii? (What shall we do?)*

Zvinorwadza sei kubhinywa newaugere naye  How painful it is to be raped by the one you stay
With!

Uchiziva kuti unahwo utachiwana      When you know you have the virus

Zvinorwadza sei kubhinywa neakabvisa pfuma How painful is it to be raped by the one who
Paid a bridal fee for you

Hee Todii                          What shall we do?

Senzeni                          What shall we do?

What shall we do?

Zvinorwadza sei kuchengeta rufu mumaoko... How painful it is to nurse death in your hands

Ko zvapabata pamuviri pasina raramo? Now that one has conceived a lifeless pregnancy

(Mtukudzi 1999, Todii?)

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He reflects; zvinorwadza sei kuchengeta rufu mumaoko (How painful it is to nurse death in your hands)

As the world searches for answers to the HIV and AIDS pandemic continues, victims and caregivers are perennially troubled by the pandemic (Ruparanganda, 2011). Mtukudzi recounts the horror of taking care of victims of a terminal infection. Care giving has severely been affected by the notion that the disease is contagious (Subero, 2014), incurable and fatal hence efforts to prolong the lives of the victims are simply delaying tactics for an inescapable fate; a fact both the victim and the care giver are seized with. The victim may simply be uncooperative or the giver may adopt an offhand attitude towards their tasks. He asks the same question in three local languages, Shona, English and Ndebele probably to appeal to the majority of the Zimbabweans in search of an answer:

*Hee Todii* What shall we do?

*Senzeni* What shall we do?

*What shall we do?*

Such is the desperation that grips the nation and the whole world. The search for the cure has proved elusive.

The willful transmission of the disease is also brought to the fore. The sexual aggressor in this case a marital partner willfully infects their spouse (*Uchiziva kuti unahwo utachiwana* When you know you have the virus). Two crimes are committed in the name of marriage; marital rape and wilful infection. The Zimbabwean 2013 constitution criminalises intentional transmission of the disease. It is defined as failure to disclose one’s status or take precautions for preventing the transmission of HIV and AIDS (Constitution of Zimbabwe 2013). Mtukudzi reflects on the pain of wilful infection on the victim particularly by a husband who should be the protector for the delicate woman. Most innocent wives end up infected through their husbands who would have acquired the virus from liaisons outside matrimony.

*Zvinorwadza sei kubahinywa newakabvisa ptuma* How painful it is to be raped by the your own Husband?

*Achiziva kuti anahwo utachiona?* Knowing that they are infected with the virus
Mtukudzi abhors transmission of the virus through spousal rape perpetrated by a person from whom one expects love and protection. In some verses Mtukudzi expresses the issue of neonatal infections where one is born with the virus acquired from the parents. The wailing *Ko zvapabata pamuviri pasina raramo?* (Now that one has conceived a lifeless pregnancy) tries to alert on the high chances of giving birth to an already infected child? Chances of life are next to nothing, the artiste alleges. New borns are extremely exposed to maternal HIV infection write Krist and Crawford-Faucher (2002). The artiste seems to hint that there is no life in the new born baby. However, this situation has improved with the prevention of mother to child infection programmes in the hospitals where pregnant women are tested periodically for the virus but it is a big problem where these interventions have not been availed.

The HIV and AIDS pandemic has drawn mixed reactions among Zimbabweans, where some people find occasion to ‘mock the sick victims ‘of the pandemic. Steve Makoni’s (1999) *Vakasasana* and Kenneth Chigodora’s (1990) *Ndine Urombo* (I am pitiful) caricature the victims through graphic and comic descriptions of their physical conditions probably to scare those who dare venture into transactions associated with its transmission.

*Ndine Urombo* (I am pitiful)

*Iko kuonda*;

*How thin they are;*

*Maziso akanga asara zvino kunge mabhatanisi eparenikoti* The eyes resemble the buttons of a Raincoat

*Iwo magokora*;

*Look at the elbows*

*Kunge mosikito yakamhara paganda remango* Like a mosquito that is patching on a mango peel

*Kucherechedza mhino kudai izvi,*

*Look at the nose*

*Kuona munho yasara yoga kunge bhaudhi repaBirchnough* The nose resembles a Birchnough Bridge bolt

*Mbabvu dzange dzave kuita seeriya yeTV*...

*The ribs resemble a TV antena*

*Wazvionaka tAmbokuti sara iwe ndokubva waramba* You see, we used to say remain behind

*And you refused*

*Ukaona munhu aonda musoro kunge gaba rebhifika!* To see a person’s head thins like a tin of
Chigodora uses similes of mocking to describe their stature. Their lean stature is compared to a mosquito patching on a mango peel (magokora kunge mosikwito yakamhara paganda remango). He similizes their slender figure to an unpopular insect (mosquito) to reflect the miserability of the victim’s condition. The disease is then read as a disease of mischief and licentiousness. Most victims are seen as people who would have caught up with their misdemeanours. Such colouring of its victims makes their home based rehabilitation very difficult as they are seen as people who wilfully courted the disease (Ruparanganda, 2011). The victims end up losing public sympathy. Chigodora in Shuramatongo suggests that the disease is a spread by those who do not pay heed to advice (Ndakakuti sara ukamba... I advise you not to go but you refused). The artiste combines humour and sarcasm to put across a serious message. These are used to mock those who acquire the disease through promiscuity but this has a danger for their home based care. The social embarrassment of the sexual nature of HIV transmission is a stigma that worsens the pandemic (Campbell, Skovdal, Madanhire, Mugurungi and Nyamukapa, 2011). The victim is wasting away because of the disease and his gaunt frame becomes the artiste’s comic butt that is meant to discourage promiscuity. In the same vein, Steve Makoni’s Vakasasana (those who enjoyed themselves) employs the same strategy of caricaturing the victims of AIDS/HIV to parade the disease as caused by mischief. The phrase, kungorumwa ganda ndondondo, tsva midnight and referring to the hair as greeting aliens ‗hallo, hallo’ is to mock the skin and hair of the terminally ill. Just like Matavire, Steve Makoni (1999) in Vakasasana kare (Those who enjoyed life long back) sees it as a disease for the daringly stubborn, those who disparage warning. He likens it to dancing with a venomous snake; playing hide-and-seek with a black mamba.

Vakasasana kare (Those who enjoyed life long back)

Mazuvano varume These days gentlemen
Kuzeyesana nerovambira It is like dancing with a mamba
He uses the dangerous animal trope to candidly portray the danger of exposing oneself to the disease. The disease is incurable and once one acquires it that is a sure case, they will eventually die. He uses dangerous snakes to impress images of fatality and in the process discourage promiscuity and irresponsible behaviour.

6.1.7 Gender issues

Although the relationship between men and women is as old as life; the politics of gender is more pronounced now than before as cultures of the world mix with local ones to seriously disfigure and shock local conceptions of gender. In Zimbabwe, artistes debate critical gender issues that continue to worry society. In a society that is home to various cultures, it is relatable for this study to examine how various artistes reflect on the resultant discourses.

Paul Matavire (1993) in his song *Dhiyabhorosi nyoka* (Evil Snake) traces the duel of the sexes to the biblical story of ‘fall of men’ where Adam succumbed to the treachery of the woman and the scheming serpent (the devil) as explained in Genesis 3.

*Dhiyabhorosi nyoka* (Evil Snake)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dai vasivo</th>
<th>Had it not been for them</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nyika iyo ino ingadai riri sango remichero, mudyandigere...This country would have been a big Orchard, a luxurious land</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Musatinakurira nyoka iyí</em></td>
<td>Don’t shift the blame on us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Totochema namunyengeri dhiyabhorosi nyoka</em></td>
<td>We have the devil to blame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Musatinakurira nyoka iyí</em></td>
<td>Don’t shift the blame on us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Totochema namunyengeri dhiyabhorosi nyoka</em></td>
<td>We have the devil to blame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adamu asati awana wakanga asina chivi</td>
<td>Be Adam was married he was sinless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Murume ichiri tsvimborume wakange ari mutsvene</em></td>
<td>The man as a bachelor was holy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akange asina chivi</td>
<td>He was sinless</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here, Eve and the devil outwitted Adam to break a standing divine rubric handed down from God. Matavire retells the same story to reinforce the claim that women are bad. That biblical story places women on the side of the devil, the bad; while Adam represents God, the good. The juxtaposition of good and evil on the male female relationship serves to project them on a moral continuum where one extreme represents men while another represents women. Chari (2008:106) observes this about urban grooves male artistes’ portrayal of females; “women are always found on the wrong end of the urban grovers’ stick”. Such portrayal of women tends to mobilize patriarchal sentiment in crusades that demonise and authenticate women as pinnacles of evil.

Matavire paddles the impression that the women are inherently pernicious, niggling and are a constant vexation for men, hence, Dai vasivo (had it not been them (women). This has the effect of perpetuating the vilification of women. The artiste then alleges that all the problems on earth are caused by women. Had it not been because of women this earth would have been a forest full of fruits (nyika iyo ino ringadai riri sango remichero). The sango remichero (forest of fruits) metaphor is a continuation of the biblical Garden of Eden which project has been scuttled by women.

However, there are other artistes who project women and men in fair light. Oliver Mtukudzi represents that male section of society that sees women differently. Mbabvu Yangu (My Rib) (1996) is a trope from the same biblical story of creation. The artiste takes the roles of the men and women as complementary as espoused by Hudson-weems (2004). The male persona behind the lyrics seems to suggest that before
marriage he was incomplete (gasva). The woman is seen as coming into the marriage to make the men whole (wazadzisa);


*Nhasi uno iwewe ndorimbira pauri* Today I stick to your

*Wazadzisa upenyu hwangu* You have made my life whole

*Hwanga huri gasva* Which was half full

*Makore makumi mana anoraudzira* For over fourty years

*Ndichishaya chimiro* I have been lacking in respect

*Wazadzisa upenyu hwangu* You have made my life whole

*Hwanga huri gasva* Which was empty

*Uchiziva kufumuka kwangu* You knew my emptiness

*Kushaya chiremerera pane vamwe* Lacking in respect among others

*Wazadzisa upenyu hwangu, Daisy...* You have made my life whole, Daisy

*Iwo marehwarehwa evanhu* All people’s gossip

*Pauri ndoopaonosvikira* Lands on your ear

*Wazadzisa upenyu hwangu* You have made my life whole

*Kungonzwa kuti tapesana* If they hear that we have quarrelled

*Vanorova bembera* They will have a veiled protest

*Pandinonetseka ndiwe wega uripo* You are there with me when I am stressed

*Ndiwe mbavu yangu; ndiwe* You are my rib; you are

*Wazadzisa upenyu hwangu* You have made my life whole

*Hwanga huri gasva* It was empty.

(Mtukudzi, 1996 *Mbabvu Yangu*)

The biblical story of creation (Genesis 2) records that women are a rib extracted from men; so created for complementing the former and by *Ndiwe mbavu yangu; ndiwe* (You are my rib; you are), the artiste confirms the complementary role of women. The male persona acknowledges prior to finding his love, he was a weightless person in his society. A bachelor at over forty years (*Makore makumi mana anoraudzira / For over fourty years*) becomes
a disgrace in his society as he is seen as abdicating or postponing his procreation mandate. He is considered an unco-operative cog in the wheels of continuity. The wife comes as a gossip insulator (marehwarehwa evanhu pauri ndopanovikira / All people’s gossip lands on your lap) that blocks all destructive rumours. However, Mtukudzi seems to create for himself a larger than life wife character different from the typical portrayal of women as rumour monikers as discoursed in studies by Roussel (2013) and Masule (2014). Unremitting in his sanitization of stereotyped portrayal of women, Mtukudzi sees women as helping in lifting that burden of stress. Stereotyped lenses generally portray women as stressing and annoying but for Mtukudzi when he is down; the wife is his shoulder to lean on. Such conception of gender is rare in postcolonial Shona society as seen through the lens of Shona music.

The same Africana womanism perspective of male-female complementarity oozes from Simon Chimbetu’s 2000 product, Mudzimai wangu/ Ndiwe chete (My wife/ you are the only one). The artiste embraces the ideal Afrocentric conception of a wife who is a mother of the family, a nurse, a caterer, a repairer of broken souls and a source of stability in the family. Such portrayal of women tears the veil of their invisibility in a predominantly patriarchal society as Akujobi (2011) advances. Chimbetu reflects:

*Mudzimai wangu/ Ndiwe chete* (My wife/ you are the only one)

*Ndiwe chete mudzimai wangu*  It is you alone my wife

*Ndiwe chetewatove mai vangu*  It is you alone that has become my mother

*Musi mumwe ndakuvara kubasa* One day I get hurt at work

*Ndiwe wodziisa mvura pamoto*  It is you who boils water for me

*Tochengeta hama zvakanaka*  We now take good care of all our relatives

*Dzose nokuti tato ne musha*  Because we now have a home

*Musi mumwe wandinorwara*  One day I get sick

*Ndiwe ndiwe kani unondichengeta* It is you who takes care of me

(Chimbetu, 2000 *Mudzimai wangu/ Ndiwe chete*)
Chimbetu represents a rare African voice that yearns for a return to the perfect male-female relationship in a globalising world which has been tremendously changing that relationship through feminist discourses that seek to contest and wrestle alleged male hegemony. He accords respect to a wife whose qualities epitomise the African wife. In Africa a wife is a mother even to her husband (Ndiwe chete watove mai vangu / It is you alone that has become my mother). This is so because the wife has assumed the caregiver role of the husband’s mother that she is just as good as his mother. Magosvongwe (2015) eloquently discourses the subject of motherhood in the African society and streamlines the manifold responsibilities it entails. The African mother is the head of the home. She provides for her family. She is a source of hope, a pillar of support to her husband and the source of shelter for her children. Chimbetu sees some of these qualities in his wife. The wife stands for that health spa which soothes the husband from pains incurred from industrial blades. In most paternalistic societies like Zimbabwe, the man as the head of the family endures the pains of searching for an income to sustain the family while the woman is there to provide comfort from the pains a day’s work.

*Musi mumwe ndakuvara kubasa One day I get hurt at work*

*Ndiwe wodziisa mvura pamoto Its you who boils water for me*

Even when the husband gets sick, she is the one who takes good care of the husband, even in these days of HIV and AIDS, many wives have diligently executed this traditionally bequeathed responsibility even when some men would have acquired this disease through reckless behaviour. However, some scholars like Akujobi (2011:4) hazard that such representations seem to “perpetuate highly prescriptive notions of motherhood” but the Africana womanism is hospitable with that agenda as long as it represents the true woman’s role in an African society.

From the multifaceted role of the woman emerges the role of taking care of the extended family; a term I am convinced has no equivalence in the Shona culture. All relatives are members of one’s family and Chimbetu sees the Zimbabwean woman as capable of taking care of the bigger family. A good wife is married to her husband’s family and should accept it as her responsibility to take care of the family. Both the
husband and the wife share this responsibility when each one of them takes their role as assigned by their culture.

Interestingly some of the few female artistes have taken the occasion of music to express the Africana womanism perception of the ideal African woman whose role is different but complementary to the masculine role (Hudson-Weems, 2004). In *Musavadadire varume* (Do not despise men), Tracy Mbirimi popularly known as Pah Chihera (2013) provokes the ire of radical feminists by suggesting that women cannot live without men.

*Musavadadire varume* (Do not despise men)

Musavadadire varume woye sevasina kutikoshera Do not despise men as if they are not precious

For us

Wangu murume ndiSinyoro My husband is a Sinyoro (of the Sinyoro totem)

Ini wakandikoshera He is precious to me

Vasikana handimborara Ladies, I can not sleep (because of thinking of him)

Sinyoro vane rudo Sinyoro is loving

Hatigoni kurarama vasipo varume woye We cannot live without them (men)

(Pah Chihera, 2013 *Musavadadire varume*)

A typical African woman pledges her loyalty to her husband. Pah Chihera prescribes submission as the African solution to the recurrent war of sexes. Chihera openly prides in her husband whom she admires for his love. She chooses to state it openly that her husband is precious for her (Ini wakandikoshera / He is precious to me), probably as an indirect response to that radical feminist voice that seeks to saver all ties with men. He is indispensable hence she cannot live without him (Hatigoni kurarama vasipo varume woye We cannot live without them (men)). Reminiscent of olden days of courtship poetry, she can not even sleep (Vasikana handimborara / Ladies, I can not sleep), always thinking of him. This goes on to show the amount of love women have for their husbands.
Chihera’s (2013) *Murume wangu* (My husband) restates the Africana womanism position of women in the family, that of being the mother of the home.

*Murume wangu* (My husband)

- **Handingasiye murume** I will not leave my husband
- **Nekuda kwehama dzemurume wangu** Because of my husband’s relatives
- **Ndikasiye murume wangu** If I left my husband
- **Anosafa vana vangu** Its my children who suffer
- **Ndainda ini** When I leave
- **Kana iri hondo ngaiuye** If it is a war
- **Hondo ndinoida** Let it come
- **Ndinorwira musha wangu** I will fight for my home

Chihera (2013 *Murume wangu*)

She steadfastly resists being shoved away from her home by any force, be it the husband’s relatives (*hama dzemurume wangu*). In a true African voice of a mother, she will not leave her children; a very important issue in marriage. Against the contemporary advice of leaving the home as advocated by other gender based violence pressure groups, she chooses to fight for her family (*Kana iri hondo ngaiuye, ndinorwira musha wangu* If it means fighting, I will fight for my home). She represents a very rare African voice of obstinate resistance to family pressures. She is Hudson-weems’s (2004) model of an African wife. Contrary to what is often considered of African women as weak and lacking in fighting resolve, the examples of Mbuya Nehanda of Zimbabwe, Queen Nzinga of Angola and Nonqawuse of the Xhosa point to the indefatigable qualities of agency in the often undervalued women.

John Chibadura’s (1996) *Pitikoti gavhumendi* (petticoat government) seems to come to the conclusion that gender issues can never be a matter of public prescriptions but are personal issues. There are some who think that they can ‘lecture’ prescriptions on
power politics in the home. Chibadura seems to suggest that people ought to leave gender relations at a personal level. He tells off those who laugh at him that he is under the influence of the wife:

*Pitikoti gavhumendi* (petticoat government)

*Vamwe munondiseka* Some of you laugh at me

*Kuti ndinotongwa nemukadzi* That I am being controlled by my wife

*Varumewe zviri mumba mangu ndizvo zvandinoita* Gentlemen what is in my home is what I do

(Chibadura, 1996 *Pitikoti gavhumendi*)

Chibadura speaks for people who have shifted from the traditional paternalistic families who have entered into some kind of power sharing agreement. In his scenario the wife has the authority much to the annoyance of some men who criticise this. The term petticoat government is not only political but a mocking one, meant to prod fun on men whose authority they think has been usurped by the woman. It turns out that it is by choice.

Some Zimbabwean artistes have tried to raise awareness on the plight of the disadvantaged women. As the nation grapples with the agony of poverty, which interesting, can be gendered some artistes like Mtukudzi have attempted to remind and highlight women’s vulnerability. Oliver Mtukudzi, in the song *Neriah*, locates an occasion to exude a rare masculine concern in postcolonial Zimbabwe for the feminine subculture. He empathises with women in difficult social circumstances. He censures the habit by some men to treat women as slaves (*vanhukadzi vanobatwa senhapwa, kugara senherera/ women are treated as slaves, they live like orphans*) for indeed there are some men who have abandoned the African culture of protecting women and have joined the forces that oppress them.

