

Language and Politics in Africa

Language and Politics in Africa:
Contemporary Issues and Critical
Perspectives

Edited by

Daniel Ochieng Orwenjo
and John Obiero Ogone

**CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS**

P U B L I S H I N G

Language and Politics in Africa: Contemporary Issues and Critical Perspectives,
Edited by Daniel Ochieng Orwenjo and John Obiero Ogone

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This book is dedicated to all those African politicians who live not *by politics*, but *for politics*; and to all those linguists who, in their desire to create a semblance of normalcy in our political milieu, are constantly struggling to make us see the difference.

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FOREWORD

Language and Politics in Africa reflects a fine work of scholarship from Scholars with varied disciplinary backgrounds within Kenya, the larger Africa and other countries of the globe. The authors bring their varying disciplinary and geo-political backgrounds to bear upon the common theme providing a rich repertoire of analyses and ideas which will illuminate the complex twin relationship between language and politics. Kenyatta University recognizes this as a worthy effort, for its own and other academics who have contributed in the production of the book.

On a philosophical and policy level, the book can be said to exemplify Kenyatta University's endeavor to remain relevant in the face of changing trends in higher education locally and internationally. By going through the chapters in the book one immediately notices the international nature of the volume. This effort is in line with Kenyatta University's policy towards internationalization as a key component of its corporate image. Kenyatta University has been in the forefront in making concrete moves towards integrating an international dimension into the teaching, research and service function of the institution. It has been noted in academic circles that the dearth of clear, comprehensive and current policies about internationalization in African higher education, diminishes African countries' capacity for contention as key providers of quality higher education within Africa and globally. Kenyatta University recognizes this dearth and its serious implications on the ability of the University to compete. We also recognize that there are many ways in which internationalization can be achieved and one of the ways is through joint publications such as the current book. This book is a concrete actualization of the academic rationale of internationalization which includes the provision of an international / intercultural dimension to research and teaching, extension of the academic horizons of faculty, enhanced profile and status for our local scholars and enhancement of quality and benchmarking with international academic standards.

Turning to the topical focus of the book, foregrounding the concept of language and politics in Africa is timely since the last two decades have been a time of intense political activity in many African countries which were emerging from one party systems to embrace pluralist political orientations. Such transitions have not been without their attendant

problems in terms of electoral violence, ethnic tensions, socio-economic and historical grievances and exclusivising rhetoric as was witnessed in the last elections in Zimbabwe and Kenya. Therefore a book that examines the relationship between language and politics across the African continent is a praiseworthy effort considering that Africa is the most politically unstable continent, one third of the world's languages are spoken in Africa, and that language is central to any political activity to the extent that without it, it would be hard to even envisage any political process. Thus, one may be tempted to ask: is language the missing link in the political process in the African continent? Some of the contributions in this volume have attempted, albeit modestly, to tackle this question.

For the Kenyan situation, a book that seeks to explore the political landscape from a linguistic angle is in line with certain important local socio-political trends about which any University would want to provide insight. Politics is one of the important pillars envisaged to influence Kenya *Vision 2030*. The *Vision* is the country's long-term development blueprint that aims at creating a globally competitive and prosperous country with a high quality of life for all its citizens, transforming Kenya into a newly industrializing middle income country by 2030. Recently, Kenyatta University revised its *Strategic & Vision Plan 2005-2015* to align it with the *Vision 2030*. It is therefore timely to have a book dedicated to critically evaluating issues pertaining to politics, a key pillar in the realization of the ambitious goals of *Vision 2030*. Universities have an important role to play by providing critiques such as the ones espoused in this book in order to assist the country create an issue based, people-centered, result-oriented, and an accountable democratic political system as envisaged by the *Vision*. Notably, this political positioning does not end at the local level but extends to the internationalization that I have referenced earlier in that the process of internationalization itself has political rationales with influences on foreign policy, technical assistance, peace and mutual understanding and regional identity.