Mtukudzi commiserates with Neriah and adequately prepares her for life without her pillar of support; her husband. Mtukudzi (2002) empathises with Neriah, a victim of masculine greed;
He forearms her for harder times which demand metallic resilience (Zvinoda mwoyo wekushinga / Requires spiritual strength). There are temptations (Ngwarira mhepo dzeziyedzo / Beware of temptations) in widowhood. In the context of the song, a title track for a Zimbabwean film Neriah where the eponymous character is deprived of her deceased husband’s estate, it emerges that women suffer at the hands of selfish men. Mtukudzi however weakens their fight to liberate themselves from some of these warped patriarchal practices and point their plight to God (Mwari anewe / God is with you). He deflects feminine anger from men to God. Mtukudzi may then be interpreted as subtly conniving with forces that oppress women by shielding men from the fiery darts of women. He encourages women to be strong, courageous and resilient but the resource he prescribes for them has no stipulated action. One may question, be strong and do what? Mtukudzi does not suggest action but only recommends women to assume a mood of resilience.

At a time when most women are citing gender disparities between men and women, Chimbetu (1990) in Pasi riya rapinduka (The world has changed) contests the domination of men by women.
Pasi riya rapinduka (The world has changed)

Pasi riya rapinduka               The world has changed
Handichina mutaroro ini          I no longer have joy
Ndaifunga nguva iya apo ndaigara zvakanaka... I am reminded of the good times
Mudzimai wangu iye Julie...       My wife Julie
Ndiye wandaite mai vemba...       She is the one I used to call mother of the house
Ndagumburwa pabasa               When I am frustrated at work
Ndingatsamwe sei?                How can I be frustrated?
Ndainyevenuka ndave naJulie...   I would rejoice when I a was with Julie
Kubasa kunotongwa naforomani;    At work the foreman rules;
Kumba kwave kutongwa naiye Julie The home is ruled by the woman
Hanzi takafanana                  She says we are equal
Mwanasikan nemwanakomana         The female and male children

(Chimbetu, 1990 Pasi riya rapinduka)

He retreats into the olden days, in typical Sankofa reflection, and glorifies the traditional set up of marriage where the woman is the head of the home and the husband; the head of the family. In that regard, he sees the Africana womanism conception of a woman and man as different but complementary. Retreating into the past sets the past as sanctuary for the problems of modernity, whose politics of gender have threateningly eaten into masculine bliss. (Ndaifunga nguva iya apo ndaigara zvakanaka). He romanticises the past where he has the power and voice in his home.

He however, does not discuss gender power without locating the rightful position of the woman as the head of the home (Mudzimai wangu iye iye Julie/ Ndiye wandaiti mai vemba). He seems to assert that the place of the woman was in the home with her role being that of soothing the man from harsh labour conditions. It would seem that the changes brought about by the new modes of economy and their wage related engagements have significantly weighed into family matters where the authority of men is challenged from two fronts; the home and the work place. The foreman (foromani) represents some type
of domination for the man. This validates the observation by Rubaya and Gonye (2011:60) that:

Contrary to the popular view in some feminist quarters that all men in patriarchal societies enjoy protection under the male-biased society that brutalizes its weaker female members, there is, in fact, a certain class of underrepresented males who are victimized by a system believed to pamper them.

The contention is that gender is not tied to people’s bodies but is located in discursive practices (Hepburn, 2003: 110). In the workplace where men are in the majority, some men are bound to lose their masculinity as the authority tends to follow grades. The male persona struggles to make peace with his traditional socialisation that men have authority. He struggles to come to terms with some sense of castration that has suddenly emasculated his masculinity. The home and the work places seem to have disrobed him of his potency. This makes him feel less man, hence the melancholy.

It emerges later in the text that the artiste frowns upon the contemporary topical issue of gender impartiality. The male persona frowns at the vogue debate that there should be equality between men and women (Hanzi takafanana Mwansikana nemwanakomana). The debate dies hard among many Zimbabweans. A man who does not measure up to the Shona people’s conception of masculinity attracts the label ‘woman’; a negative (to the male subculture) label that quakes men into self-rehabilitation. All men abhor the label and would be quick to adjust their character and attitude to recover their masculine title.

Uncharacteristic of the Shona gender traditional relations, several artistes present women as expendable objects for male sexual gratification as they present them in sexist language and stereotyped frames. Chari, (2008:98) concurs that, “they are presented as objects of adoration, often with unusual beauty. Emphasis on cosmetic features results in sexualisation of women where they are presented as “play things” under the control of men or simply as sexual objects”. This is pervasive through out urban groves as the study by Chari (2008) entails, but is mutedly suggested in some popular sungura and other genres of popular music.
6.1.8 Poverty

The economic decline from about 1990 upwards features on the lips of the postcolonial artiste as they critically debate the causes, course and the resultant poverty. Artistes have joined the debate that every lay person has participated in and it is interesting to note how they see the economic problems bedeviling the nation. System Tazvida, Leonard Zhakata, Thomas Mapfumo and many others have released songs that reflect on the economic situation. Music that reflected on the early signs of danger, however, tended to be more veiled than direct compared to protest music from 2000 onwards.

The early warning signals of economic decline in postcolonial Zimbabwe come through Edwin Hama’s trilingual song, *Asila Mali* (We have no money) in the early 1990s which commented on the depreciation of the Zimbabwe dollar and the general rise in the cost of living.

*Asila Mali* (We have no money)

Asila mali  
I have been counting the budget for this month  
It is too tight  
I have been counting the money in my pocket  
Wondering what it can buy me  
I have been counting the change from the dollar  
After buying bread  
The dollar is getting small  
Day by day, every day  
We have got a problem

*Ini ndasahuka*  
I am worn out

*Ini ndabhurika*  
I am broke

(Hama: *Asila Mali*)
Hama personifies the ordinary worker in Zimbabwe who suffers the bite of a reeling economy where the worker’s disposable income is gradually dwindling. His budget is increasingly constrained (I have been counting the budget for this month. It is too tight). There is little space to accommodate essentials on the budget. The dollar has depreciated (The dollar is getting small day by day, everyday). The overall distress is that the worker himself/herself has ‘depreciated’ (ini ndasahuka / I am worn out). The artiste helps remind the nation that the state of the economy is the state of the citizen. He rhymes with Chirikure Chirikure’s view in Musha waparara (the family is destroyed) where the poet satirically asks, muri kuti musha watsakatika; handiti musha wacho ndimi? (you say our home is destroyed; are you not the family?). Musha in Shona could mean the physical home or the family itself hence when the home is destroyed it means the family is also destroyed; likewise the collapse of the economy is the collapse of the people’s dignity and value. When the “dollar is light” or “getting small”; there is metaphorical insinuation that the nation is wasting away; hope is shrinking and the people’s dignity is severely compromised.

Thomas Mapfumo’s (2000) Mamvemve (Rags) aptly describes the collapse of the economic infrastructure and social amenities largely due to the political situation in Zimbabwe from the closing stages of the 1990s decade to around 2009. Mapfumo uses the mvemve (a torn cloth) image to graphically project the country as worn to shreds. This is sharply contrasted against people’s aspirations of a prosperous Zimbabwe espoused during the liberation struggle.

Mamvemve (Rags)

Nyika yenyu yamaichemera The country you were is dying for
Nhasi yaita mamvemve Is today tattered
Chipo, Chipo iwe Chipo, Chipo please
Bereka mwana tiende... Carry the child your back and let us go

(Mapfumo, 2000 Mamvemve)

The line ‘bereka mwana tiende’ potentially implies that the artiste is hinting departure from this state of mess as a solution. That arguably would add up to suggest his flight from
Zimbabwe. He seems to share opinion with Oliver Mtukudzi’s (2014) *Kusvipa* (Spitting) where the artistes encourages taking action instead of staying in a fouled situation simply complaining without doing anything:

*Kusvipa* (Spitting)

*Kusvipa, kuramba uчисvipa*  
Spitting, continually spitting

*Dai kusvipa kungadzima hwema*  
As if spitting will sanitise the fowl smell

*Haiwa hakudzingi hwema*  
No it will not sanitise the foul smell

*Suduruka ibva kumhepo*  
Get away from the fouled smell

(Mtukudzi, 2014 *Kusvipa*)

Mtukudzi, like Mapfumo, appears to encourage disentangling oneself from situations that are not favourable instead of merely crying and complaining. Such protest sees action as the solution to such problems. He seems to share metaphorical resonance with Chirikure Chirikure’s *Napukeni* (diaper) which seems to encourage changing of a soiled napkin as a solution. Chirikure Chirikure’s (1998) *Simuka Ufambe* from his *Hakurarwi* anthology and even in the eponymous poem *Hakurarwi* seems to prescribe action as an antidote for troubled situations. The militancy in this music adds up to Brecht’s view in Askew, (2003:633) that “art is not a mirror held up to reality, but a hammer with which to shape it”. Art then engages in corrective criticism more than mere reflection.

*Zimbabwe Simuka* (Zimbabwe rise up) by Paul Madzore (2008) is a protest against the regime’s slipshod handling of the economy and the resultant shortages.

*Zimbabwe Simuka* (Zimbabwe rise up)

*Zimbabwe simuka udzosere*  
Zimbabwe Stand rise up and revenge

*Zimbabwe simuka*  
Zimbabwe rise up

*Zimbabwe simuka udzosere*  
Zimbabwe rise up and revenge

*Pawakaurawa*  
Where you were killed

*Simukai veZANU vayeuke*  
Rise up and remind ZANU

*VeZANU vauraya nyika...*  
Those in ZANU have destroyed the country
Kubasa kwandinoshanda ndomira mumutsetse Where I work I stand in a queue
Nditambire mari yangu ndomira mumutsetse When I get my salary I stand in a queue
Baba here ndozorora riniko? My father when will I ever rest?
Kana ndichida chingwa If I want bread
Pamwe hapana... Sometimes it is not there
Ndaenda kuchipatarazve ndomira mumutsetse When I go to the hospital I stand ion a queue
Ndarwara ndafa ndotorwa mumutsetse When I die i will be taken through a queue again

(Madzore, 2008 *Zimbabwe Simuka*)

There are queues everywhere; people queue for work (*basa*), at the banks (*ndatambira mari*) and in shops for shortages (*chingwa /bread*) have plagued the postcolonial nation. They have to queue for drugs at the hospitals (*kuchipatarazve ndomira mumutsetse*). The artiste is getting frustrated by the continued shortage of basic commodities and services. The artiste imputes the blame of destroying the economy on the government of ZANU PF although he does not assign space to explain how the party has contributed to the sordid economic state but goes on to enumerate the unpleasant resultant states that signify collapse of the economy. To show how bad the situation has become; even the sick have to wait in queues for their turns while those taking the dead from the mortuary have to queue for dead bodies, hence he says:

*Ndaenda kuchipatarazve ndomira mumutsetse* When I go to the hospital I stand in a queue
*Ndarwara ndafa ndotorwa mumutsetse* When I die i will be taken through a queue again

The year 2008 is recorded in the history of the nation as one of the toughest (Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009), where vast amounts of money were chasing a limited supply of basic good.

The artiste prescribes insurrection as an expedient intervention to check the cavalier management of the economy. The statement, *Zimbabwe simuka udzosere*, (Rise up and revenge) is a call for action for those who have suffered the brunt of alleged government mishandling of the economy. The political artiste encourages politics of action as his party has become associated with from the days of public demonstrations,
strikes, to the ill fated Final Push of 2003 which only served to harden the ZANU PF party.

One manifestation of the economic malaise was the unbridled rise in prices against shrinking disposable incomes. The nation was failing to meet the basic requirements of life. In these reduced circumstances, Chimbetu’s (1997) album *Survival*, highlights a nation grappling with meeting the basics for mere survival against a leadership that seems to have thrown away their mandate of stewardship in pursuit of self-satiation. In the song *Vana vaye* (Those children) the artiste reminds the reality definers to consider the plight of the ordinary when they debate on national economic issues.

**Vana vaye (Those children)**

- *Kana moenda mukoma* When you go brother
- *Kana moenda kure kure*... When you go far away
- *Kana moenda kumabiko* When you go to feast
- *Mundisiire upfu hwevana vangu* Leave some mealie meal for my children
- *Kana mokwidza mitengo yetunonaka* When you increase the prices of sweet items
- *Mundisiire chingwa chevena vangu.* Leave some bread for my children
- *Muchindopinda mumusangano* When you enter important meetings
- *Kana moenda* When you go
- *Muitaure yeupfu hwevana vaye* Please raise the issue of my children’s mealie meal
- *Vanochema vana vaye, vanochema* Those children cry, they cry
- *Chavanoda kusevhaivha* What they want is survival
- *Chawawana mukoma udye nehama* What you get my brother share with your relatives
- *Vanokanganwa VaNyamande vanokanganwa ava* For Mr Nyamande forgets

(Chimbetu, 1997 *Vana vaye*)

The artiste reminds those in various portfolios of leadership to devise policies that cushion the poor from the ever-escalating prices. Price controls and pricing evaluation and monitoring instruments were a response to the distress call by the ordinary
people. The use of the phrase *kana moenda kure kure* (when you go far away) serves to convey the idea of a leadership that is drifting from grassroots needs and therefore, not in touch with their daily challenges. Zimbabwean parliamentarians are serially blamed for neglecting their constituencies once elected. Munyoro (2010:3) observes that MPs themselves are invisible in their constituencies; only to resurface during election time. In the same song Chimbetu assumes the role of a constituent who is pleading with his/her representative to convey his request in a meeting that affects the lives of the ordinary people. It comes out clearly that the persona is complaining that the postcolonial state is becoming more and more ‘classed’ as the rich and the poor are affected differently by the economic situation. Vambe, (2004:183) in similar observation says that the “critical message is in Chimbetu’s song “*Vana vaye,*”… shows that postcolonial Zimbabwean society has been radically redefined along class lines.” The poor are more concerned with survival (*chavanoda kusevhaivha* / what they want is survival) while the rich can afford expensive lifestyles (*tunonaka*). Such disparities define the postcolonial state which now recreates the colonial social classes:

*Kana mokwidza mitengo yetunonaka*  When you increase the prices of sweet items

*Mundisiire chingwa chevena vangu*  Leave some bread for my children.

The ordinary person pleads for the staying of price increases on basics commodities like bread for the basic survival of the poor. The artiste mutedly contrasts good living and surviving thereby baring the yawning disparities between the poor and the rich in postcolonial Zimbabwe. The same message is conveyed by Chenjerai Hove’s (1982) *Up in Arms* where the poet censures “a civilisation where brother by the corner eats till baobab fat; while sister behind the hedge thins like living biltong”. This shows that by as early as 1982, capitalist tendencies were already showing in an ambitious socialist state. The artiste then reminds the socialist concept of sharing (*Chawawana mukoma udyehama* / what you get brother share with your relatives) which at this point has been a long forgotten rubric because VaNyamande vanokanganwa (Mr Nyamande forgets). The government has to be reminded of those socialist principles some twenty years into independence. This poses serious questions on the independence status of the postcolonial state.
There is a nagging fear government is increasingly becoming tangential to the wishes of the common people.

Hosiah Chipanga’s (2011) *Mazitye* (second hand clothes) graphically sums up the vacuousness of Zimbabwean economic independence by contrasting persistent dependency on second hand clothes in a country that grows and exports quality cotton to world markets. The ordinary person can not afford quality clothes but finds themselves importing bales of cheap second hand clothes:

*Mazitye* (second hand clothes)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Zvinondirwadza moyo wangu} & \quad \text{It pains my heart} \\
\text{Mwari pindiraiwo} & \quad \text{Please God intervene} \\
\text{muZimbabwe tinorima donje} & \quad \text{In Zimbabwe we grow cotton} \\
\text{Asi vana vedu vari kupona nekupfeka mazitye sei? But our children put on used second hand clothes} \\
\text{Bhachi rake rakambopfekwa nemumwe} & \quad \text{He wears a second hand jacket} \\
\text{Hembe yake yakambopfekwa nemumwe} & \quad \text{He wears a second hand shirt} \\
\text{Bhurezha rake rakambopfekwa nemumwe} & \quad \text{He wears a second hand blazer} \\
\text{Pindiraiwo Ishe} & \quad \text{Lord please intervene}
\end{align*}
\]

(Chipanga, 2011 *Mazitye*)

The statement:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{MuZimbabwe tinorima donje / In Zimbabwe we grow cotton} \\
\text{Asi vana vedu vari kupona nekupfeka mazitye sei? But our children put on used second hand Clothes}
\end{align*}
\]

sums up the artiste’s consternation with the contrast between economic potential and levels of poverty in a liberated nation. The Mupedzanhamo (Literally-poverty eradicator, a market place for/or second hand clothes) concept comes as a relief to the ordinary person who cannot afford to buy clothes from upmarket shops like Greatermans, Meikles and Edgars. Chipanga pours his heart to God presumably to cushion himself
from perceived censorship as it would be unthinkable for the government to persecute an artiste for an ‘offensive’ prayer.

Ironically, though the wares and the market are referred to as *mupedzanhamo*, they only serve to cushion the citizen from the debilitating effects of the economic malaise and never eradicate poverty as the name feigns to impress. What is more, what one now calls their own has been worn before and this, the artistes mockingly chides: *bhachi rake* (his/her jacket), *hembe yake* (his/her dress), *bhurezha rake* (his/her blazer)). The song carries a very subtle critique on the issue of market politics between the developed and the less developed countries where the core (the developed) exploits the periphery (developing) by flooding their markets with cheap wares. Mpofu (2013) observes that used clothes are dumped into Zimbabwe and this destroys any hope of reviving local clothing industries. Elsewhere and even locally, trade liberalisation has opened the less developed countries’ (LCD) resources to excessive exploitation by the more developed countries as Green and Griffiths (2002) observe about agricultural markets where heavily subsidized agric products are dumped on LDCs directly threatening local products.

Chimbetu’s (1989) *Musoro wachenya* (My head has turned grey) and *Gomo risina michero* (A fruitless mountain) are either individual or social commentaries of the state of poverty in Zimbabwe:

*Musoro wachenya* (My head has turned grey)

*Inga ndochembera*  
*By the way I am getting old*

*Kana yee, kana chandiinacho...*  
*No, I have nothing*

*Musoro wangu uya womera*  
*My head is getting gray*

*Kana yee kana chandiinacho*  
*No, I have nothing*

(Chimbetu, 1989 *Musoro wachenya*)
It is high time he counted his achievements in an independent Zimbabwe but for all the autonomy, he has nothing to declare his own. The nation is experiencing arrested growth and has very little to match the years it has been independent. The use of the phrase *musoro wochena* (the hair is greying) is meant to remind of the passage of time without commensurate achievement. The greying of hair is a signal for passage of time and time presages wealth. Time is money; but Chimbetu has none. He regrets that he has nothing to show for all the years he has been on earth.

By extrapolation, can Zimbabwe be proud to count her achievements, three decades into independence? He probably satirises Zimbabwean independence through reference to his life presumably to escape censorship as was potentially the case with Mtukudzi’s 1999 *Bvuma wasakara* (Admit you are worn out) which the artiste reflected was about himself getting old not about the head of state as was commonly interpreted (However, according to Fawn (freemuse.org/archives/1079), the song was blacklisted by the state broadcaster). The hair is turning grey; can we still be regarded as a young nation in terms of age? There is an argument that Zimbabwe, compared to its own potential is far behind expected levels of development courtesy of the economic and political problems dogging the nation from around 1990 (ISERVICE, 2010). The economy was greatly affected by the economic structural adjustment and general mismanagement of resources leading to a slump in the period 2000 -2010.