Finally, there has been a move within Africa spearheaded by African University's Leaders Forum to explore novel ways of nurturing and retaining the next generation of academics. It is thus noteworthy that many of the African academics who have contributed to the success of this book are young scholars to whom the efforts of this engagement are targeted. The quality of the current book demonstrates the validity of the forum's focus on the next generation of academics since it's clear that the potential from this group though untapped is great. Therefore, as the reader goes through the papers in this book, beyond the obvious intellectual stimulation offered, they are engaging in a scholastic process that has

international, regional and local implications from both the philosophical, aspirational and practical viewpoints. I am content to note that the book links very well with the institutional aspirations of Kenyatta University, as they interface with those of the authors from all the countries and political cultures represented here.

—Prof Olive M. Mugenda, PhD,EBS.
Vice-Chancellor,
Kenyatta University

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PART ONE:
THE LANGUAGE OF POLITICS IN AFRICA

‘BROWN IS SAYING NONSENSICAL THINGS, MUCH MORE IDIOTIC THAN BLAIR’: AN ANALYSIS OF HATE LANGUAGE IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE USED IN ZIMBABWE

REWAI MAKAMANI

Introduction

Zimbabwe attained her independence on 18 April in 1980 following an armed struggle waged by two liberation movements namely Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front(ZANU PF) led by Robert Gabriel Mugabe and Zimbabwe African Peoples’ Union Patriotic (PF ZAPU) front led by the late vice president Joshua Nkomo. Commenting on Robert Mugabe’s history in the struggle for independence in Zimbabwe the Encyclopaedia of World Biography states:

Robert Gabriel Mugabe (born 1924) was in the forefront of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe (formerly Southern Rhodesia) for nearly two decades. Despite detention and harassment from the white settler regime, Mugabe resisted attempts to break him and maintained a fierce commitment to the principles of racial equality and democracy. In 1980 he was rewarded by becoming Zimbabwe's first elected black prime minister.

The liberation struggle was a struggle by all Zimbabweans to liberate themselves so as to create a democratic society characterized by civil liberties such as freedom of association, observance of human rights, equality of education and employment opportunities, freedom of expression and association as well as to redress the historical imbalances on land ownership. These are some of the critical issues that saw many Zimbabweans sacrifice their lives so that justice prevailed in their society.

The first ten years of independence were characterized by an expansion of education opportunities mainly to the disadvantaged black communities. This was made possible by a combination of massive support from international institutions and the donor community coupled with the inheritance of a sound economy by the black government. With reference to the sound economy that Mugabe had inherited the late founding presi-

dent of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere once marveled: “You have inherited a jewel. Keep it.” As a result of an enabling economic environment, many schools, hospitals and even a number of new institutions of education were built. For example, at independence in 1980 Zimbabwe had only one university, the University of Zimbabwe, but to date it has more than ten Universities of which seven are state universities. This shows that during the early ‘80s Robert Mugabe’s government clearly aimed at empowering Zimbabweans through equality in education and employment opportunities. However, as years unfolded, Mugabe’s weakest spot appeared to have been that of overstaying in power and an apparent refusal to transfer power to another leader in Zimbabwe. Thus the United States President, Barack Obama was correct to say, “President Mugabe. ... has not acted oftentimes in the best interest of the Zimbabwean people” (<http://www.thetimes.co.za/News/Article.aspx?>). His obsession with power led him to use security agents to perpetuate an iron fisted rule. Consequently; Mugabe’s rule resembled and even surpassed the very oppressive regime that he fought against. With reference to Mugabe’s misrule and how it destroyed the livelihoods of Zimbabweans the next United States ambassador to Zimbabwe, Charles Ray, asserts:

Zimbabwe once had a productive economy and effective democratic institutions. It was considered the breadbasket of southern Africa, with enviable schools and medical facilities. Today, unfortunately, Zimbabwe is struggling to overcome more than a decade of suffering under authoritarian misrule (<http://zimbabwesituation.com/jul24>).

Mugabe’s iron fisted rule was so subtle that it took the world a long time to notice such that by the time it became clear to everyone that something was wrong in Zimbabwe, just like a silent cancer, ill-governance had negatively affected all sectors of the Zimbabwean economy. Commenting on the catastrophic consequences of Mugabe’s ill-governance, Edgar Tekere,¹ a former cabinet minister in government recently lamented: We are in a fix. Zimbabwe is thoroughly poor, thoroughly plundered; the leadership has stolen from it. It is completely destroyed.

What has happened to our resources? Have they all been taken to Malaysia and Hong Kong? Where is all this plunder piling up?" (<http://www.thezimbabwetimes.com/?=19928>)

Tekere’s voice represents that of a disgruntled insider. From it we note that he alleges that Zimbabwe’s resources were plundered by the leadership who “stole” national resources to line up their pockets. In doing so the

¹ Edgar Tekere is the former ZANU PF Secretary General who formed the now defunct Zimbabwe Unity Movement.

former ZANU PF secretary general, exposes the agent behind the economic down turn of Zimbabwe. Tekere also criticizes the much vaunted 'Look – East Policy',² as a gimmick by the political leadership to further loot Zimbabwean resources. This background information is critical for it alerts us to the questionability of Mugabe's commitment particularly as he presents his candidature for the 2008 elections. The campaign messages that Mugabe churned are so evasive and persuasive that one is tempted to take them at face value without questioning his commitment. Such an interrogation of Mugabe's commitment is vital for it enables us to appreciate the force behind language for deception as well as to chart a way forward for political discourse in Zimbabwe and other countries.

Theoretical framework

The study uses the descriptive method of analysis within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis³ (CDA) (Dijk, 1998, Fairclough, 1989, 1992) to analyse linguistic resources used by President Mugabe and his officials as political campaign tool particularly during the 2008 elections and the turbulent political environment that followed the election period. Taking a cue from a number of scholars who have claimed that language can be used for manipulative purposes (Dyer, 1982, Schroder and Vastergaard, 1985, Biagi, 1999, Fairclough, 1989, 1992, Dijk, 1998, Kimmo, 1997, Coulthard, 1985, Gee, 2005, Halliday, 1989 and Thompson, 1996, Swales, 1990), the study sought to demonstrate the effect of registers of hate used during the election and mediation periods. Since scholars have also argued that language can be used for image building and to forge identities (Johnson, 1994, Beaugrande, 2001), the study exposed how inclusion and exclusionary linguistic strategies associated with hate language, divided the nation of Zimbabwe and thus precipitating violence along political party lines.

In this study, both primary in the form of speeches made by Mugabe and some of his political allies during campaigns and secondary data from the media and other sources was used. Data was gathered through library research, electronic data searches, newspaper cuttings, collection of posters and non participant observation. Furthermore, as the chapter also deals with data gathered through non participant observation, the ethnographic

² The Look East Policy is a policy in which Mugabe's government sought partnerships with countries from the East in a move to evade sanctions imposed on his government by western countries.

³ Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) enables the researcher to critically analyze discourse by employing a number of theories of analysis that CDA incorporates.

approach was be employed to complement CDA. The ethnography of communication approach originates from the work of Hymes (1971) and was revised by Saville- Troike (2003).The approach makes it possible for the researcher to be a good listener through suspending value judgement and thus being in the best position to understand messages from the point of view of the language user.

Thesis and analysis

In the chapter, I observe that Mugabe used hate language as a face and face management strategy⁴ (Bull, 2008) both to decampaign his political opponents as well as to desperately repair his battered image as the legitimate leader of Zimbabwe. The chapter reveals that Mugabe's use of hate language exposes his deep fear of an inevitable loss of political power and support at the hands of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change led by Morgan Tsvangirai. For this reason, Mugabe's use of rhetoric reveals one who appeared to have lost his moral campus. This loss of moral fibre disqualifies Mugabe's rhetoric as rhetoric.