**6.1.9 Escaping home: Diasporan discourses in popular music**

One motif that has received moderate tellability in popular music is the issue of diasporan reflections on conditions at home and abroad. The theme has seen artistes discuss the concepts of home, diasporan reception, expectation and frustration. Local artistes and those abroad have opened a forum for diasporan reflection in music in a way that expands discourses on the subject.
Bongo Maffin’s (2005) *Kura uone* (Grow up and you will see) represents a voice from outside reflecting on the illusion of greener pastures and that ever-present yearning to reconnect with one’s roots:

*Kura uone* (Grow up and you will see)

**Shona**

*Dai ndiri shiri ndaibhururuka* If I were a bird I would fly
*Ndaibhururuka kuna amai vangu* I would fly to where my mother is
*Ohh Dai ndanga ndine makumbo mana* Oh that I had four legs
*Ndaimhanya ndoenda kuna baba vangu* I would run to where my father is

(He dai ndiri shiri) Dai ndiri shiri ndaibhururuka If I were a bird I would fly
( Ho ndaibhururuka kani) Ndaibhururuka kuna amai vangu I would fly to where my mother is
( Ho dai ndine makumbo mana) Dai ndanga ndine makumbo mana Oh that I had four legs
(Ho ndaimhanya ndaimhanya) Ndaimhanya ndoenda kuna baba vangu I would run to where my father is

**Zulu**

*Ayikho into eqgithi khaya* There is no place you can call home
*Xa uxakekile une hlungu zakho* Where your pains are quenched
*Akhuko ndawo* There is no place
*Akhuko ndawo* There is no place
*Efana nekhaya Lakho* Like home
*Apo kukhona uthando* Where there is love
*Apo kukhona ukunwaba* Where there is intimacy
*Apo kukhona izihlobo zako* Where your relatives are
*Apo kukhona uthando* Where there is love
*Apo kukhona ukunwaba* Where there is intimacy
*Apo kukhona izihlobo zako* Where your relatives are

*Ayikho into eqgithi khaya lako* There is no place I can call home
*Dai ndiri shiri ndaibhururuka* If I were a bird I would fly
*Ndaibhururuka kuna amai vangu* I would fly to my mother
*Dai ndanga ndine makumbo mana* If I had four legs
*Ndaimhanya ndoenda kuna baba vangu*... I would run to my father

(Bongo Maffin, 2005 *Kura Uone*)
Dai Ndiri Shiri is a voice in the wilderness longing to reconnect with home. It represents the pain and the dehumanisation diasporans have to put up with in some countries. It deconstructs the greener pastures narrative that has led some to leave their homes and places of engagement in pursuit of. The triliglossic song is composed in South Africa in Shona, Zulu and Tswana. The Shona segment probably serves to communicate with people back home to express the pain of life in the diaspora while the Zulu and Tswana parts are meant to protest and express displeasure to the locals over the molestation of diasporan integrity in their land.

The song begins by a wish (Dai ndange ndiri shiri ndaibhururuka / If I were a bird I would fly), implying that the soloist is incapacitated and can hardly extricate himself from the situation he is entrapped in. Lines 1 to 4 express a deep sense of nostalgia, a clear hint that all is not well out there. He wishes he had four legs (Dai ndange ndine makumbo mana If I had four legs) probably to imply a car which ironically may not be affording in the so-called greener pastures. ‘Dai’ among Shona people expresses a wished state which at the very moment cannot be achieved, obtained or attained.

The diasporan realises that the only plausible option would be to leave that country and go back home (Hapana chokumirira apa- there is nothing to stay here for). Contrary to the diasporan ‘fables’ of milk and honey abundance in lands beyond the mountains and seas, they struggle for basics there. Bongo Mafin laments the scourge of hunger away from home (Hona nzara yacho ko chii?). Many oral accounts of life in foreign lands concur that it is not rosy throughout. Basics like food and shelter are sometimes beyond the reach of many (Mupakati, 2012). This pushes Mutasa, (2000) in Nyambo DzeJoni to dismiss glowing stories of life outside one’s boarders as mere jest. Foreigners are not wanted out there. Xenophobia is unsettlingly rampant in some countries; hence hona rudo rwacho ko chii? Reports of xenophobia have inundated expanses of literary and non-literary space. In a study by Mbiba (2012:84) diasporan respondents described Zimbabwean experiences at the hands of immigration officers as ‘traumatic’, ‘demeaning’, and ‘frustrating’ and ‘utter human rights abuse’.
There could be some who are earning a lot of money in foreign lands but Bongo Mafin opines that money means nothing when one misses home and is ill-treated abroad. You can have all the money and respect out there but it cannot buy you the love, warmth, and security you miss from home. This pushes Bongo Mafin to ask- *Hona mari yacho ko chii?* (What is money in light of this?). The *hermeneutic method* employed in this research is comfortable with ambiguity (Kinsella, 2006). The ambiguous and linguistically conditioned nature of interpretation allows for contrasting shades of meanings in discourses. The same phrase may also imply that there is no real money to talk about in the foreign lands. A study by Mupedziswa (2015) in the United Kingdom revealed that most people in the Diaspora are not working in areas of their specialisation (what euphemistically has been referred to as ‘R and R’ short form for *rese rese* (vernacular for any job)) and are therefore not paid like semi-skilled or skilled labour force. They may be better paid than people back home but that does not mean that they earn a lot of money.

The overall refrain in the Zulu and Shona part in Bongo Maffin’s (2005) *Kura uone* is the proverbial statement: there is no place like home. The pains, troubles and challenges are soothed at home as love, relations and the peace at home are enough consolation. There is an integrity one has at home that one misses away from home. Back home, the government of the land preaches patriotism and the integrity of the black person while out there the same is scorned. At home there are high expectations over what those outside can do for their home and country. The Homelink concept was mooted out of such expectation. The Homelink concept was created in 2005 with the objective of mobilising foreign currency for the Reserve Bank through provision of services tailor-made for Zimbabweans in the diaspora. The call came amid mixed receptions on the whole subject of seeking economic refugee in foreign lands. In some circles it was seen as dereliction of patriotism as award of asylum space was achieved at the cost of the nation’s image. Some asylum seekers got their asylum through fictitious victimisation claims which, unfortunately, projected the nation as blantly abusive of people’s rights Nyoni (2012) observes that the Zimbabwean picture as seen from Europe was a "curse of fabrication and exaggeration". The refuge tag always associates the ‘chasing country’
with violation of citizens’ rights while it assigns a badge of philanthropism on the receiving country.

In some communities the flight to far away lands debilitated families’ potential to deal with the basics of sustenance. They looked forward to support from brothers and sisters abroad. Oliver Mtukudzi’s (2005) *Izere mhepo* (It is full of nothing) articulates the crisis of expectation common with the remaining communities and those who go out *kunoshava* (to look for something to sustain oneself with). The song goes;

*Izere mhepo* (It is full of nothing)

*Wangu mwana akaenda marimuka*  
My child went into the wilderness

*Dangwe rangi riri marimuka; kuLondon*  
My first born is in the wilderness - in London

*Gotwe rakaenda kwaro*  
The last born went away

*Mumvana akaenda kumwe*  
The daughter went away

*Gotwe rakaenda kwaro*  
The last born went his/her own way

*Kuenda kumarimuka kuendera tu vana ava...*  
The children have gone into the wilderness forever

*Vasara sure sare,*  
Those who remained behind

*Sare vakaringa nzira...*  
They remain anticipating for something

*Nhava izere mhepo*  
The pouch is full of air

*Fume nhava izere mhepo...*  
We wake up to find the pouch is full of air

*Ari marimuka kuye ofondoka*  
In the foreign lands he toils

*Hakuna akaziva marimuka idikita*  
No one knew that the green pastures there is

*Sweat*

*Ndangariro dzeari marimuka*  
The one who is in the forest thinks to her/himself

*Dura rangi razara*  
My granary is full

*Vasara shure sare,*  
Those who remain behind

*Kupura nemusana*  
They enjoy his/her sweat

*Magumo; nhava izere mhepo*  
In the end his pouch is full of nothing

(Mtukudzi, 2005 *Izere mhepo*)

In traditional Shona communities, one who goes away (even into towns) from home is said to have gone into the ‘forests’ for they are going away from the land of the familiar into uncertainty. *Marimuka* (the forests) are lands of potential catch or danger for those that go hunting. It was a leap into the dark and for this reason those who were going out
had to seek ancestral blessings and protection. The artiste also uses the *nhava* trope to delicately convey the ambivalence of hope and loss. Nhava may refer to a leather bag where the hunter’s arrows are kept. The book of Psalms 127:3-5 records that a man’s children are like arrows in a quiver. “Like arrows in the hands of a warrior, so are the children of one’s youth. Happy is a man with a quiver full of them” He uses them for his defence and protection and in *Nhava* the father’s quiver is empty (*nhava izere mhepo*) because he has released them into the diaspora. A man’s children are his trusted guard and without them around, he is vulnerable just as a hunter who has released all his arrows into the air. The phrase *vakaendera tu* implies that the children have gone forever like arrows that have missed their target. Every hunter’s arrow carries an assignment and to miss a target is to miss task; the hunter’s expectation. There are some diasporans who have sought citizenship in some far away countries and are now permanently domiciled in those countries and the hope of them returning diminishes with passage of time. In such cases it is counted as loss to the releasing country or family hence the quiver is empty.

Consistent with *hermeneutic ambiguity*, *Nhava* may also imply a hunter’s bag where he puts his kill and to say *Nhava Izere Mhepo* (the hunter bag is empty) may imply that the hunter has brought nothing home. This contrasts with the opening lines which one may see as a show off (*Dangwe rangu riya riri marimuka; kuLondon My first born is in the wilderness- in London*). It is common to hear someone brag about having children in America and Britain even when they cannot elaborate what they are doing there. Besides, other studies, for instance by  Dube (2015) show that some Zimbabweans living abroad are now struggling to make ends meet due to unemployment.

Another dimension to the lamentation is the mislaid expectation of those who wade into foreign lands. They are recorded as riding on to the fallacy that all is easy in the foreign land. Unknown to them, *marimuka* is a place of toil and sweat. As they work hard they post the harvest of their sweat home expecting to fulfil long cherished ambitions and targets but those back home have plundered their investment:
Oral accounts of diasporans who were swindled of their money through house projects ‘managed’ by friends and relatives which never took off abound. The worker’s dream and the contrasting frustration of misplaced trust in those left at home makes the diasporan discourses a site of contrasting complexities.

Thomas Mapfumo’s *Ndangariro* (Thoughts) (2010), off the album *Exile*, is enigmatic in that it could be construed as referring to his situation or that of others in diaspora.

*Ndangariro* (Thoughts)

*Ndorara ndichifunga ini mhuri yeZimbabwe* As I sleep I remember the Zimbabwean family

*Pfungwa dzinodinetsa ini kwandiri kure* Nostalgic pressure pains me

*Hama musandicheme ini ndiri kuuya* My relatives do not cry; I am coming

*Kugara ndichifunga chete hama kumusha* I always think of relatives at home

*Kugara ndichingochema ini misodzi baba* I always shed tears

*Kana ndorangarira ini mai vangu kumusha* When I remember my mother

*Kunyange zvangu ndiri kure ini* Even though I am far away

*Handikanganwe kumusha* I will not forget my home

(Mapfumo 2010 Ndangariro)

All the same, it helps express diasporan sentiments from those who are experiencing the vexations on a regular basis. It links experience with expression as much as one gets in perusing Mahvash Sabet’s *Prison Poems* (2013). It is one thing to hear an artiste who has not had a diasporan experience sing and quite another to hear one who is living it. This blesses the work with properties of palpability and realism or lifelikeness.

Contrary to what is commonly believed that diasporans are unpatriotic sell outs; the love for the country and nostalgia exhibited in Mapfumo’s exile explodes such suspicions. He sings with such a palpable home sickness (*Handikanganwe kumusha* / when I think of home)
that makes one envision the degree of home affection. He misses his mother back home (Mai vangu kumusha), his friends (shamwari dzangu) and sums up his exilic dilemma as home sickness. His main problem is his conscience (ipfungwa dzangu). Those who are at home miss him too (vanondichema). Diasporans and those back home are trapped in the prison of conscience. As Chamboko (2015) in The Zimbabwean notes, “Despite the distance that separates us...the majority of Zimbabweans in the diaspora remained actively involved with and emotionally attached to developments back home”. Distance has become a barrier but the diasporan mind constantly shuttles back and forth to seize what distance has stolen. This is worsened by the seemingly unending social and political problems that constantly frustrate waiting to return home permanently into perpetuity (Chamboko 2015).

Mapfumo and indeed others in diaspora did not just wake up one day and find themselves away from home. Chinua Achebe’s (1958:186) caution probably hazards push factors for the flight “Whenever you see a toad jumping in broad day light, then know that something is after its life” There are push and pull factors that fuel human movement. In a wide ranging interview with Lance Guma on Nehanda Radio on May 1 2015, Mapfumo cites the government as responsible for the flight of people from home:

Vana ava vari kubotiza chii kumusha kana zvichinzi kune over 1million maZimbabweans vari kugara kuSouth Africa?...Reason yaita kuti vana ava vatize kuZimbabwe iZANU PF. Vari kutiza udzvinyiriri kumusha ikoko. Vari kuda kuti vanowana kugara kwakanaka kune dzimweo nyika...dzine hugari hwakanaka. KuZimbabwe hakuna mabasa.

Why are these children fleeing away from home, as it is said that over one million Zimbabweans live in South Africa? The reason why they flee from Zimbabwe is ZANU PF. They are running away from oppression at home. They want to find safe dwelling places in other countries.

There are no jobs in Zimbabwe. Thomas Mapfumo’s views presumably justify why he and many other people have run away from home. People flee from alleged oppression from home. A number of asylum seekers have used this as the reason for their flight but
the abiding question by Moyo, Gonye and Mdlongwa, (2012) is, is diasporanism an answer to home problems or an abdication of responsibility to deal firmly with national problems? The answer lies between the two extreme positions but leans heavily towards necessity.

The Sotho segment of *Kura uone* (Grow up and see) however makes a very interesting alternative reading of the artiste’s lyrics as suggesting a symbolic diaspora where the African laments the cultural dislocation brought about by colonialism and its cenotaph, neo colonialism which have taken people from their familiar cultural terrain to domicile them in borrowed spaces.

*Kura uone* (Grow up and you will see)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sotho</th>
<th>Nkabe ke le lenong</th>
<th>If I were a vulture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Ke rakalela godimo ke sa e tlase</em></td>
<td>Flying above not coming down</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Le nkare fa nka mela diphuka</em></td>
<td>Even if I grow wings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Di nkuka di nkisa mankalankaleng matlhaleng</em></td>
<td>They pick me up and take me high at the top</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Ko go buiwang ka puopoko le maele teng</em></td>
<td>Where there are wise people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Setswana sa teng se le ko teng</em></td>
<td>Setswana language so deep</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bommelataola ba nna teng</em></td>
<td>Divine bone creators live there</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Magageng a boMmadipela</em></td>
<td>Caves of rock rabbits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ko re batang sa mokotla sa mpa re mpampetsa</em></td>
<td>Where internal issues are protected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Re tlhola re bua re besa</em></td>
<td>We spend the day talking and ‘braaing’ meat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Seno re se bitsa re re Boitumelo</em></td>
<td>This we call happiness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Maroping go tlhokega poelo</em></td>
<td>We need to go back to where we come from</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Re bue ka tsa botshelo</em></td>
<td>We’ll talk about life issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Botshelo jwa teng ke botshelo jwa motsogapele</em></td>
<td>The life there is our forefathers’ kind of life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(Bongo Maffin, 2005 *Kura uone*)*
They are sojourners who one day must return to their homeland (culture). The persona then justifiably proposes a return to a symbolic motherland;

Maroping go tlhokega poelo We need to go back to where we come from

The homeland spoken of glowingly represents the untainted African cultural space where the language is rich:

Ko go buiwang ka puopoko le maele teng Where it is spoken in poetic and idiomatic language

Setswana sa teng se le ko teng Setswana language so deep

They speak deep Setswana language there. Such nostalgia feeds the impression that the persona pushes for a revolution to return from linguistic diaspora to familiar codes. Reference to poetic and idiomatic language restates the desire to reconnect with culturally rich languages that carry the weight of African experiences as Ngugi (1987) argues. This implies that the cultural diaspora Africans are in potentially deprives them of the capacity to dialogue important issues of their lives. The same cultural diaspora has increased the rift between Africans and their spirituality and the artiste then strives to reconnect with the divine, the custodian of life.

Bommetlataola ba nna teng Divine bone creators live there

Magageng a boMmadipela Caves of rock rabbits

The melancholy discourses African livelihoods as wound around their spirituality. This is the source of their lives and energy hence very crucial.

6.2 Analysis of interviews

Interviews on the socio and economic motifs in Zimbabwean music were conducted as outlined in chapter 5. The same interviewees in chapter 5 were considered for the aforesaid themes. The following are their reflections on the themes.
6.2.1 Music and culture

There is general consensus among interviewees that artistes are seriously concerned with cultural issues in postcolonial Zimbabwe. Artsites are seized with the desire to throw light on critical cultural debates that have attained agenda status in Zimbabwe. Emergent also is the view that some artistes are conniving with forces that fight our culture. This presents quite some varying perspectives on how Zimbabweans view the issue of culture, independence and globalisation as mediated through the music.

On music and sociality, interviewee 1, an arts manager, argued that art is a reflection of society. “Art is the software of society; it’s there to heal the nation, to build and to do the positives”. However, some interviewees like, interviewee E see some genres of music as clouds that bear no rain. They are some genres of music that are self-referential and not reflecting any contexts. He alleges that, “Dancehall does not really reflect the serious national sentiments but has given rise to obscenities in music. This genre of music thrives on imitation of western sensibilities and styles. This obviously shows there is no serious reflection on the topical issues around the musician” This observation resonates with Interviewee 2’s observation that “the work is characterised by apemanship which trivialises the whole concept of music as a creative expression of contentious issues in one’s background.” The insinuation that dancehall does not contribute significantly to serious national discourses has helped sustain the accusation that the genre is complicit in the government propaganda machinations of using music as an opium to diffuse and deflect national attention to contentious issues. Interviewee 3 observes that:

Besides being copycats, these youngsters produce music replete with obscenities unfit for family time consumption. They visit the internet and watch pornographic materials and proceed to sing obscenities, offensive and debasing material without any string of restraint. They have lost any shade of decorum.

He gave an example of Soul Jah Love’s Gumukumu (no English equivalent, probably a coinage for the male sexual organ) as a song in which the dancehall artiste is singing about the male sexual organ, falling short of calling it by its name. “How can a national
radio broadcast such music?” The same music that should correct social problems confronting the nation becomes complicit in assaulting a culture that is already receiving blows from the global onslaught.

**Interviewee 1** reviewed Zimbabwean popular music as a rare avenue for ordinary people into national debates:

“There is a serious concern with the loss of cultural compass and a craving for the other culture. Mutukudzi and Mapfumo have attempted to shed light on the issue of language and the black man’s identity. In a country where the temptation to discard one’s culture is evident, putting such critical issues to the music forefronts the ordinary people an opportunity to participate in national debates.”

**Interviewee 3** sees Zimbabwean music as communicating those issues people can not communicate through other means. “It is a natural resource which cannot be compared to any other resources. It is an inexhaustible resource. Whereas other source of information like newspapers have largely appealed to the urban readership and the literate few, music has a wider appeal to all sections of society.”

**Interviewee 4** agrees with **interviewee 1** that music responds to cultural changes in the postcolonial state but thinks this is an issue “many musicians have not attended to with the seriousness it deserves. Music being a very effective method of disseminating information has not addressed this issue adequately. Music communicates with youths more than any other modes can do.”