It becomes rhetoricity⁵ which is "... the intentional abuse of rhetoric with the aim of manipulating the audience" (Ige, 2009: 22). Rhetoric is aimed at serving society. It is at the service of people. On this line Crassus advises, "This is my proposition: that the perfect orator, in the spirit of meekness and wisdom, ensures his own dignity, the safety of numerous private individuals and potentially the entire nation' (ibid, 21). This chapter reveals that Mugabe's vitriolic betrays egocentric and self serving tendencies that characterize his later days in office. He appeared to have been overtaken by ambition for:

Ambition drove many men to become false, to have one thought locked in the breast, another ready on the tongue; to value friendships and enmities not on merits, but by the standard of self interest, and to show a good front rather than a good heart. (tr. J.C. Rolfe 1921 in Ige, 2009:22).

The latest Western dignitary to fall victim to Mugabe's diatribe was the United States Assistant Secretary of State, Johnnie Carson, who was recently referred to as 'an idiot' by Mugabe following their sideline meet-

⁴ The face and face management strategy explains a situation where an interlocutor creates a good image of himself and his allies whilst s/he negatively portray his/her adversaries

⁵ The intentional abuse of rhetoric to meet individual pursuits at the expense of the people.

ing at the African Union Summit in Cairo, Egypt. Mugabe was quoted by the state controlled Herald as having lambasted Carson for displaying a “condescending attitude” when they met. Mugabe further asserts:

Who is he? I hope he was not speaking for” U.S. President Barack Obama. ... You wouldn’t speak to an idiot of that nature. ... I was very angry with him, and he thinks he could dictate to us what to do.
<http://www.voanews.com/english/Africa/2009>).

Concerning Mugabe’s attack on Carson, Edgar Tekere accused Mugabe of “losing his head”<http://www.thezimbabweanetimes.com/?=19928> .This shows that Mugabe’s outbursts are an embarrassment even to some of his former and current allies.

One reason behind Mugabe’s anti-West, anti- America and the British rhetoric is the often blown out of proportion rhetoric of “The West want to recolonize Africa.” This rhetoric is often abused to suit the political ambition of Zimbabwean politicians particularly at a time when their political fortunes appeared to be on the wane due to economic mismanagement and a general abuse of power. According to President Obama, Mugabe’s “... anti-colonial rhetoric that is used to distract from his own profound failures as a leader” (<http://www.zimdaily.com/news/obama27.658html>). As a result of this hate rhetoric purportedly concocted to cover up on ill-governance Mugabe resorted to an iron fist rule. Hence, the Zimbabwean society is now characterized by fear due to massive repression. Many prominent politicians and security personnel have mysteriously perished under not so clear circumstances such as road accidents, and short illnesses in Zimbabwe. This has forced people to maintain a very low profile when it comes to political and other sensitive social issues. Even some intellectuals have been reduced to praise singers for Mugabe’s regime.

Mugabe also used the anti- West Rhetoric to dismiss what he envisaged as Western influence in his territory. On a televised speech on 25 May 2008 Mugabe asserted:

Tiri muAfrica, ndizvo zvinokanganikwa nemaBritish nemaAmericans. (We are in Africa. This is what is often missed by the British and the Americans).
 We are a free country with our own resources....
 We celebrate today the sovereignty of Africa, the sovereignty of Zimbabwe. ...
 That as Zimbabweans we have our own resources, birth right.

In order for Africa to be where it is there occurred the partition of Africa following the Berlin Conference. ... led to the scramble of Africa.

That partition came to an end as African countries one by one took up arms..."

In this speech Mugabe seeks to inform people that Zimbabwe is under threat of attack by the Americans and the British. Mugabe's speech thus urges Zimbabweans to be prepared to fight for their birth right. Like in many of his speeches he deploys the first person pronoun "we" and the possessive "our" as involvement strategies. Thus these linguistic expressions are effective inclusive and exclusive communicative devices effects (Cook, 2001, Johnson, 1994) deployed to separate Zimbabweans in particular and Africans in general from foreigners. This use of linguistic expressions is thus a strategy to forge both national and bi-national solidarity of Zimbabwean and African citizens. Through the use of these expressions, Mugabe wants to pause as a true African – one un-spoilt by Eurocentric influences. This use of linguistic expressions is consistent scholars' observation that language can be used for image building and to forge identities (Johnson, 1994, Beaugrande, 2001). For example, it was observed that the personal pronouns 'I' and 'We' can be exploited to forge relations between interlocutors (Hudson, 2000, Mashiri and Makoni, 2003:15, Makamani, 2006). Similarly, Mugabe has often used the pronoun "I" and the possessive "my" in reference to his country. This has caused some critics to lambaste him for regarding Zimbabwe and its people as his personal possessions. Critics proceed to argue that Mugabe's iron fist approach to leadership stems from this psychological disposition.

Additionally, Mugabe's speech betrays one who uses the rhetoric of the 1960's to market his political self and ZANU PF. He seeks to invoke in peoples' memories the often blown out of proportion suffering that they endured during colonial era. Mugabe thus paints a picture of a Zimbabwe whose sovereignty is under threat of an attack by the British and the Americans. Mugabe's use of the collective possessive 'our' to foreground resources makes the resources to appear as if they are shared equitably among citizens who must fight to defend them. However, President Obama's speech clearly shows that Zimbabweans never enjoyed both the said resources and the birth right. Part of the speech reads:

The people of Zimbabwe have suffered far too long. They live in fear and struggle to survive, as opposition supporters and leaders, civil society activists, and ordinary citizens are subject to harassment, torture, and murder. The government-orchestrated economic catastrophe has wrought runaway inflation and food and fuel shortages. The regime's deliberate disruption of humanitarian operations has left the Zimbabwean people in utter de-

spair. This crisis is affecting the entire Southern African region and mars the vision of a more just, prosperous, and stable continent to which African leaders are committed.

<http://briefindroom.thehill.com/2008/06/24/obama>

In his campaign messages, Mugabe made scathing attacks against the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and its alleged Western backers. One such speech was made in defense of the controversial June 2008 re-run presidential election in which he emerged winner after Morgan Tsvangirai had withdrawn from the race citing violence against his supporters. In the speech Mugabe asserts:

...Not even the African Union. It has no right to dictate to us how we run our country. They must keep silent on this matter – absolutely. Because they have devious ... absolutely evil ... Brown is saying nonsensical things. ... Much more idiotic than Blair. ... The MDC is not born here.

It's a product of the three parties – The Labour Party, The Liberal Party and The Conservative Party. ... So we have no quarrel with ordinary British people. Its those in number 10 Downing Street. The Demons of number 10 Downing Street. ...

It is clear from this speech that Mugabe seeks to win the hearts of Zimbabwean people by what he perceives as evoking memories of colonialism which he presents as being at Zimbabwe's door step due to alleged MDC's association with 'British and American imperialists'. According to Mugabe, the British government created the MDC so as to make Zimbabwe a colony again. Hence the ZANU PF 2008 campaign slogan, "ZIMBABWE WILL NEVER BE A COLONY AGAIN." To emphatically impart his message, Mugabe resorts to biblical imagistic metaphorical language in which he regards the leadership of British government as 'demons.' Through this strategy, Mugabe seeks to maintain 'a positive face' (Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) for himself and his political party while he creates a negative face for the British government and the MDC. As argued by Bull (2000) "Face management is not just about avoiding making yourself look bad, but it can also involve saying things which make you look good in the eyes of others." Thus in this way Mugabe uses his vitriolic to persuade people to vote for him and his party. However, this strategy appeared to have angered even some of his former and current allies including supporters. The reason is that people wanted Mugabe to state how he was to arrest the hyperinflationary environment mainly caused by corruption in his government. A statement by Enos Nkala, Zimbabwe's former Minister of Finance, reflects the mood of Zimbabweans to Mugabe's attack on foreign governments. He remarked thus, My friend

(Mugabe) is very eloquent and clever but spends most of his time shouting at other nations" (<http://thezimbabwestandard.com>).