**Interviewee D** opined that:

Most artistes contest cultural changes are brought by imperialism and modernity. There is a general famine of morals artistes are concerned with. Children challenge their parents and youths their elders. This is the message Jonah Moyo attempts to put across in “Ndabve zera” (I am gown up) where the child reminds the father that she is now over 18 years”.

This is probably axled on the Legal Age of Majority which empowers children above 18 to be considered independent.
Interviewee 3 sees elders as responsible for the collapse of African culture more than the artiste is responsible. “Many people seem not to know that artistes are simply reflecting what society is doing. We sing what we see rather than wanting to see what we sing”. On the same issue the arts manager, interviewee 1 stressed that music expresses issues in a way that does not bring about confusion and further injury to society.

6.2.2 Marriage and Family issues

Music listeners who had an opportunity to reflect on sampled songs concur that family and marital issues are recurrent themes in Zimbabwe popular music. They however, differ on the artistes’ afro-fidelity on the alluded motif. They have also reflected on family matters such as domestic violence and divorce.

Interviewee A “The family and marriage institutions are fairly represented in Zimbabwe popular music but they seem to be drifting away from their traditional set up. Artistes have lost faith in the extended family as they see it as interfering in the affairs of the nuclear family. System Tazvida tells off his father’s elder brother who now wants to inherit his brother’s estate despite the fact that he was nowhere near when the brother was sick.” These are real life issues that confront the family on a daily basis.

Interviewee C is of the same opinion with A, “Members of the extended family are projected as greedy and failing the family institution. They are failing to take care of the extended family. This comes out clearly in Leonard Dermbo’s Babamunini where babamunini is portrayed as failing to maintain his brother’s family after his death.”

On divorce and domestic violence, Interviewee A and D concur that families are presented as full of disputes and disharmony features significantly in Zimbabwean music. “Artistes bemoan high incidents of dissonance in today’s families. Ever wondered what tickles artistes like Josphat Somanje (Murume Wangu Handibvi Pano/ My husband; I will never leave this place) and Pah Chihera (Murume Wangu/ My Husband) to dwell on the subject of dissonance in families. Today’s society is shaky.” Marriages are established on shaky grounds,” observed interviewee A. Asked to elaborate what he meant by ‘shaky’, the interviewee clarified that traditional marriage
ethics of perserverence, honesty and general civility have deserted the African family. “People enter into marriages blindly and regret later. Ketai warns us adequately in Kuroora Tanga Wa funga (Think carefully before marrying). People later discover that they married a prostitute when they would not have taken their time to know the person. The age old Shona proverb, rooranai vematongo (One should marry from the neighbourhood) is today taken for ganted”

Other artistes portray families as buckling under the weight of financial problems leading to divorce. Interviewee C “African families are presented as heavily shaken by the changing economic conditions that have rendered family sustenance uncertain. This has brought instability in the family as fathers drown their sorrows in alcoholism which then leads them to engage in domestic violence and eventually divorce. If you listen to Oliver Mtukudzi’s Tozeza Baba (We are afraid of the father), it comes clearly that alcoholism is to blame for domestic violence.”

Interviewee B alleges that “domestic violence leads to divorce. It is not a way of solving disputes but a way of getting rid of the wife. Kiren Zulu’s Murume wangu opens on a scene of violence when the husband shouts ‘unopabva’ (you have to leave the home) implying that violence is served as a way of sending away the wife.

On romantic expressions interviewees agree that Zimbabwean popular music is predominantly about the changing face of love in a rapidly changing world. Interviewee A is of the opinion that “Popular music in Zimbabwe is about loss of faith in the institutions of love and marriage itself. It is not conjectural that the majority of artistes have dwelt on the theme; neither is it driven by demand from music listeners. We are talking of lived realities here. Love and marriage have gone materialistic and ephemeral.” He agrees with Interviewee D on the short-lived nature of love but the later imputes greed as the nemesis of genuine love. Women have become instiable and pesky. This has been recorded in Pengaudzoke’s Mai Linda, Simon Chimbetu’s Maggie where the women characters are presented as hard to please people.” What does not come out in their analysis of music is whether artistes are fair in projecting love as a victim of feminine unreasonableness or there are other undeclared factors.
Interviewee D holds the view that “Zimbabweans are tired of betrayal in love affairs. Marriage is that union of commitments but some artistes berate the culture of betrayal that has set in. Marriage is built on trust but it is that trust which is the missing cog in love and marriage.” This would probably explain why there is a lot of divorce in Zimbabwe.

6.2.3 Romantic expressions

Interviewees agree on the prevalence of theme of love in popular music but differ on why it is recurrent. Some see artistes as recreating their society in and through music while others see them as singing their lives in the music.

Interviewee D remarked that:

Music is an expression of an emotion and love is one such emotion that would tickle the artiste to reflect. More than them (artistes) being representative characters in the subject of love, they are also people in love who articulate their own love emotions.

This view does not derobe the artiste of his representational voice but helps underscore that artistes may sing about their own lives in their music. One is reminded of Paul Matavire’s ‘Back from college’ where the artiste reconnects with his fans after being convicted and incarcerated for rape.

Interviewee A sees artistes as “mediating voices of society and as such when they sing love related stuff (sic), they are simply looking at the theme of love in society and coming up with a composition that reflects those issues.” This view of art is at the centre of context bases appreciation of artistic products which stretch meaning of art to society more than restricting it to the individual.

Interviewee C and B concur that Zimbabwean love music is stirred by the high incidence of infidelity. Interviewee C “It is reflected in music that that relationships have succumbed to the culture of greed that has engulfed society. Women want money and
on the high incidence of infidelity, 

Interviewee B sees men as guilty of insatiability; “men are generally reflected in music as being swayed by facial looks and bodily structure. They are presented as chasing after vain beauty.” This is a complete departure from the traditional understanding of love as blind (rudo ibofu) to beauty.

Interviewee B observes that, “Popular music artistes have joined the world in trending ‘modern’ love as they celebrate it in superlatives that colour it as materialistic and as a public show. The urban grooves and zimdancehall stable have been leading in this regard as artistes like XQ in Mazirudo (Big Love) make love something unimaginable”. When an artiste amplifies /zi/ and pluralises /ma/ love, then we wonder what love he is talking about. It is overstated but very shallow.

Such sensationalization of love only helps problematise it as it departs further and further away from the traditional understanding as mere communion of hearts. Contrary to seeing the problematisation of love, Interviewee A sees music as celebrating love:

More than music merely lamenting the corruption of love, I see artistes like Dembo in Chitekete showering their loved ones with all sorts of praises, which to me is celebration of their loved ones. Artistes are simply reflecting on a critical subject that is pervasive in every section of society. If you look at the way Tongai Moyo looks at the subject of love, you see how multifaceted kapuka kanonzi rudo is.

It emerges then that artistes are also articulating a subject that is at the heart of society. It covers all professions of society; the young and the old. It is therefore, pervasive and for the artiste to sing it is simply responding to a topical issue in society.

Interviewee 6, an entertainment editor differed with the observations of other respondents choosing to conclude that:

Artistes expend their energy more on love music as opposed to political and contentious issues for fear of victimization. They would rather concentrate on the type of music that does not put them in problems. Even in those songs they may
also infuse a political message although that shows you how restrictive the environment is. Besides that, love music helps in removing the mind from the pains of the struggle. Zimbabwean political situation has been very painful and love music comes as that pain relief shielding us from the pains of our struggle.

The observation by the editor may not be supported by verifiable evidence could be a genuine reason some artistes may never attempt a political line in their music. The other observation by the editor that love songs help soothe people from the pains of the struggle rhymes with the place of love in everyday life situation. Love is the consolation for existence. That explains why even in war ravaged countries or even refugee zones there are high instances of fertility.

6.2.4 Gender

The research set out to secure music listeners’, critics’ and artistes’ perceptions on the portrayal of gender in works of music. Views from these respondents do not reflect gender as a deliberate inflection in Zimbabwean music content. Artistes remark that their portrayal of the male and female subculture is driven by their societal conceptions of gender rather than a deliberate attempt to belittle or deify either of the genders. However, purposively sampled music listeners and critics reflect that gender is an issue in Zimbabwean music.

**Interviewee 1** reflected on gender from the perspective of participation of men and women in the performance and production of music rather than in terms of how the music is portraying the two subcultures. He observed that:

women are becoming more visible in music than before independence but I must confess that I have never looked at the gender nuances imbedded in music expression. Our line of activity does not ordinarily look at whether the content of art is gendered or not.

The issue of presence of women in the production of music is of particular interest to this research as it may imply opening of opportunities to correct or impress the feminine agenda in music composition. **Interviewee 4** sees the women participation as a solution
to differential portrayal of sexes. He thus observes that, “the gender attitudes can only be addressed by women getting into music” Representation is a critical issue in art as those who participate in any artistic production have the opportunity if not the proclivity to impress their own hegemonic agenda.

**Interviewee 5** discounted the view that Zimbabwean music is gendered in terms of its handling of social content. “The issue is not that pronounced in Zimbabwean music. Musicians are simply recording how society is structured; the power politics in society and social sentiments. It is the memory of society”. The observation by the critic trivialises the notion of artistes as full members of the societies who are the vocal representatives of their culture. He takes artistes as people simply reflecting what societies are projecting not as people who have the potential to change society through their music. He takes the Aristotolian philosophy of art as mimetic without embracing its ‘cleansing’ role on the audience.

**Interviewee 4 and 6** attacked some genres as contriving to negatively portray women as expendable objects. **Interviewee 4** observed that Urban grooves artistes exude attitudes disrespectful of women in their music while **Interviewee 6** contended that the sungura artistes project women as problematic, immoral and scandalous. The RnB genre was seen as guilty of commodification of women while the dancehall genre as ridiculing women. The same sentiment is held by some music listeners. **Interviewee A** thinks that “Zimbabwean music is replete with gender references. Artistes like Matavire and Simon Chimbetu are guilty of amplifying gender issues in their music. They tend to cast blame on women for men’s misfortunes. For Matavire to equate women to the devil is to certify their sustained vilification” She agrees with **Interviewee C** who sees Matavare’s reference to the story of the fall of man as a way of “stretching the gender debate to creation day”. That way the two see the feminine blame motif as a way of solidifying their demonization as perennial and time-honoured.

**Interviewee D** and **Interviewee 7** and **8** are of a different mould as they view some artistes like Mtukudzi as attempting to sculpture a positive image of women in their music. They note that Mtukudzi, in Neriah, has distanced himself from the male
chauvinistic agenda and the denigration of women. Interviewee D observes that, “Mtukudzi helps society challenge culturally sanctioned female oppression by exposing the unfair practice of gendered inheritance dispossession.” Interviewee 7 and 8 exonerate dancehall from a blanket curse of deliberate negative portrayal of women. They cite dancehall artiste, Tocky Vibes, whose Mhai (Mother), they view as “celebrating the importance of women in life. The dancehall artiste pays homage to his mother, something that his peers are not associated with.”

Interviewee E observes that, “although society has changed significantly as a result of cultural fusion, there are still other female artistes like Pah Chihera who still nurse the hope that there is some chance the traditionally assigned male and female roles in marriage can still be achievable.” This sustains the impression that artistes are treading the gender terrain to invite a critical reflection of trendy gender debates from a truly afrocentric perspective.

On women and the vulnerable, interviewee 2 revealed that, “it is common sense to know that a woman or any girl can be your sister, your mother or your wife. Would you want them treated badly? When you beat your wife, you are beating your sister. When you abuse a young boy, you are abusing your own brother. When you look down upon a person, you fail to realise that no one is born in vain. Every person has a mission in life. They are born to fulfil something. God does not duplicate talent. There is no better you than you (sic).” This view helps portray the artiste as a genuine African who thinks of others as worth their existence in life.

6.2.5 Economic issues

It is the submission of several interviewees that Zimbabwean music has not articulated the economic issues with enough gusto to match the marauding economic meltdown. Factors cited for such deficiency of critical bite range from fear, lack of communicative tact and market disinterest.

Interviewees A, B and D concurred that very few artistes mustered the courage to directly comment on serious economic issues. Interviewee A observed that “Only isolated voices have had the courage to call a spade by its name. Artistes like Leonard
Zhakata, System Tazvida, Edwin Hama, to mention a courageous few have had the nerve to comment on the economic situation in their country. Edwin Hama in *Asina Mali* was courageous to articulate the early signs of economic decline at a time when it was considered dangerous to sing anything that exposed the state’s off hand management of the economy. A song like *Mugove* (Share) candidly laments the state of exploitation the lower classes of society have been subjected to.

Asked to explain why it was considered dangerous to sing suggestive lyrics, the interviewee A alleged that, “the state’s control on artistic expression is a known fact. Musicians are aware that the government has mechanisms to closely monitor what artistes sing and few may dare express themselves on sensitive issues”.

Interviewee C, however, sees it differently. She is of the opinion that, “Artistes indeed sing about serious economic issues but they do so in a veiled way. They have developed the art of saying it without naming it. Leonard Dembo sandwiches his sensitive messages in love songs. You would think that Sungura is all about love yet from time to time sensitive issues are inserted in love songs.” When further asked how effective it was for the artiste to be indirect, the interviewee expressed that, “It gives the song a more durable meaning that speaks to different situations of a similar nature. Besides, there is still this fear of victimisation by the government”. When asked to give examples of artistes who have been victimised, the interviewee simply said “it is the general sentiment among people that government victimises artistes”. This view helps shows that the public is not seized with any example of censored works but all the same believe there is a hand of censorship in Zimbabwean artistic expressions. This view when extended to the artistes has adverse consequences in terms of expressive courage.

Interviewee 5 sees society as faced with a number of challenges. “There is a multitude of problems people face everyday. They grapple with existential issues like child and marital abuse, violence, relationships, incest, economic issues but there is also that optimistic quota that still believes that the situation is going to be better.” The same sentiment rhymes with material fodder that constitutes popular music lyrics. This helps
show that what the ordinary people see and what the artistes see confirms them as parties contemporary to the same social reality.

**Interviewee 3** blames genres like urban grooves for concentrating on empty uniqueness and abstractions at the expense of what is real, on the ground.

> They forget that they ate potatoes for bread because the father could no longer afford bread; these are the bare issues they should sing about but they don’t. Musicians like Mtukudzi, Dembo and other yesteryear artistes, sounded so natural because they sang about real life issues.

The formalist conception of art concentrates on the structural dimension of art at the expense of critical social issues within their background. They can only be appreciated from the formalistic perspective. The *Afrocentric discourse* encourages the dialoguing socially relevant issues in the artiste’s background as advocated by Asante (2009). Such art is associated with lived realities of both the artiste and the consumer and they locate common experiences in the work of art. They are both contemporaneous with critical social and political issues discussed in the music.

### 6.2.6 Diasporan discourses

Zimbabwean artistes have discussed diasporan issues in their music as testified by various interviewees. This research sought the views of locals and people in the diaspora on how Zimbabweans abroad reflect on developments home and away from home.

**Interviewee F** reflected that what Zimbabwean artistes articulate is a very accurate narrative of life in the diaspora and the overall expectation of people back home. She however marginally differed with Bongo Maffin’s lamentation that there is nothing attractive outside.

> Bongo Maffin’s assertion that *hapana chekumirira* (there is nothing worth staying for here) could be an exaggerated frustration. It could be true with his situation in South Africa. We are out here because of money and here money buys more
than at home. Life is easy. You can get all the things that are considered luxuries back home but you can hardly save unless you are working as a couple.

She concurs with **interviewee G** who says that:

> Life is comparatively better here than back home but staying here is very dangerous. I could liken the situation here to attempting to wrestle honey from bees. Honey is sweet but there are bees around. If you are afraid of bees you will never enjoy the sweet taste of honey. Locals here are very jealous and overtly show their hatred of foreigners.

The interviewee who has had a five year stint in South Africa gives an example that probably explains while some diasporans are considering staying in foreign land when negative conditions threaten their stay. The situation abroad is a bitter-sweet blend which overally weighs on the sweeter since diasporans are not relocating home in spite of all the problems they encounter.

**Interviewee B** a local critic questions Bongo Maffin’s continued stay in diaspora if the situation is as bad as he claims. One also wonders if things are as bad as the artiste is saying, why does he not come back home. The fact that he chooses to stay there can be evidence to suggest he is in a better place than home. He reflects:

> When Bongo Maffin sings “dai ndiri shiri,” you imagine a man who has overstayed in the diaspora. For someone who has suffered from serious problems back home, such singing can only be regarded as arrogance by people who lack the basic essentials of sustenance.

When the views above are examined closely, it is akin to the birds and the cage anecdote: those that are inside are desperate to get out, while those outside are dying to get in. **Interviewee B** being a local could be fantacising life outside while **G** has had a practical feel of conditions in the diaspora.

Responding to Mtukudzi’s articulation that there is futility in the diaspora, **Interviewee F** fully subscribes to the artiste’s view:
You just do what comes your way. Very few professionals get jobs that accord with their qualifications. The real motive here is money more than anything. Even if you started your own business, the moment they see that it’s black owned, they avoid it. Your own black colleagues avoid you or sell you out if your papers are not in order. The only way to go around that is to have a white frontperson.

In that sense Mtukudzi is probably very correct to say that *nhava izere mhepo* because wealth accumulation story becomes an oversold myth. Where people are not professionals they are not handsomely rewarded. They are paid for their further exploitation in their work place.

Both diasporan interviwees concur with Bongo Maffin that there is no love lost between locals and foreigners in these migration destinations. Interviewee F alleges that:

> Work environment is not conducive because you will be working with people who do not like you. Back home there was no money but as a teacher, I enjoyed working with colleagues. You can not joke with anyone; even if you tried no one understands your joke. Here, racism is rife in most work places even when in principle there are labour regulations that stand against it.

Congruent to what Bongo Maffin observed Interviewee G observed that:

> In South Africa black foreigners are not tolerated by fellow blacks. Black versus white racism is not as visible as “black apartheid”. By this, I mean the intense dislike of foreign blacks by black locals. We have witnessed some of the most harrowing scences of brutality and dispossession by locals here in South Africa to a point where you wonder what logic is there for you to continue staying here.

While xenophobia is rampant in South Africa, UK racism is equally an annoying vice making life in the diaspora perennially unpleasant. They have to battle all negativity in order to eke out a living by ignoring such pressure and working strenuously to make enough money for home projects and general sustenance.

Both respondents from the diaspora agreed with Mtukudzi’s assertion that those at home look to the diasporans whom they regard as messiahs. Interviewee F agrees with
Mtukudzi’s articulation that those back home (vasara shure) succumb to the frustration of overexpectation:

The expectation by those back home is very high and often misplaced. They think that once you are in UK you can do almost everything. There a time before dollarization when we could do a lot with very little money back home but nowadays it is very difficult.

The same view is shared by interviewee C who says that:

In this underperforming Zimbabwean economy, it is not a misnomer to expect something from those who go out of the country. A herdboy here cannot afford to buy himself a pair of boots while a housegirl down in Mzansi (South Africa) can afford to build her parents a flat (a small gableless house).

This weight of expectation is itself a frustrating burden considering that those who wade into foreign lands have their unfulfilled ambitions. Interviewee F, for instance, reflected that:

When I came to UK, I thought I would stay here for five years and then go back having invested in some projects at home. But back home projects are poorly managed and sometimes your money is stolen by people you gave charge over your projects. So Mtukudzi is right to say vasara shure, kupura nemusana (those at home feast on our sweat).

When one looks at the balance sheet of expectations, investment and reward; the result is a negative transaction, hence “nhava izere mhepo”.

Diasporans in international and regional destinations agree with Mapfumo’s homesickness lines in “Exile”. Interviewee F regretted; “We do miss home but there is nothing we can do. Back home we cannot pay our bills, school fees and even food; so there is a time you want to think of survival more than anything.” Interviewee G however, compared his case better than that of diasporans in Europe, “Yes we miss home but we can always go home more frequently than our brothers overseas. We can afford to go home every year or when a close relative dies”. 
Views by interviewees in the diaspora on diasporan music help authenticate artistes’ reflection on one of the contentious issues in postcolonial music in Zimbabwe. Artistes debate and articulate serious national issues in a way that would force those intending to leave the country to pause and refrain as they reflect on the caution that the grass in the so called green pastures is not always green. Views by interviewees, however, may help appreciate the push factors that led people into seeking economic refuge in industrialised nations as the need for survival outruns patriotic loyalty. This would explain why some people end up taking up anything on offer as long as it helps them solve problems at home.

6.3 Conclusion

Postcolonial popular music has addressed a number of serious social and economic issues in postcolonial Zimbabwe. The research may not exhaust all critical themes that artistes have paused as warranting attention but has made an effort to reflect on some that can be used to show the social aspect of postcolonial Zimbabwe. Using the hermeneutic method to mine out meaning, a few sizeable themes have surfaced out as critical issues in this research. The family, culture, and economic themes have been analysed as critical motifs in Zimbabwean music which artistes labour to put across in sundry ways. Interviews were conducted as a way of validating the hermeneutic method and these generally produce the line of thought as generated by the hermeneutic method. The rich Shona language has been appropriated by the artiste in order for them to explicitly say out the Zimbabwean cultural position in the global world. Themes that may appear very localised can be interpreted as local responses to the global invitation, hence the social motifs that typify Zimbabwean popular music are a tip of the ice bag. They portend larger narratives of globalisation, neo colonialism and cultural imperialism.
CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION

7.0 Introduction

The study set out to explore the efficacy of postcolonial Shona music as a credible record of the social and political milieu in which the music is composed. Pursuant to that goal, this chapter discusses the predominant contemporary social, economic and political motifs encapsulated in popular music. The role of institutional frameworks in either stimulating or stifling the expressive potential of postcolonial Shona music is examined as a way of assessing the legal environment in which the music is produced, disseminated and consumed. Hermeneutic data is corroborated with data from interviews and document analysis.

7.1 The creative environment of music

The study found out that there are a number of institutional factors that subtly work into music production and consumption in Zimbabwe. Interviewees cited the state, the corporate world, the producers, promoters and the arts management boards as having a recognizable input into the process of production, dissemination and consumption of music. These were cited as contributing significantly in the final state of the artistic product. This flows in the same tide of opinion with Street’s (1986:6) observation on institutional interference in art. He makes a very succinct and cusped observation on the multiplicity of institutional variables that have a bearing on music production and consumption which have an effect on the overall meaning and interpretation:

A record is not just the sum total of the notes which compose it. Because pop cannot be separated from the industry that produces it, understanding the sound entails understanding the system that creates and propagates it. Record executives, lawyers, accountants, producers, engineers, publicists, sales personnel, radio programmers, disc jockeys, music journalists and a host of others come between a song’s composition and its first hearing. A single is not a piece of pure art; it is the result of countless choices and compromises, using criteria that mix the aesthetic, the political and the economic.
When the audience consumes the art of music, they are as it were, imbibing the whole mass of music production systems. Zimbabwean music is produced in a similar context although other factors such as artistic inhibition and real and imagined institutional control dominate as factors standing in the artiste’s freedom to express. Although interviewed artists expressed that they are free to sing what they want, recording and production companies in Zimbabwe have a bearing on the final content of their music. Studies by Vambe (2000), Zindi (1985) and Mano (2007) have established that music companies interfere with textual content of music. It is these companies that can interpret the censorship laws more than the artiste and to say they may stand in the way of free expression is to blame the victim of the censoring institution as they may not do so willingly. These are at the business end of the music production and as marketing agents; they are interested in what sells more than the artiste’s original voice. If the product is deemed politically and culturally offensive it may be considered unmarketable and as such, a loss for the artiste, the production and marketing company. In that regard, the artiste capitulates to the advice of the production and marketing institutions. However, such advice has no overall effect of muzzling the artiste because, should they insist on sticking to their original theme focus, they are advised to rework on masking their content in such a way that it slides through the censor’s strainer undetected. One interviewee, an arts manager, observed that a seasoned artiste is one who masks their content in such a way that they do not court the ire of the censor. Over and above that, they in turn add their own bit to the system so that every receiver contributes to the new meaning of the final part.

The legislative frameworks, infrastructural and institutional contexts of music creation concatenate to constrain or promote the nature and content of music we have today in Zimbabwe. A study of the legislative documents (constitution and broadcasting policy) and an ear to the professions of interviewees in the preceding chapters point to the Zimbabwean creative environment as conspicuously contentious. On paper, the Zimbabwean constitution has tremendous space for freedom of expression which however, withers away when one considers artistic inhibitions and hesitancy to tackle
contentious issues. The study found out that the Zimbabwean artiste has a hazy appreciation of his/her rights as extended by the constitution thereby failing to appropriate their freedom of expression. Just as Othman and Riesen (2001) discovered, Zimbabwe may be famed for high functional literacy rates but when it comes to legal literacy it is one country that has very low literacy levels. The implication is that, what the constitution provides for the ordinary man and woman is not accessible to them as the legal education that unlocks the constitutional provision is not availed to them. Where the constitution guarantees their freedom to express their ignorance of the provision (Mhiripiri and Mhiripiri, 2006) potentially chocks their precision to criticize, confront and comment without fear. It emerged during the interviews that some artistes are ignorant of the full provisions of the law. This leads to self censorship as the artiste is not so sure of the position of the law.

In spite of the constitutional provision of freedom of expression, the ZBC is one critical institution that has been seen as a government instrument meant to garrote politically sensitive lyrics as well as disseminate pro-government messages. Moyo (2004) sees the postcolonial state offering nominal change with no tangible transformation on access to free media:

> Despite claims to neutrality by both pre- and post-independence governments, the ruling elite has always used broadcasting as a tool for political control and manipulation of the masses. In the name of ‘national interest’, ‘national security’, and ‘national sovereignty’, broadcasting, from Rhodesia to Zimbabwe, has been characterized by two salient features: first, its legal status as a state monopoly, and secondly, its location under the Ministry of Information which rendered it a political tool in the hands of the government of the day.

Moyo's observations sound very accurate as the same situation still subsists in the postcolonial broadcasting set up where the state still wields the monopoly over broadcasting and monopolies are characterized by patronization and inbreeding. One interviewee, an entertainment editor from a print media remarked that the ZBC has
been fingered as stifling free expression of political music. The Censorship and Entertainment Act and Broadcasting Regulations Act connive to deny access to broadcasting of music deemed politically offensive. The term offensive has an arbitrary interpretation which implies that it can be prone to subjective red-lighting of artistic products.

Government censorship mainly works in two ways: *de jure* and *de facto* censorship. *De jure* censorship is the judicial position of censorship as categorically stated by a veritable section of law. The Censorship and Entertainment Act has clearly delineated subjects it deems offensive and therefore censorable. The *de facto* position on offensive themes is how the government reacts on the ground without the law or gazette stipulating or recording any works as either censorable or censored respectively. In the constitution, freedom of expression is freely served yet the *de facto* censorship encroaches to furtively usurp the artiste’s right to express freely. This was confirmed by some interviewees who reported of some works of art having been censored in spite of the artiste being empowered to freely express. Zhakata (2005:12) who has penned many politically suggestive songs provides evidence of censorship even in the presence of *prima facie* freedom of expression:

I was surprised the first time that I heard that certain of my songs had been banned from the airwaves because they were perceived to be politically incorrect. I did not waste any time when I learnt about this. I went to the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Holdings (ZBH) to enquire about this new development. At ZBH I held a meeting with the then Chief Executive Officer, Munyaradzi Hwengwere who professed ignorance at the said ban.

The *de facto* censorship is very hard to figure out by way of a tangible document to support its effecting. What are apparent are its effects. Music just receives zero air play; that is when one senses something could have happened.
Muza (2005) reports that Mapfumo’s *Corruption, Disaster* and *Mvemve* were banned on ZBC for straying from the approved messages and so was *Hodho* (Short gun) by Leonard Karikoga Zhakata. Musavengana, a former ZBC newsman, confesses that ZBC banned playing of Thomas Mapfumo’s *Chimurenga Rebel* alleging that it was self-avowedly against the *Third Chimurenga* (Land Reform Struggle. However, the system of censorship in Zimbabwe is so subtle that the public cannot access any veritable official public document to confirm such censorship but one only sees the artiste’s voice peter out on national broadcasting stations. Any such communication is passed on to the broadcaster. At least with regards to officially verifiable censored works, this research confesses that it never came across any. This position accords with Albert Nyathi’s (2005:3) interview with staff at the Censorship Board:

> Staff at the Censorship Board indicated to me that they have never banned music by a Zimbabwean. They said that maybe the broadcasters use of their discretion not to play some tracks that they feel are “indecent, obscene, offensive or harmful to public moral.

There could be no record of the board officially ‘arresting’ the music but the fact that the music is not played points to some form of censorship. We may fail to locate any tangible state censored material but it does not mean that it is not there. There are justifiable fears to suspect state censorship may be silently influencing the avoidance of certain sensitive topics, so that what the public eventually consume as free artistic products are potentially censored products.

Interviewed artistes may profess abundance of expressive space in the Zimbabwean constitution, but their reluctance, avoidance or is it disinterest, in some political or sensitive themes points to the existence of an iron hand in a velvet glove somewhere. Even when they eventually take that opportunity to compose themes of their choices, they have often done that through indirect means which though effective may not easily be construed the way they would have wanted, given the multiplicity of connotations and interpretations associated with indirect music.
Interviewed popular music artistes and arts critics expressed that psychological censorship or self-censorship is pervasive in the Zimbabwean musical landscape. This psychological censorship is an internal control mechanism that inhibits the artiste freedom to compose independently. In doing so, the artiste is responding to a number of forces such as cultural considerations, market forces and even fear of trespassing a written or unwritten law. Artistes end up avoiding or toning down on some subjects in a bid to retain their safety, acceptance and reception in the social and political context of their creative works.

7.1.1 The escape route

The Shona language has been utilised as censorship evasion device. It is an escape corridor for institutional and individualised censorship. Even when some Zimbabwean artistes seem immobilized and manipulated by censorship fears, they are nimble to craft their tales through a variety of strategies that defy muting or erasure. Linguistic devices have been deployed as escape routes for most popular music artistes in Zimbabwe. Artistes have not been totally silenced or controlled by the various types of censorships in place. Various linguistic devices have been employed to evade various manifestations of censorship. Reminiscent of apartheid South African artistes, they have developed various strategies to sterilize the power of restrictions on artistic products. Of South African censored artistes, Drewett, (2003:53) observes that:

No matter what their message was censored, musicians developed strategies to reach as wide an audience as possible. In doing so, they articulated and transformed culture, opening spaces in which particular forms of artistic expression emerged.

Be that as it is, any suspects picked are allegedly treated as guilt as some songs without any direct reference to any ‘sensitive’ issues have allegedly been taken off air. There is no one as creative as a cornered artiste, he or she will serve his or her dishes in the presence of censors. Zimbabwean artistes have appropriated the rich Shona symbolism and imagery to encode politically suggestive messages. Shona language is
renowned for its rich metaphorical properties which naturally lend the language to ambiguity and polysemy. This agrees with the arts manager’s view that even if there were to be censorship, a good artiste should always find a way of saying it without naming it.

Satire has been used by artistes to convey political thought without detection by the forces of censorship. Artistes have used other politically innocent themes like love and social expression to hide political expression. The use of diversionary tactics to ‘confuse’ the censorship chip has worked in some compositions; but has stretched the listener and the critic’s appreciation of the artiste’s message. Compositions such as Zhakata’s *Bhora rembabvu* (a physical game) are on the surface, love songs that convey political overtones very difficult for the consumer to decipher. The difficulty is however, welcome as it also evades detection from the censor. Several protests songs like Chimbetu’s *Vana vaye* (Those children); a political song disguised in social robes and Leonard Dembo’s *Chinyemu* protest the artiste’s displeasure with price increases and punitive taxes.

The Shona proverb has been widely used in Zimbabwean Shona popular music’s to convey sensitive messages to the audience. This powerful resource has been used on many occasions in music to ‘cheat’ the manifold manifestations of the censorship system. Paul Matavire extensively exploits the proverb as an expressive tool to adequately reflect a number of social issues in Dindindi Full time and *Kamoto kambarerevere* (A dying fire) among others. This gives his music referentiality to a variety of discourse set up than stating the implied. Moreso, proverbs and idioms set a platform for the discussion of contentious and controversial subjects. Mudzanire and Gondo (2014), Furusa (1996) and Mandova and Chimombe (2013) reflect that the Shona proverb as the effective communication device among Shona people. It has the power to refer to a number of situations hence the censor may not find it easy to stifle it based on their private interpretation.
7.2 Political motifs

A close reading of postcolonial Shona popular music in Zimbabwe evinces two broad thematic regimes that estimate the tide of political sentiment in the emerging state. The first ten years (1980-1990) produced songs that feed into what may be called meta-narratives (grand narratives) whose content inclination largely rhymed with the hegemonic discourse on national and international political developments. On the contrary, the period 1990 upwards gave birth to songs that can be classified as the counter-narratives where the postcolonial nation was beginning to experience nagging economic problems. Counter-narrative songs deliberately subvert formulaic interpretation of events and expectations of the state. Caution should be embraced, however, that these thematic regimes have no solid boundaries as neat and abrupt as suggested by the temporal delineations. Temporal frameworks are mere estimations. Some songs oscillate between the two broad time zones. It is also important to note these thematic regimes partly explain the expressive techniques of the artistes.

7.2.1 Sustaining nationalist meta-narratives

Postcolonial songs in this broad category are largely tributary to the official interpretation of historical experience and knowledge; in this context independence and nationhood. According to Stephens and McCallum (2013) a meta-narrative is a global or totalising narrative schema which orders and explains other little stories within the conceptual models that assemble the little stories into a whole. It follows that even the micro-narratives are so conditioned to speak to the tune of the state. Meta-narratives are interpretive socio-cultural frameworks which embody the leading principles of a nation and guide it accordingly (Bamberg 2004, 2005). Shona music in the opening stages of the postcolonial mainly uses hyperbole, denotative and prescriptive diction, pleas and in some cases commands which devices largely propel the listener to the grand narratives of patriotic conformity espoused by the new state.

A number of songs here speak to the grand narratives of celebration, ‘grandeurizing’ the revolution and summoning the nation to the unity crusade. The same music also aimed
at recreating in the postcolonial the mood of the revolution as a way of revitalizing a nationalist spirit in the citizen. Popular music proved critical in that nascent stage of rebuilding Zimbabwe as it sowed the right seed for steadying the nation through affirmative compositions that encouraged working for Zimbabwe. The study realised that the first ten years produced music that sustain the meta-narratives of the new nation. Although some opinions are that the artistes were too naïve to believe that the new government would deliver, the study discovered that it was not myopia for the artiste to believe so given promising projects trajectory marking the early hours of independence.

Popular music positively fortified the nation with courage and emotional strength to remain resolute in the face of adversity. The artistes recorded the early development initiatives in the aspiring socialist state as reflected in the five year development plans implemented soon after independence. Education and basic health became a right for every citizen and music has recorded such development successes by new government.

7.2.1.1 Immediate post-independence reflections

In sync with the government grand narrative of celebrating attainment of independence, the postcolonial artistes in the first ten years after independence significantly articulate the mood that gripped the nation. Music publications by Mapfumo, Mtukudzi and Munhumumwe and others are William’s (2000:406) little voices or petit recits that are an extension of the grand narrative and as such converge to the political trajectory of the elite or the ruling class. However, more than blind acquiescence to the dominant narrative, Musiyiwa (2008:23) observes that, “the euphoria and effervescence triggered by winning independence was a watershed for it heralded a new dispensation that saw the substitution of a white government by a black one.” Popular music in Zimbabwe vividly captures the mood of the nation in the early hours of independence. It records the joy, hope and self actualisation, a sense of arrival for a people who had wallowed under the subjugation of Europeans for a century. It was also an opportunity to capture the spirit of the revolution and a celebration of the freedom to say; an issue colonial legislation emphatically censored. The artistes then had rediscovered their muted
voices and explore the freedom to express. Like Zimunya and Kadhani (1981) in *And Now the Poets Speak*, indeed they can now ‘speak’, hitherto, denied themes, hence it is not a misnomer for Zimbabwean music in the postcolonial period to celebrate the heroic deeds of the fighters whose military prowess managed to deflate the British overstated potency.

A number of artistes have explored the mood of the revolution through popular music to record memories of lost liberation fighters, the pain and sad moments of the struggle. Music and memory are coterminal. Artistes like, Mapfumo, Mtkudzi, Mbuya Madhuve, and Chimbetu have recorded postcolonial sentiments in their compositions. These are explored to remind succeeding generations of the path to tread on and invoke the spirit of the revolution and infuse it into contemporary efforts at national development and staving off real or perceived threats. It was important that war memories be captured as a transitional phase from the liberation struggle to independence (Chiwome, 1996). Mutasa and Chigidi (2010:5) reflect; the attainment of independence and freedom created an enabling environment in which writers could then express the experiences of the liberation war. This would compel those who might be quick to forget that the independence they enjoy came as a result of a deep and passionate sacrifice. It would remind those easily carried away to remain focused as they reflect on the aspirations of fallen comrades. The musical reflection of the pre-independence era should never be seen as plain romanticisation of war exploits or mere disenchantment with the colonial past by the post independent Shona artiste. It should neither be myopically construed as parenthetical. Songs that revisit the wartime life, like *Ndega ndega* by Mbuya Madhuve candidly reveal the pains of the liberation war and appraise the salutary contribution of the liberation fighters. This makes music some form of historical narrative as reflected in the works of Turino, (2000), Pfukwa (2008) and Musiyiwa (2013), among others. Besides, this vindicates the New Historicist theory that every work of art is a product of the historical moment that created it (Brizee and Tompkins, 2012). That music was relevant to the context of its composition and reception as an index of the post war agenda to reconstruct and fortify nationalist attitudes in the citizen.
More than a mere retreat into the past; the songs soundly harden the post independence, ‘fighter’, the ordinary person, the leader and whoever aspires to work for Zimbabwe, that it is not that easy. They should soldier on no matter what odds are staked against them in the processes of development. It helps remind that independence is not an event but a process that can be confronted by myriad problems. First person encounter-narratives by artistes like Mbuya Madhuve, Ndega ndega and Chimbetu’s Hatikanganwe are micro voices that explode the chimurenga grand narratives that seek to validate heroic ‘tales’ of the liberation fighters since for once the artistes present liberation fighters as victims (Rwafa and Vambe, 2007). On another note, the strategy to invoke war memories is a well contrived one given that a significant portion of the Zimbabwean population has not had direct war traumatic experiences.

For what can pass for postcolonial mind control, war time songs like Nora (resung more than 20 years after the war) do not only display wartime challenges but may serve as reminders to ‘stubborn’ regime change voices that ZANU PF is prepared to fight again and alert that war is not pleasant. The graphic accounts of war experiences, enough to terrify the most daring are still indelibly engraved in the hearts of many that the mere mention of these is intimidating enough to castrate any lingering spirit of rebellion against the establishment.

Reminding the nation of the courageous spirit that took the freedom fighters to and from Mozambique, aims at prescribing the same resource for the Third Chimurenga (Gonye and Moyo, 2012) which is being waged against tumbling hope in the face of sanctions induced hardships. Invoking war memories renders the past usable in informing both the present and future. The past is not rendered dormant and irrelevant but a learning platform from which the present and the future are better compared and appreciated. The little voices become the tools that sustain and legitimise the master-narrative projection of the state. They appeal to memory revival; which memory is used to sanitize and legitimise the revolutionary party authority to steer the nation.
One critical and distinct motif in the postcolonial music is that of unity. During the liberation struggle unity was the bedrock upon which a common vision was crafted. Different political affiliations and tribal groupings had to forego their idiosyncrasies in pursuit of a common national vision and destiny. The new nation, at independence would rather be preoccupied with the broader developmental issues than concentrate on trivial tribal and partisan egocentricities. Years of fighting a common enemy and striving for a common destiny had naturally engendered and geled a sense of nationalism among Zimbabwean tribal groupings but this was not supposed to be taken for granted. Colonialism had used divide and rule tactics to atomise African tribes as the colonial powers aligned with some of the tribal groupings at the expense of others while at the same time creating and formalising tribal identities (Green, 2011). These erstwhile suspicions and conflicts would need closer attention in the postcolonial period for them not to derail the post independence revolution. Like in most meta-narratives a deliberate and conscious effort had to be mobilised so as to bolster a common code among all the people. Every government thrives on the unity of all of its components. Post independence call for unity was both a national healing and national development engineered initiative. In that regard, it was obligatory, for the new government to be seized with such a task. Independence demanded the same resources that were deployed in the liberation struggle. And this is recorded in musical memory. Unity calls by Chimbetu, Mapfumo and Chingaira are not nostalgic post war reflections but a true Afrocentric crusade to make people realize the strength of group affiliations. Besides, Mapuwei and Orina (2013), in their comparative assessment of Zimbabwean and Kenyan popular music, argue that music is a powerful force in communicating unity sentiments. This tallies with Musiyiwa’s (2008:12) observation that, “the arts, particularly music, are crucial in the creation and articulation of national sentiment. These are therefore constantly mobilised in social movements.” A number of postcolonial songs soon after independence labour to foster the ideals of unity and cooperation in the Zimbabwean nationals.

However, Muwati (2009:273) alleges that the celebration was a display of one’s desperate attempt to express feigned patriotism. “During this time, celebration was synonymous with patriotism. Failure to embrace celebration was tantamount to selling
out...” To this extent, Zimbabwean popular music space has been appropriated to conform to the hegemonic grand narrative of patriotism and self-sacrifice. While there could be some shade of truth in it; celebration of independence cannot be reduced to sheer obsession, it was a genuine spirit of the time buoying the post colonial artiste to join the crescendo. Besides, it gives credence to Amuta’s (1989) dialectical theory of African art where artistes act as mediating subjects who compose their works within their society’s milieu. Independence is the milieu in which celebratory popular music emerges.

In all the excitement and euphoria, artistes are in danger of eating their word as none of them suspect any disappointment that stalked the nation years later. No one does like poet Freedom Nyambaya (1986) who, in her satirical poem, “A Mysterious Marriage”, pessimistically lampoons the notion of independence without freedom. She expresses disillusionment with the independence and employs the allegory of a social relationship in which the boy named Independence and his fiancé Freedom’s marriage failed to take off. The poet puns around with flipsides of the liberation struggle; independence and freedom to portray Zimbabwean independence as farcical. Postcolonial music, like its equivalence in poetry, draws from the same experiential circumstances but is more optimistic than its poetic counterpart.

7.2.2 Counter-narrating the vision of the state

About ten years into independence, artistes begin to question the independence trajectory. Songs under this thematic regime are counter-narrative in outlook as they seem to attack the hegemonic portrayal of postcolonial history and events as preposterous. Contrasted with meta-narratives which serve to propel single stories or unidirectional historiography, counter-narratives deliberately disrupt formulaic expectations, understanding and interpretation of history and events. In her TED talk, “The Danger of a Single Story,” Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2009) supports the multiplicity of voices and perspectives in order to do justice to the fullest range of experiences. Zimbabwean popular music from the closing stages of the 1980s onwards
appears to read a different template of the postcolonial state trajectory as artistes beg to question, doubt, carp and satirise unfolding events with an alternative eye. From the literary version of Zimbabwe one is reminded of Yvonne Vera *Nehanda* and Marechera’s 1984 *Mindblast* which act as constructions of alternative histories unscripted in meta-narratives of postcolonial experiences. In music, artistes like, Thomas Mapfumo, Chirikure Chirikure, Leonard Zhakata and many others have scripted music which can pass for counter-narratives as they reflect on the economy, land and politics tangential to the statist historical perspective.

### 7.2.2.1 Land

Typical of the polemic nature of land policies in Zimbabwe; music has reflected on the theme of land from two contrasting angles; the state assisted view of commissioned artistes and the counter-narrative independent view. The history of land in Zimbabwe is one of alienation and marginalisation of the peasantry (Hill and Katerere (2002) against opposing colonial bourgeois forces and *ipso facto*, land has been a contested space in the postcolonial much as it was during the colonial era. It is one of those emotive and political (Idasa, 2011) discourses as dialectical tensions of dispossession and repossession compete for space in the postcolonial as they were in the colonial period. This affords the theme high tellability even in the postcolonial period. Grand and counter-narrative voices have invested interest in the subject, albeit, in varying perspectives.

Visible on the land issues are two contrasting narrations of the same subject. There is pro-land music that genuinely supports the cause and another one that is government commissioned. On the other hand, there is music that counters state version of the reform. Sibanda (freemuse) alleges that government commissioned some artistes to record pro-land music. Albums such as *Nhaka Yedu* by the Air Force of Zimbabwe Band; *Rangarirai* by Peter Majoni; *Hoko* by Simon Chimbetu and; *Tongogara* and *More Fire* by Andy Brown are alleged to have been commissioned by the government as a way of activating the reception of the land reform programme. Land is then read as the inheritance which belongs to the ancestors and failure to see it as such attracts the sell out label as Chingaira warns, “*muchatitengesera nyika* (you want to sell our country)”
Hondo yeminda. The government becomes the indisputable vanguard of that heritage and the effort that supports it is raised from a mere programme to a full war; the Third chimurenga. Having acquired such a ‘ferocious’ title, the resultant absence of rules in its implementation, course and resultant volatility become justifiable as wars are not formula occurrences.

Music that flows counter to the vision of the state mainly censures alleged absence of order, violation of rights and the partisan nature of the land reform. The music seeks to contest state monopoly of the national heritage narrative. Counter-narratives mainly come in the form of music by Thomas Mapfumo (1993, 2001) whose Maiti Kurima Hamubviri (You thought you were experts at farming) and Marima nzara (You have sown hunger) are visible anti-reform compositions. The counter-narrative, which risks being labeled unAfrican, seems to allege that the exercise has chased away productive white farmers and replaced them with inexperienced and therefore unproductive black farmers. However, Afrocentricity allows for self criticism of Afrocentric initiatives. Unguided African initiatives will not automatically become affirmative or Afrocentric in posture.

7.2.2.2 Corruption

One theme that has received moderate musical tellability in the postcolonial era is that of corruption. Zimbabwean popular music has not been bold in articulating corruption but the few artistes that have overtly done so have been quite eloquent in castigating corruption. Mapfumo and Solomon Skuza are some of the few postcolonial artistes who have dared to openly criticise government and private sector corruption. While corruption is motivated by greed, Makumbe (1994) attributes corruption to unethical leadership and bad governance which was widely neglected in that celebratory stupor of the early years of independence. For him it would seem that the corrupt exploited the transitional naivety of the first decade of independence. The Willowvale Scandal, narrativised by Mapfumo and Solomon Skuza, revealed that the political leadership had thrown away the leadership code of ethics evolved in the early days of socialism as Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2002) notes. This convinces Moyo (2013) to interpret these corrupt
tendencies as an appropriation of the postcolonial space for personal as opposed to national good. The leadership seems to have waded further from the guiding principles of the nascent stages of independence. Fanon (1967:133) observed that the new leadership is “preoccupied with filling its own pockets, as rapidly as possible but also as prosaically as possible, the country sinks all the more deeply into stagnation.” These developments provoked a lot of trepidation on a nation that was treading on the path of socialism in whose dream laid an egalitarian society. The ordinary person felt betrayed by the politician in whom they had invested much trust. This development would worsen from the 1990s onwards prompting artistes like Leonard Zhakata (1994) to demand their share (Mugove) of the national cake. For the artiste to demand his share alerts that the national economy is up for scrambles. Corruption has plowed its teeth into the national cake and is threatening to rip it apart.

However, when one looks at the number of high profile cases and the instances of their discourse in music, one sees that the theme has been avoided, neglected or simply under-sung. According to the Anti-Corruption Trust of Southern Africa (2012) and Moyo (2014), classic examples of corruption that tainted the Zimbabwean leadership include: the Diamond Scandals, the looting of the War Victims Compensation Fund, the VIP Housing Scam, the Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Company (ZISCO) Scandal, the Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (ZUPCO) Scandal, the Kondozi Estate Looting, the Willowvale Scandal, the Fertiliser Scandal, the National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (NOCZIM) Scandal, and the Harare Airport Extension Scandal, to name but a few. Artistes have not been as forthcoming in discoursing corruption as other themes like love. Topical issues should naturally attract high tellability but this one is conspicuously under-sung. One is tempted to believe that artistes are probably afraid of whistle-blowing corruption due to restricted freedom to express.

7.2.2.3 Political violence

The culture of violence as a method of thwarting dissenting voices is deeply entrenched in Zimbabwean party politics. The practice is traceable to the colonial regime which selectively applied it against blacks. Onslow (2011) observes that the incoming ZANU
PF government, in 1980, inherited a legacy of the colonial state’s use of asymmetric and disproportionate force when dealing with opposition and dissent. This legacy was further compounded by the armed struggle acquired tendencies of using force as deciding option. These formative attitudes and experiences forged political cultures which have continued to play out in the domestic post-independence political arena. Gatsheni-Ndlovu (2002) observes that the ruling party as a militarised liberation movement failed to demilitarise itself after 1980 thereby perpetuating the inbred culture of authoritarianism bequeathed from colonial settler repression and guerrilla violence. How then does postcolonial music reconcile violent decolonisation process and the independence era that exerts its own violence not least against the past, in the name of the present? (Buuck, 2015). Postcolonial music has recorded such violence in subtle and direct ways. The postcolonial political violence discourse in music ranges from veiled to direct, name calling protest.

Few artistes have braved the heat to express their views on political violence in a country fraught with political violence. Zimbabwean music records the deaths, maiming, dispossession, displacement and psychological trauma that people face in independent Zimbabwe. Dread Recklers’ (2011) *Maronda* (Wounds) reads like a catalogue of ZANU PF terror vices, while Mapfumo’s message comes in the form of advice about the dangers of entering politics. Reeler (2002:2) of the Amani Trust alleges that the Mugabe government and ZANU-PF use torture as a systematic means of clinging to power by destroying people physically and mentally and by wrecking terror on those who might threaten Mugabe’s rule. In the process people who subscribe to the alternative political ideology are subjected to torture, intimidation and psychological agony. Their property is either forcibly appropriated or destroyed to make them vulnerable and decide their fate in any plebiscite based on fear. This would explain why artistes fear to sing about violence when it is that rampant.

Interviewed artistes observed that violence is a sign of absence of democratic space. It comes when authorithies are afraid of extending to the artiste leeway to free expression of political opinion. This probably numbs the artiste from expressing issues openly fearing that by reporting violence they may end up being the victim they want to save.
7.2.2.4 Political polarisation

Counter-hegemonic musical discourses in postcolonial Zimbabwe are largely reflective of events, emotions and frustrations that mark the era in context. Prior to 1987, only ZAPU had emerged as a significant factor in the Zimbabwean political landscape in pre- and post independence Zimbabwe. Other parties like Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) Ndonga and United African National Congress (UANC) had mainly been sectoral parties confined to some regions and tribes. Zimbabwe had mainly been a quasi-one-party state (Gatshen-Ndlovu, 2003). With the unification of ZANU PF and PF ZAPU in 1987 after a civil unrest, the one party state dream of ZANU PF had been boldly affirmed (Onslow, 2012). Crafting the national vision was the single handed responsibility of ZANU PF without any input from any political party (Crisis coalition in Zimbabwe, 2015). The formation of the MDC in 1999 changed the tone of national politics in Zimbabwe. The ruling party conducted a saturated ideological attack on a range of internal ‘enemies’ as part of a sustained project of delegitimising opposition politics (Raftopoulos, 2004). So sharp were the differences and perspectives that the two main political parties evolved political music to criticise, mock, discourage or tout one party's political opinion. Party politics generated hegemonic and counter-hegemonic music.

This music is largely celebrated as music that reflects the emotional environment in which it evolves. The political terrain is marked by extreme violence, anger and emotion that the music should naturally reflect the tone of its context. It is not surprising to note the unmistakable presence of cabinet ministers and Members of Parliament (MP) in the musical ring to sing out political issues. Jonathan Moyo and Elliot Manyika and other party functionaries composed music that can easily be noticed as political party music. Paul Madzore, then an MDC MP put on his party regalia and compose music that offered a break from the tedium of meta-narratives of the state. The music was direct and unequivocally partisan. For the first time sacred cows are called by their names and their alleged crimes brought to the fore. The president, protected by an act of parliament against libel, is challenged through no holds barred music. In the music of Paul Madzore and Dread Recklers he is labeled a dictator, blood sucking vampire, despot, just to
mention a few. The music has lost the basic etiquette of respect for people who have been seen all along as untouchable. On the other hand, the opposition leaders have had their fair share of criticism and ridicule. The MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai has been called derogatory names such as *Chamatama* (the chickened one), *chimbwatsungata* (sellout) and many more to reflect the ruling party’s distaste of the character.

While such music is celebrated as cusp and less convoluted, some interviewed critics however dismissed political party songs as genuine music. They allege that such music lacks the finer endowments of music. To them art should be the software and not hardware of society. It should help people without harming them, or even without causing divisions in society. This adds fuel to the question, what is music? which has been a source of grand debates. If what is music is debatable; what about what is good music! From a Marxist perspective what can be celebrated in the music is its directness, its courage to confront. But from an Afrocentric perspective confrontation is not the language of art. Pre-colonial Shona societies; always used veiled protest as a conflict resolution tool (Batidzirai, 1998). Elders are not rebuked in public.

**7.3 Socio-economic issues**

Postcolonial popular music in Zimbabwe can arguably be understood as a significant part of the grand narrative of the major socio-cultural issues confronting most postcolonial African countries represented in literary cultural dialogues by leading African artistes and academics such as Achebe (1958, 1983, 1987), Armah (1968, 1970, 1972, 1973) and Ngugi (1967, 1987), among others. A hermeneutic reading of the popular song in this research attests to the thesis that artistes are responding to the local manifestations of the global socio-economic themes in motion as well settling terms with postcoloniality. Postcolonial popular music is thus, a candid articulation of society’s perceptions on some of the emerging social and economic issues in the world in general and the postcolonial Zimbabwean socio-economic scenario in particular. Interviewee reflections corroborate that Zimbabwean music is a fertile site for national and individual reflection where the themes of globalisation, independence and postcoloniality concatenate to give birth to a series of socio-economic motifs. The music
arises in a fast globalising world, where issues of cultural universalism have sprung as vogue headlines compelling all nations of the world to purchase. The music dialogues cultural issues, gender issues, poverty and many pertinent socio-economic motifs in the postcolonial state.

7.3.1 Culture

Postcolonial cultural dialogues in popular music respond to the residual effects of colonialism and its cenotaph, neo-colonialism which have left the postcolonial state staggering to locate the path towards the true African culture. A hermeneutic reading of the postcolonial music shows that artistes are stirred by the desire to discuss critical themes like language, cultural pride and disserting of one’s culture in pursuit of the ‘normalized givens’ (Jamal, 2003); a term referring to such cultural essentials that we accepted from Europeans as we denigrated our own in return. Africans have turned against their own culture. However, from the perspective of interviews, artistes, consumers and artistes themselves are seized with the desire to throw light on critical cultural debates that have attained agenda status in postcolonial Zimbabwe.

Artistes like Oliver Mtukudzi, Chimbetu and others decry the continued flight from African cultures. The artistes contest society’s unbridled appetite for foreign languages instead of their native languages. Mapfumo laments African institutions like the broadcasting houses’s continued use of English against the imperative to use African languages. Any culture is a people’s image or simply a society’s footprint as Mtukudzi in Tsimba itsoka (the footprint is the foot) suggests. If culture is an image then no one can run away from it; if it is footprint it represents a spoor of our experiences. When people run away from their cultures in pursuit of other people’s; then they run the risk of failing to communicate contemporary cultural messages. This flows in similar ebb with Chirikure’s poem ‘Watswanya development’ (You have destroyed development) in his anthology Chamupupuri (Whirlwind) where the poet contests the use English when addressing a Shona gathering. It is simply outrageous. However, some interviewees see some young artistes, particularly from the Zimdancehall alliance as complicit to the vilification of African cultures as they continue to churn out obscenities in the name of
modernism. They experiment with the Shona language to create unique linguistically fractured similes that can not be identified with any forms in the Shona language. More still, some artistes like Mtukudzi, are pained that Zimbabweans have been convinced to scorn their creative works like ngano, products of their ingenuity, which are the flagship of their culture (Mapara, 2014). Imperialism and globalization thrives on cultural dispossess and demonization.

The concept of ubuntu, the local and regional cultural compass is projected as severely threatened by the invading culture which has turned people against their own cultures. Ubuntu dialogues by sampled artistes seek to contest such loss of direction and is Sankofan voice calling for a return to the centre. The Sankofa call affirms that it is not taboo to go back and reclaim what one has forgotten. In that sense it represents concepts of self identity, redefinition and vision as the past informs the future. Critical social values like hard work, perseverance, love and respect for humanity are pervasive themes in popular music even in songs whose main themes may not necessarily reflect a concentration on ubuntu.

7.3.2 Romantic expressions

When people talk about serious national issues, love is seen as the most peripheral issue, ranking least among weighty issues yet love is a prevalent motif in postcolonial Shona music in Zimbabwe. Musicians who prod this theme are often criticized as escapists of hard issues particularly in a country teeming with injustice, corruption, guile, afflictions among other ills, yet love in music probably addresses the most important consolation of existence. Chari (2008: 100) sees love themes as ‘soft issues’, ‘light hearted subjects’ triggered by survival instincts in the singer as they shy away from restricted freedom to explore political issues. While love may satisfy the selfish interests of the artiste, in Zimbabwe the popular artistes is driven by the desire to express the postcolonial society’s views on love and its derivative themes. Though some artistes overtly celebrate love, the overall refrain by artistes is; love is in limbo.
Zimbabwean music articulates love as an indirect victim the economic situation in the country. For married couples, Matavire’s *Iye Mbune* (Himself alone) laments the separation of the husband from the home as he goes job hunting. The industrial economy has taken men from their rural homes and families to create conditions that threaten the functionality of the African family. Men are separated from their families because of work but it seems the man in the picture is embroiled in some shenanigans. Some men cannot even spare a weekend with their families or even apply for a special leave to be with their families. The city has been cited in the works of Charles Mungoshi (*Waiting for the Rains* (1975) and *Kunyarara Hakusi Kutaura?* (1983), as tearing the quintessence of the marriage and family institutions. It is here where ‘small houses’ thrive, where people lose their moral bearings and integrity as family heads because the city is home to a diversity of ravenous cultures.

The prevalence of love themes in postcolonial music arguably confirms the independence and peace as critical for the full enjoyment of love. Aestheticism is located higher than safety, at least Maslow has postulated. Independence has arguably removed the threat of insecurity and firmly guaranteed freedom from fear; therefore love, intimacy and affection have been allowed space to flourish. However one may view concentrating on romantic music at a time when the artiste could have exerted their energy on the most burning issues of the moment as spurred by the fear of imagined reprisals if one touched political subjects as well as the issue of market forces.

Hermeneutic interpretation sees the romantic side of Zimbabwean music probably stemming from the need to deflect and relieve the audience from the harsh political and economic environment. It also came out in the interviews that the prevalence of love songs in the postcolonial Zimbabwe can also be appreciated as a palliative to deflect the mind from the debilitating economic effects of the collapsing economy. Music possesses those psychological and neuro-chemical qualities that help sedate the body and the mind (Sacks, 2007). In an economic and political environment that is perennially pushing men and women to the margins of living; romantic music has those qualities to tame the mind and give hope for something to live for. Although the theme of love is apparent in popular music, its socio-historical circumstances have often not been given
due scrutiny by love music. What comes out clearly are the crises of passion but very few artistes have deployed energy to examine the socio-historical circumstances in which love themes unreel. The follies and inadequacies of male and female characters are clearly outlined, albeit, without corresponding examination of the context of such folly or inadequacy. Women are generally projected as pesky, inclined towards prostitution, and acquiescing effortlessly to materialism. On the other, hand the theme of love projects men as shallow in morality, double-crossing or victims of such vices. Much as men and women suffer in love; love is the ultimate victim as it loses its essence against the socio-historical forces at play.

Some interviewees see the context in which such love transactions operate as one driven by materialism and property fetishism. Incidentally, Karl Marx links these to the broader economic crises. It therefore connotes that a fractured economic system has resulted in cultural corruption and cultural stress as love becomes a victim of the local economic condition and the global effects of cultural imperialism. Interviews revealed that Zimbabwean music celebrates love while the hermeneutic method in some songs interpreted love as being problematic. The dissonance probably stems from hermeneutic ambiguity which allows the interpreter the latitude to see data differently and the freedom of opinion interviewees have. More so, musical stimuli impress on different people different ways of interpretation.

### 7.3.3 Domestic violence and divorce

The hermeneutic reading of popular music in Zimbabwean partially agrees with interviewee perspectives on domestic violence and divorce in music. Both instruments agree on the prevalence of these motifs in music. A close reading of songs under this banner shows that domestic disputes are paraded as leading to violence. This should in turn lead to divorce (Gender Equality Network, 2015) but popular music projects it differently. Most women are paraded as larger than life characters that persevere and vow to stay put even when the pressure of violence suggests they quit. Hudson-weems (2004) sees perseverance as a hallmark of Africana women. Popular music however,
parades domestic violence as affecting the less powerful and vulnerable like women and children.

The social and economic tensions in the postcolonial set up have crept into the family threatening the basic bonds of family cohesion. The hermeneutic method and the interviews agree with related literature on high incidence of domestic violence. Just like the hermeneutic method established, divorce and family instability are predated by the economic and mega-cultural shifts in the postcolonial state. Although wanton divorce was barely tolerated in the traditional Shona society, the postcolonial period has seen an upsurge in the incidents of divorce cases from both the high and low profile sections of the Zimbabwean society mainly due to financial stress, marital infidelity and domestic violence (The Sunday Mail 2014). Pristine Shona communities never accepted divorce at any rate. One had to convince a family court of elders as the wife belonged to the whole family and could not be sent away for no apparent reason (Gombe, 1996). Today the ordinary Zimbabwean family is projected in music as an incoherent unit bereft of the requisite capacity to handle the pressure of existence in a globalising world.

As music records some of these issues bedeviling the nation, there are high profile divorce cases that have tainted the moral centre of authority. Ignatius Chombo formerly Local Government Minister, Simon Khaya Moyo, Chairman of ZANU PF and former Prime Minister of Zimbabwe and leader of the opposition MDC party, Morgan Tsvangirai have put the national leadership’s morality in question.

While others may see the high incidences of divorce as pointing to the failure of the Shona family institution, some see this as empowerment for women as Gunn (2012) contends:

In any society where women are socially stigmatized for failed marriage, higher divorce rates can be a sign of progress and women’s empowerment. When women are stuck are in a relationship that is not working, this can be emotionally damaging; however in many countries with extremely patriarchal family and gender roles women are blamed when marriage does not last which can lead them to stick with it in spite of the distress of the bad relationship.
Such a conception of divorce seems not to emerge from the African conception of gender politics. It smacks of a radical feminist tincture. The *Africana womanism* sees the woman’s dignity in a marriage not outside. This is not to say it is good for men to oppress their wives but in all conceptions of African marriage there is nothing that sees divorce as empowerment. Although Gunn raises important points to note regarding emotional issues stemming from failing marriages in Africa, women do not celebrate divorce. In the division of the estate there are some women who walk out of a marriage with a broad smile on their face but from an African womanist perspective this actually brings shame and pain on their heads.

### 7.3.4 The HIV and AIDS pandemic

The outbreak of the lethal HIV and AIDS pandemic in the early 1980s coincided with the teething phase of Zimbabwean independence. It coincided with the celebration of self exploration and self rediscovery characterising independent nations which could have affected its reception and impact on the nation. Popular music in the postcolonial state audibly articulates the pandemic. A number of songs have attempted to give the general perception of the pandemic: its causes, nature and social interpretation. The disease has generated different interpretations among different groups of people. It still remains an unpacked enigma in the postcolonial society. It is difficult for those living with the disease to reconstruct their shattered sense of social value in spite of all the social and medical interventions to ease the severity of the scourge.

The study has observed that the disease received much musical attention in the first decade of its outbreak with artistic interest receding years later. Matavire’s (1989), Yakauya AIDS Mtukudzi’s (1999) *Todii? (Whar shall we do?),* Chigodora’s (1990) *Ndine urombo* (I feel pity), Mapfumo’s *Mukondombera* (The pandemic) all come in the first decade of the pandemic. This may show that artistic interest on the motif was motivated by society’s quest for answers to the pandemic and the general fear associated with the pandemic.
The disease is paraded in music as severe and widespread yet the artistes are not giving up on discussing the pandemic as requiring the untiring attention of society. A hermeneutic interpretation of songs by Chigodora, Matavire and Mtukudzi has produced divergent interpretations of the pandemic in the Zimbabwean society. The disease is presented as incurable hence terminal, prompting Matavire to conclude, *yakubata rufu chete* (ones you are infected; it is a sure case you will die). Artistes, then raise a warning banner for society not to engage in activities that expose members to the life deleting disease. It is disturbing to note that in music and as in society, women, who can also be victims, are presented as the causative agents of the disease. Matavire in *Yakauya AIDS* (AIDS has come) locates a platform to project women as carriers of the disease hence men are advised to keep away from them. Vambe (2002) and Mudzanire and Mufanechiya (2010) agree that it is unfortunate to present victims as villains as this assails their overall reception in society.

In some songs, artistes mock the pandemic by drawing laughter on victims of the disease. Chigodora and Steve Makoni caricature victims of the disease probably as a way of discouraging people from promiscuity. While home based care initiatives encourage helping the patient in appreciating their condition as manageable; the artistes’ insinuation that the pandemic is lethal disarms the confidence of the patient and dampens the caregiver’s resolve to assist the victim. When the disease is presented in such light, victims may find it difficult to disclose their status as doing so would be tantamount to inviting mockery over their condition.

### 7.3.5 Gender issues

The study established that a number of male artistes appear thunderstruck by the women’s flight from their culturally sanctioned positions and the sudden challenge on their hegemony by the feminist revolution. Popular music contests the threat of feminist intrusion into patriarachially ordained domains of life. There is a palpable feminophobia in popular music by male artistes. The phobia stems from the challenge women seem to be waging against the male subculture. Years of intercourse with western brewed literature and western modeled education have opened women to ‘new truths’ concerning their position in society. The western education and gender conventions
have shredded the ‘myth’ of male superiority over their feminine counter class. These have helped expose the male-female binary construct as culturally given, not as God-made.

Contrary to what some researches have recorded (Vambe, 2002), the inscription of gender in postcolonial Shona music is bolder than is often appreciated. Admittedly, Shona music is not explicitly gendered but there are evident nuances that pass for gender references in the music which cannot be ignored. A number of musical pieces exhibit some gender tinctures in their outlook that Zimbabwean music a site of gender discourses as Mudzanire and Mufanechiya (2010) have noted. Gender is used as a prism to reflect on many social and political issues. As artistes articulate other issues like AIDS, politics, love and economic issues, the subject of gender becomes a byproduct of such discourses. The gender gaps and silences are furtively inflected in popular music. For instance Mtukudzi’s song on inheritance Ndagarwa Nhaka on a closer analysis can be peeled to reveal society’s perceptions on women. Chimbetu’s song Magobo, on the dilemma of unemployment teems with gender undercurrents.

Zimbabwean music artistes seem to be using lenses that are foreign in articulating gender issues in their music. The feminist perception of life has been appropriated by some artistes to paint a gender picture that are exotic to Afrocentric realities. One thinks of Matavire’s Dhiyabhorosi nyoka which projects African women through prisms that malign them as axes of evil. Matavire’s wholesale appropriation of the biblical story of the fall of men denies his audience an opportunity to reflect on gender from their cultural frame of analysis and instead present them in precast authoritative biblical narratives that only serve to discourage women’s agency and confidence in postcolonial Zimbabwe.

Africana womanism does not view gender relations a site of suspicions and counter-accusations. African females and males are seen as harmonious and working in complementarity as Hudson-weems (2004) and Magosvongwe (2015) appreciate. Accordingly, artistes like Mtukudzi, Pah Chihera and Chimbetu greatly inject confidence into Afro-gender discourses as their music has loyalty projected afro-optimism on
gender relations. Their music dialogues critical issues like restoring the real place of women in the postcolonial nation as dictated by their Shona society. These voices come against deafening calls for the ‘liberation’ of women from the masculine pliers.

In postcolonial Zimbabwean music, the masculine subculture is projected as attempting to reclaim threatened social positions and echelons of power by their feminist counterparts. Musical space abounds with songs that seek to register discomfort with the way women have responded to the spate of liberation literature and teachings. The feminist teachings of gender equity has alarmed Zimbabwean women to the realization that they can encroach and penetrate the culturally bestowed prefecture of male hegemony in virtually every arena of life. Women have challenged the authority of men in politics, religion, professions and other arenas of life. Jona Moyo’s *Ndabve zera* (I am grown up), Prince Musarurwa’s *Gogodera* (a rough character), Tongai Moyo’s *Ndiro yababa* (Father’s plate), Chimbetu’s *Pasi riya rapinduka* (The world has changed) and John Chibadura’s *Murume ngaaremekedzwe* (The husband should be respected) among others are stimulated by the frustrations of men’s reduced boundaries, courtesy of women’s encroachment. Prince Musarurwa’s *Gogodera* thus asks, *Ndiani jongwe pamusha pano* (who is the cock here?): a very legitimate masculine concern that seeks order in the African family. (Even the most shining examples of democracy have one centre of power). The cock and the hen represent the family set up and the location of power in the family.

With regards to domestic violence and disorder in families, those who have failed to persevere have lost their families but have gained their ‘freedom.’ It must be noted that this study does not seek to condone gender based violence which it cannot ignore given the overwhelming cloud of witnesses in literature on it. Already, on-going researches by the Musasa Project (one of the oldest women’s and feminist organizations in Zimbabwe founded in 1988 in response to the escalating violence against women) point to the prevalence of the scourge (Morshenberg, 2014). The evidence serves to confirm that either men or women are failing to live to their socially prescribed roles or are encroaching into each other’s sensitive boundaries.
Interviewee reflections that females are not well represented in music performance and the fear that their voices may not be represented in their gender messages is partially legitimate as music hermeneutically analyzed point to most artistes conveying their sub-cultural agenda. Other studies, for instance, by Rwafa and Vambe, (2007:66) decry the exclusion of women in music as reflective of their absence in national discourses:

The marginalisation of the voice of female singers is a mirror for the larger ‘absence’ of female leaders from the national liberation struggle and the public political domain of post-independence Zimbabwe.

Though a fair reflection of the situation; the absence of women in popular music may not however, signify their total absence from music in the widest sense as traditionally women have been at the centre of communal music (Mudzanire and Mufanеchiya, 2010). Home chores are littered with instances in which women sing. It is in public performances that women voice dwindles.

7.3.6 Poverty

With the incidence of independence, hope for better livelihoods buoyed the citizen’s resolve to participate in national development programmes with spirited zeal. For all the expectancy, reality confessed otherwise; a gloomier picture dampened all traces of foreseeable bliss. Chinake (1997:39) observes that:

The vision of an egalitarian Zimbabwean society by the year 2000 envisaged after Independence in 1980 has been blurred by the failure of development programmes to alleviate poverty and reduce inequalities, particularly in the country’s rural areas. As a result of market-based economic reforms, drought and other interplaying factors, the poor and disadvantaged sections of the population have become further marginalised, thus making development efforts futile.
Although early national development efforts in the form of health delivery and education infrastructure have been noted, as time unreeled, the gap between the rich and the poor continued to widen. The Marxist theory allows us to critique such a scenario as uneven and requiring urgent revision. Poverty became the most unfortunate condition of the newly liberated citizen contrasting sharply with their expectation. This contrasts sharply with the social and economic problems in a country that is renowned for profuse wealth potential. Poverty has reached unprecedented levels. The worker is increasingly alienated from his sweat and popular music has recorded this development.

Although economic problems may be clear for all to see, the answers to and the causes of such problems may not be that clear to the public. Popular music artistes have tried suggesting or simply alarming society on the critical economic issues facing the nation. Since economic problems are intertwined with political ones, the artiste has not been that explicit or audacious in limelighting economic problems in the postcolonial state. Very few artistes have found the nerve to openly articulate economic issues and for that reason interviewed consumers of music earnestly feel that artistes have not adequately sung the economic problems with the “gusto that matches the marauding economic meltdown.”

Some interviewees agree with hermeneutic interpretation of songs that, indeed, there is a sizable presence of music that discourses economic problems but they suggest even songs that seem tangential to economic crisis content may in fact be alluding to it. A song like Magobo (Chimbetu) may appear to be alluding to love dialogues, but nuances of the economic crisis are easily perceptible on closer analysis. Interviewees maintain that the issue has been adequately covered, only that artistes are less direct. Some artistes, particularly party artistes, openly criticize and cite certain institutions and individuals that responsible for the economic meltdown and the resultant poverty. Artistes like Madzore allege that ZANU has destroyed the country and go on to prescribe corrective action. Mapfumo’s (2015) Nhamo (poverty) alleges that sekuru vamunoona vatiunzira nhamo (this old man you see has brought us poverty). Although he does not openly say who the old man is; one thinks Mugabe is the old man. It is
common to hear people refer to him as *sekuru*; a term which is used to show his advanced age. However, pro-government artistes like Chingaira, see economic sanctions imposed by the West on Zimbabwe as responsible for the economic problems. The shortages that Madzore sings and blames on ZANU PF in *Zimbabwe Simuka* are then read as emerging from the economic sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe. But as early as the late 1980s, Zimbabwean economy had begun to show signs of stress (Dumba, 2015), way before sanctions were imposed. These differences help show the polemic nature of Zimbabwean crisis.

Poverty in postcolonial Zimbabwe appears to be political. Improperly advised political decisions and general political management of the economy appear to be responsible for the poverty that stalks the nation. From the late 1980s the government has not been committed to tackle corruption (Gilpin, 2008). Government’s cavalier management of the economy has seen corruption proliferate unabated. Ill-advised market-based economic reforms like ESAP marginalised the poor and disadvantaged sections of the population due to the adverse effects of spiraling living costs, falling social services, expenditures, unemployment and reduced income levels (Chinake, 1997:43). Post 2000 economic crisis has been attributed to the handling of land reform or fast track that created an atmosphere of uncertainty in potential investors. Mlambo and Raftopoulos (2010:3) allege that the reform programme provoked the ire of the international community:

The chaotic and highly controversial fast-track agrarian reform exercise and the violent campaigns against perceived opponents of the ruling party that accompanied it from 2000 onwards resulted in widespread human rights abuses that made Zimbabwe a pariah state that was boycotted by the international community and subjected to targeted economic sanctions

Zimbabwe was as a result marooned from the international community and economies of the world being interdependent; this had disastrous consequences for the asphyxiated economy. Artistes like Mapfumo allege that the chasing away of white
farmers was tantamount to inviting poverty hence the befitting title to the claim *marima nzara* (you have sown hunger). All this had ripple effects on the economy, particularly one that has always been agrarian.

7.3.7 Escaping home: Diasporan discourses in popular music

The political pressure and the resultant economic meltdown from the closing stages of the second decade of independence into what has been epitheted ‘The Lost Decade’ (2000-2010) are largely implicated for the ensuing human power flight into the region and beyond (Mupakati, 2012 and Mbiba, 2012). As pressure mounted at home, people fled *en masse* to neighbouring countries. It is estimated that there are about three to four million Zimbabweans are in the Diaspora (Pasura, 2010 and Mopedziswa, 2015), hence there is a voice in the wilderness yearning to reconnect with home and refusing to forget the cradle that nourished it. The exiled, the fugitive, refugees and all the other descriptions of diasporans either miss home or are missed back home. The experiences of those who left and those that were left behind are vividly recorded in popular music. Diasporan discourses are therefore symbolically and explicitly legitimate wailings. The physical and the metaphorical dislocations are representative of African conditions as they attempt to wrestle themselves from the unfortunate realities of their daily conditions. Mlambo and Raftopoulos (2010:3) observe that:

> the economic crisis resulted in a massive collapse of the country's once-celebrated social services sector, with health and education provision declining precipitously in the face of chronic and severe under funding and a debilitating brain drain as most professionals voted with their feet in search of better prospects abroad.

The postcolonial has left many questions unanswered. There is hunger, poverty and war in postcolonial Africa and if people can not eke a living out of their environments or find peace, they have to relocate to some areas where unfortunately they incur upon themselves more problems like the proverbial grasshopper that jumps from the frying
pun into the fire. Diasporan discourses may also imply symbolic cultural dislocations that have ‘exiled’ people from their pristine cultures into global spaces which are defined by world powers and former colonizers. In that, the rest of Africa is in a cultural diaspora because Africa is pursing a culture foreign to its being.

Although some interviewees may see it differently, an attentive analysis of postcolonial music confirms the music as contesting the oversold myth of greener pastures abroad. Mtukudzi, Bongo Maffin and others refute the glittering fables of gold in foreign lands. They however, fail to point out the push factors that drive people into foreign lands. What comes out clearly is that those that have escaped home find themselves in not so pleasant conditions. There is xenophobia and racial discrimination to a point where the money they earn means very little to them. Ndlou, (2013) recounts that in South Africa, foreign nationals have either been burnt to death or have had their properties confiscated by locals who think they have taken their jobs or have increased the burden on the fiscus. This tallies with what came out in the interview with one regional diasporan respondent. This pushes Mutasa in Nyambo DzeJoni (2000) to dismiss glowing stories of life outside one’s boarders as mere jest. More so, it comes out in the songs that diasporans become frustrated as they fail to fulfill their dreams. Back home there are high expectations and hopes that the mere fact of having someone abroad is enough consolation for those that remain. Mtukudzi’s Izere mhepo sums it all. It eloquently balances the expectation of those that remain and frustration of underachievement for those that leave. Literary interpretation of diasporan experiences by Moyo, Gonye and Mdlongwa, (2012) denounce the decision to abandon home as an ill-thought, unpatriotic and thus exacerbating the predicament of flight.

The overall message from hermeneutic and interviewee data points to diasporan sentiment as reflecting that home may be having problems but the diaspora is not the solution to home challenges. This may imply that it would be advisable for people to sort out their domestic economic and political affairs and create conducive environments for themselves than hiding in shelters that further expose their vulnerability.
7.4 Conclusion

This chapter has found out that Zimbabwean popular music arises out of a complex institutional and legal environment in which government official position on free expression is ideally the best environment for music production and consumption. The same government has through the local content regulation opened airwaves for the composition of local content music. Other African countries like South Africa have followed the Zimbabwean initiative, yet there is a general feeling that music in Zimbabwe is heavily censored. The government through institutions such as ZBC is alleged to suffocate some politically suggestive songs. This has not however, succeeded in completely shutting out political music. The study discovered that the place of popular music in Zimbabwean national discourses may not seek to contest or deconstruct archival and official versions of history but is meant to complement them. It is an attempt to record just another voice which may augment the officially sanctioned discourses. In some instances it may appear anti-establishment but it certainly helps in the versioning of history and anthropology. Through the music, Zimbabwe's postcolonial social and political trajectory can be neatly followed, although in some instances music may not possess the punch and courage to confront contentious issues in society. By and large, Zimbabwean music is a serious travelogue of the postcolonial journey.
CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

8.0 Introduction

This study set out to critically interrogate the context reflectivity of Shona popular music in postcolonial Zimbabwe against the backdrop of the evolving postcolonial legislative framework. Pursuant to that, this chapter concludes the research by summarizing its major findings. The chapter is a succinct insight into the legislative context of music creation and consumption. It is also a pithy exploration of the major social and political themes that preoccupy postcolonial music expression. The chapter winds up by suggesting recommendations for music art, legislation, criticism and future researches on music and sociality.

8.1 Research findings

The research findings can be summarised into three major thematic perspectives, viz; creative environment, political and socio-economic motifs in popular music.

On the creative environment in which popular music produced, disseminated and consumed, the research established that there are a number of institutional factors that subtly connive to affect the final product. The research established the state, the corporate world, the producers, promoters and the arts management boards as having a recognizable input into the process of production, dissemination and consumption of music. When the Zimbabwean audience consumes popular music, they are as it were, imbibing the whole chunk of music production systems. Other factors such as artistic inhibition and real and imagined institutional control dominate as factors standing in the way of free expression. Although interviewed artistes expressed that they are free to sing what they want, recording and production companies in Zimbabwe have a bearing on the final content of their music.

The study established that Zimbabwe’s legislative environment is ideally fertile for music production and dissemination as supported by a number of legislative instruments. On paper, the Zimbabwean constitution has tremendous space for freedom of expression which however withers away when one looks at the artistic inhibitions and hesitancy to
tackle contentious issues. The study found out that the Zimbabwean artiste has a hazy appreciation of his/her rights as extended by the constitution thereby failing to appropriate their freedom of expression. From the interviews with artistes and critics of music, it emerged that there is general fear of by artistes that if they sing political music they will be heavily punished or taken off air. This is however, written nowhere in the constitution. Although interviewed artistes profess abundance of expressive space in the Zimbabwean constitution, their reluctance, avoidance or disinterest, in some political or sensitive themes suggests the existence of an iron hand in a velvet glove somewhere. Even when they eventually take that opportunity to compose themes of their choices, they have often done that through indirect means which though effective may not easily be construed the way they would have wanted, given the multiplicity of connotations and interpretations associated with indirect music. The study established that intrinsic censorship restricts artistes from openly debating hard and contentious issues which suggests the artiste senses the threat of censorship. This compromises on the artiste’s expressive proficiency.

The Censorship and Entertainment Act and Broadcasting Regulations Act connive to control free expression and restrict access to broadcasting of music deemed politically offensive. The government has a full censorship instrument that monitors artistic content and content deemed offensive to morality and political order is summarily blocked. The Broadcasting Regulations Act is an extension of the Censorship and Entertainment Act as it regulates licensing of broadcasting services. The stringent conditions limit the number of players and the freedom to broadcast objective content. As a result ZBC remains the only major broadcast option for the artiste.

Notwithstanding the constitutional provision of freedom of expression, the research found out that ZBC is one critical government instrument insidiously designed to garrotte politically sensitive lyrics as well as disseminate pro-government messages. Some interviewees fingered ZBC as stifling free expression of political music. It is cited as an executing instrument of the Censorship and Entertainment Act. Meantime, tucked in the background is Censorship Board which can not come out openly to block artistic products as doing so openly would be seen as conflicting freedom of expression
enshrined in the constitution of the land. Although there is no verifiable record to suggest that ZBC has blocked any music, literature and music critics’ confessions point to ZBC as affecting dissemination of music.

The study has also established that the Shona language has been widely employed as an effective tool of expression as well as censorship evasion device. It is an escape route for the artiste to evade real or imagined censorship. The artistes have appropriated the rich Shona language to clearly convey their messages to their audience. Even if some Zimbabwean artistes seem immobilised and manipulated by censorship laws, they are nimble enough to craft their tales through a variety of linguistic strategies that defy muting or erasure. They have used rich Shona symbolism and imagery to encode politically suggestive messages. Shona language is renowned for its rich metaphorical properties which naturally lend the language to ambiguity. Being polysemantic, the language has enabled artistes to escape censorship. They have managed to dialogue controversial messages without being detected.

The study discovered that the place of popular music in Zimbabwean national discourses does not seek to merely contest or deconstruct archival and official versions of history but is meant to complement them. It is an attempt to record just another voice which may augment the officially sanctioned discourses. In some instances, it may appear anti-establishment but it certainly helps in the versioning of history and anthropology. Popular music in Zimbabwe is therefore an alternative voice to the official version. This research sees Zimbabwean music as attempting to express emotions and views through an alternative expressive mode that has always been seen as pedestrian or earthbound, greatly lacking in sophistication and logical presentation of issues. It is neither linear nor oversimplified as the official version tends to be. More so, rather than contradicting established modes of historicity, popular music simply broadens the public sphere of its discussion given its simplicity and reach.

Through the hermeneutic method, moderated by interviewee input, this research established that the first ten years into independence produced music that can generally be conceived as meta-narratives that prop the official versions of national history. A
number of songs here speak to the grand narratives of celebration, ‘grandeurizing’ the revolution and summoning the nation to the unity crusade, hence the sub-motifs; “articulating independence euphoria”, “the call for national and regional unity” among others. The same music also aimed at recreating, in the postcolonial, the mood of the revolution as a way of revitalizing a nationalist spirit in the citizen, hence the theme; “invoking war memories”. Popular music proved critical in that nascent stage of rebuilding Zimbabwe as it sowed the right seed for steadying the nation through affirmative compositions that encouraged working for Zimbabwe. The study realised that the first ten years produced music that sustains the meta-narratives of the state. Although some opinions are that the artistes were too naïve to believe that the new government would deliver, the study discovered that it was not myopia for the artiste to believe so given the development trajectory marking the early years of independence. Popular music positively fortified the nation with courage and emotional strength to remain resolute in the face of adversity.

As the honeymoon transition receded by the turn of the 1990s, hard and courageous questions about the direction of independence were asked. The study has noted that popular music became more overtly critical of government. Corruption and managerial malfeasances gradually crept in to frustrate the hope for a dramatic rise of a post-war nation. Few artistes made their feelings known but still compared with the other social themes, political music was very insignificant and lacking in incisiveness. Solomon Skuza singing in Kalanga and Thomas Mapfumo (Shona) came out more militant than the rest as they called a spade by its name. They heavily censured the budding scourge of corruption in the closing stages of the first decade of independence.

The interparty tensions and the historic economic paralysis in the years 2000-2009 explain the emergence of a no holds barred political music by party artistes. From ZANU PF and MDC evolved artistes who did not hesitate to call people by their names. The milieu was characterized by trading of accusations of gross violation of human rights by both parties. There was murder, intimidation, a general violence in a politically
inspired economic disorder. Music became an instrument to disseminate political messages and there was virtually no time to waste through convoluted messages.

On socio-economic motifs, this research has established that postcolonial Zimbabwean Shona music accurately reflects the Shona people’s quest for socio-cultural dialogue on critical issues in post-independent Zimbabwe. The advent of independence coincided with a number of developments and changes that have opened a forum for reflection on life issues. Colonialism resulted in cultural imperialism which tremendously changed the way people confronted life challenges. The institution of family has severely been affected by cultural invasion. The same goes for the then not-so-topical issues of gender in pre-colonial times. Music has responded to these changes with a view to dialoguing, questioning and attempting to provide answers to these social questions. Popular music has provided that platform to debate social and cultural issues that could be a thorough reflection on the social state of the Zimbabwean independence.

The study discovered that the cultural discourse in music is polemic; there is a perspective that contests and seeks a break away from the traditional Shona cultural practices and one that yearns for a return to the roots. Colonialism has baited many Zimbabweans to the point of seeking divorce from anything that is associated with the African culture. A significant portion of musical space seeks to protest the unbridled fall for the baiting culture as is reflected in love, marriage and gender themes artiste seem to concentrate on.

The study discovered that love themes heavily colour the social aspect of Zimbabwean music. Love is an oversubscribed motif in Zimbabwean music. Artistes are responding to the manifold dimensions of love in society. They celebrate love in and before marriage. All other social themes like divorce, marriage, domestic violence and even economic and political are in a way linked to love hence its prevalence in the postcolonial is not misplaced. They see love as that consolation from the rough side of life. They also lament the materialistic dimension love has taken and the general spate of infidelity rampant in most love matters. More than just a social curiosity, postcolonial love music arguably confirms the independence and peace as critical for the full
enjoyment of love. Independence has arguably taken away the threat of insecurity and firmly guaranteed freedom from fear; therefore love, intimacy and affection have been allowed space to flourish. As life gets tougher from the 1990s, concentrating on love themes against the backdrop of post independence hardships has been seen as a sedative to relieve the mind from that pressure.

Postcolonial popular music discusses familial and marital relationships. Marriages are heavily shaken by the shifty circumstances of the global terrain which remain tainted with the western culture. The family is no longer united because of individualism and urbanization which has removed family members from their places of origin into urban areas. The family and the institution of marriage are portrayed as unfortunate victims of neo-colonialism. Themes of family disintegration, divorce and infidelity frequent music space in postcolonial Zimbabwe.

The study established that, more than is often estimated; gender dialogues are widely imbedded in popular music. Gender nuances are perceptible in most social songs. These remain tucked as undertones in songs that debate other social themes. A number of male artistes are struck by the women’s flight from their culturally sanctioned positions and the sudden challenge on their authority by the feminist movement. Shona popular music in Zimbabwe contests the threat of feminist intrusion into their culturally ordained domains of life. The few women that have taken the stage to sing have appeared to urge their colleagues to seek peace with their cultural positions in marriage and family. They do not seek freedom from culture as is common among their western counterparts.

In synopsis, postcolonial Shona music in Zimbabwe arises against a background of envisaged hope in a new political dispensation of independence and self determination. It comes against the vision of an egalitarian society in which the racially inspired inequalities would be addressed. These challenges and expectations rhyme with Harrison’s vivid description, in Osei-Hwedie (1995:93), of the postcolonial African state’s tragic story of the hopes, frustrations, efforts and failures, suffering and conflicts. Zimbabwean popular music thus attempts to describe, comment, critique, and record the postcolonial Zimbabwean political trajectory. Zimbabwean music can therefore,
largely be seen as postcolonial narrative which employs the unique properties of music to convey serious national issues confronting the post colonial state against a background of a controversial legal and institutional environment of music production, dissemination and consumption.

8.2 Recommendations of the study

The research proposes a number of recommendations for the artiste, the state and research in general.

1. As this study folds, it lays a demand on the current and emerging Zimbabwe artiste to shrug off fear and embrace that thin democratic space afforded by the constitution to ascend the podium and objectively reflect the Zimbabwean story through context reflective compositions. They have to develop the art of saying it without naming it, by using their metaphorically rich language to put across their sensitive messages. That way they are not easy to gag.

2. The artiste should appropriate the abundant space provided by the cyberspace to express freely without fear of reprisals. Should the censor stand in their way, the study encourages a route that is not impeachable. Though the route does not attract mass audiences, it certainly allows free expression. The internet is increasingly becoming a vogue platform for the dissemination of restrained messages.

3. The state and state related organs are encouraged to broaden the democratic space to allow music to speak, comment and critique, realizing the power of music to critically debate life challenges. The government is cautious of being labeled restrictive and undemocratic and has promulgated legislation that seeks to extend freedom of expression to the artiste but withdraws the same through a censorship regulation that purports to be responsible yet is condemned for its global restriction on the arts. Such doubling of posture, while it provides the government numerous escape routes, potentially has regrettable impacts on the creative arts.
4. The government is urged to develop a spongy culture of tolerance through the liberalization of the air waves and allowing more players to broadcast. This will allow air space for artistes to have their music played.

5. Artistes should also desist from the culture of being patronized by government, promoters and brand marketers as such control estimates to some form of censorship where themes are dictated to them or where they shy away from certain themes or develop soft spots for their supposed targets. This potentially compromises the sharpness of their message.

6. Some supportive industries need to embrace the spirit of smart partnership with the artiste and view them as mutually beneficial partners. If sentiments by interviewees are anything to go by, then supportive industries should strive to shrug off the parasitic tag that currently defines the nature of their association with artistes. The concept of artistes as brand ambassadors should be encouraged as it enhances the artiste’s power to compose. The current practice, by some show ‘promoters,’ of riding on the popularity of the artiste should be condemned.

7. Literature departments in various universities and colleges should seriously consider music as a form of literature worth studying just as they have done with the novel, the play and the poem. Though the mode of expression could be different, there certainly are similarities subsisting between those modes of expression and music. Both are texts, only expressed differently.

8. Realising music as a serious social and political commentary, more research into music and sociality needs to be done. More comprehensive researches that critique social and political issues should be done to raise music as a serious mode of discussing political and social issues.

9. Music criticism should spread out its boundaries to accommodate the exploration of music and social context as a viable aspect of music appreciation. The practice of focusing on instrumentation and performance must also recognize music and social context as acceptable.
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Music critics

Music critic interview

My name is Mudzanire Benjamin. I am a PhD student with the University of South Africa. The title of my thesis is: An Interrogation of the Context Referentiality of Post-colonial Shona Popular Music in Zimbabwe: A Search for the Contemporary Leitmotifs. The study seeks to appraise the extent of context reflectivity of post-colonial Shona music in Zimbabwe. It tries to find out how much and what about Zimbabwean social and political context the music is responding to. I therefore kindly seek your assistance to respond to some questions I think would help in obtaining data critical for this research. This research deeply values the experience you have in the area of music and pledges confidentiality of your responses.

1. How free are musicians to express themselves in Zimbabwe?
2. Through what means does the government promote or suppress free music expression?
3. Would you say Zimbabwean music in the post colonial period is a reflection of the major political processes in Zimbabwe?
4. What social issues do musicians grapple with in the postcolonial Shona Society?
5. How is the concept of independence reflected in Zimbabwe music?
6. Assess the role of music promoters in enhancing the creative potential of some musicians
7. What, in your opinion, would you point out as the major challenges confronting musicians in their day to day business?
8. How reliable is music as a mode of expressing serious business?
9. To what extent can Zimbabwean music be considered gendered? (what is the artiste’s handling of gender issues and concerns, in terms of language, portrayal of genders and stereotyping?)
10. Comment on the impact of the 75% local content on the creative potential of the artiste.
APPENDIX B: Artiste interview

Introduction

My name is Mudzanire Benjamin, a PhD student with the University of South Africa. The title of my thesis is: An Interrogation of the Context Referentiality of Post-colonial Shona Popular Music In Zimbabwe: A Search For the Contemporary Leitmotifs. The study seeks to appraise the extent of context reflectivity of post-colonial Shona music in Zimbabwe. It tries to find out how much and what about Zimbabwe social and political context the music is responding to. I therefore kindly crave your indulgence to respond to some questions I think would help in obtaining data critical for this research. This research values the experience you have in the area of music and pledges confidentiality of your responses.

Interview questions

1. What inspires your music career?
2. How free are you to sing what you want?
3. Briefly comment on the music’s freedom to express in Zimbabwe?
4. Are there any subjects you are afraid of touching in your music?
5. Briefly comment on your challenges as musicians
6. Do you dream about what to sing or you look around yourself for themes?
7. How important is your social or political context in determining what you sing?
8. Comment on the music legislative framework in the post colonial
9. How supportive has the broadcasting house ZBC been in popularising musicians’ works?
10. How instrumental have been music promoters in popularising your music?
11. How useful have been private marketers in ensuring the artiste speaks their mind unfettered?
12. Comment on the impact of 75% local content on the creative potential of the artiste?
APPENDIX C: Interview Guide: Music listeners

Introduction

My name is Mudzanire Benjamin. I am a PhD student with the University of South Africa. The title of my thesis is: An Interrogation of the Context Referentiality of Post-colonial Shona Popular Music in Zimbabwe: A Search for the Contemporary Leitmotifs. The study seeks to appraise the extent of context reflectivity of post-colonial Shona music in Zimbabwe. It tries to find out how much and what about Zimbabwean social and political context the music is responding to. I therefore kindly seek your assistance to respond to some questions I think would help in obtaining data critical for this research. This research deeply values the experience you have in the area of music and pledges confidentiality of your responses.

Part A: Music and politics

1. How does Zimbabwean music discourse the issue of independence?
2. How would you respond to the view that artistes who provoke war memories are distant to more pressing issues in the post colonial?
3. Comment on the discourse of unity in Shona music
4. What is your view on the artiste’s handling of the subject of land?
5. Comment on the issue of exploitation in the post-socialist state.
6. How are diasporan issues treated in local and Zimbabwean artistes in diaspora?
7. Comment on the prevalence of party political music in the post 2000 era in Zimbabwe?
8. What is your overall comment on Zimbabwean popular music and social life

Part B: Social and economic issues in Zimbabwean Music

1. How is the issue of culture reflected in popular music?
2. How is the issue of family and marriage projected in music
3. What love issues do artistes discuss in music?
4. Is Zimbabwean music gendered?
5. How are economic issues discussed in music?
6. What is your overall comment about music and society in Zimbabwe?

7. What is your overall comment on Zimbabwean popular music and social life?
APPENDIX D: Interviews with diasporans

Introduction

My name is Mudzanire Benjamin. I am a PhD student with the University of South Africa. The title of my thesis is: An Interrogation of the Context Referentiality of Post-colonial Shona Popular Music in Zimbabwe: A Search for the Contemporary Leitmotifs. The study seeks to appraise the extent of context reflectivity of post-colonial Shona music in Zimbabwe. It tries to find out how much and what about Zimbabwean social and political context the music is responding to. I therefore kindly seek your assistance to respond to some questions I think would help in obtaining data critical for this research. This research deeply values the experience you have in the area of music and pledges confidentiality of your responses.

1. What is the diasporan received in that foreign land?
2. How would you respond to the view that there is nothing but pain in the foreign land?
3. Are professional qualifications necessary for employment in the foreign land?
4. Comment on home expectations of people in diaspora
5. Does Zimbabwean music adequately articulate diasporan sentiments?
6. If you were to choose between home and foreign land what would be your response and why?
APPENDIX E: Curriculum Vitae for Mudzanire Benjamin

Name: Mudzanire Benjamin
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   B.Ed (UZ) 2003
   BSc (ZOU) 2004
   M.Ed (UZ) 2007

Academic Awards
University Book Prize (2003)
University Book Prize (2007)

CAREER
Secondary school teacher: 1994-2008
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HOBBIES
Research
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