The use of the possessive pronoun by Mugabe in the campaign messages, particularly in a country where he enjoys absolute power reflects one who regards Zimbabwe as a personal possession. The fallacy seems to be, "I liberated it, so it is mine." This reference to a country as one's possession also calls to question his willingness to share power and to allow a democratic political dispensation to unfold in Zimbabwe. On similar issue, the designate US ambassador to Zimbabwe was right to say, "Robert Mugabe's assertions that Zimbabwe is "his" call into question his commitment to democratic principles and reform." Below I look at Mugabe's commitment as revealed in his land rhetoric which he used extensively during the 2008 election campaign and the immediate post-election period.

Land rhetoric and Mugabe's commitment

One most prominent issue in Mugabe's speeches has been land. In the speeches, Mugabe ties land to sovereignty and national heritage. In most of his speeches of the 2008 campaign period Mugabe's central message was that the country (land) was under siege as hostile foreign nations like Britain and the United States and their allies were actively involved in the politics of Zimbabwe in a bid to take over power. In a televised message on 25 May 2008 (Africa Day), Mugabe launched his political campaign message saying that the Movement for Democratic Change was just a front of the West urging viewers to gear up for a fight against Western forces. In the same speech he puts it thus;

Munhu wese wese unhu hwake anofanira kuhurwira. Usina ivhu, usina pekuvaka, hauna hunhu. So each and everyone of us must fight. Kuti bhunu riuye futi richiti, "Puma lapa, lo farm ena kamina. (Each person must fight for his own unhu (dignity). Without the land, without somewhere to build, you do not have unhu).

In the speech Mugabe presents himself as symbol of peoples' dignity and respect – a fighter for peoples' freedom. In doing so Mugabe pauses as a selfless leader who leads his people through thick and thin to fight for a birth right. Consequently, Mugabe gears the people of Zimbabwe to prepare to fight a not so clear enemy. Unfortunately, in the absence of such an enemy, political party supporters of the Movement for Democratic Change, whose party Mugabe alleges to have been engineered from "Number 10 Downing Street," became victims of attack. One argues that

Mugabe's hate speeches contributed to the outbreak of violence during the 2008 elections. Another example of Mugabe's land – rhetoric – quoted - speeches was uttered when he addressed people at a rally on 22 March 2008. Mugabe boasted,

Tichiri kuenderera mberi nekupa vanhu land. Vangati chii vakatipa nyika vana (the late Vice-President Dr Joshua) Nkomo nava (Simon) Muzenda?" (We are still giving out land to people. (If we don't do that) What will those who liberated us like (the late Vice Presidents) Dr Nkomo and Dr Muzenda think about us?

Source: The Herald, 24 March 2008

In this speech Mugabe seeks to persuade his hearers through the exploitation of the perceived bond between the two departed Vice-Presidents, particularly the late Dr Nkomo and the people of Matebeleland. In addition, he also intends to communicate to the generality of Zimbabweans who might need land that it was still being distributed for free. This information packaging is aimed at persuading people to vote for him.

Real beneficiaries of the Zimbabwean land reform

In this chapter, I note that Mugabe has abused Land rhetoric as a political weapon to realign his battered political image. Taking advantage of the fact that the majority of Zimbabweans are farmers, Mugabe used the demand for land by Zimbabweans to further up his political ambition particularly during the time when his political star had faded. It is now apparent that Mugabe only became actively involved in the land redistribution programme⁶ after a stage managed lawless invasion of commercial farms in 2000. It is critical to note that such invasions were timed soon after ZANU PF'S campaign for a 'YES' vote during the constitutional referendum of 1999 had received a 'NO' vote from the people of Zimbabwe. This referendum could have given Mugabe a political lifeline. Recent media reports confirm that the Zimbabwean land reform programme was a farce as it only catered for the greedy ambitions of a clique of president Mugabe's aligned political elites. One report asserts:

A five-member Presidential Land Resettlement Committee appointed by Mugabe has completed its land allocation audit and has once again unearthed widespread evidence of corrupt allocations and the use of violence by senior politicians and military officers to evict landless small-

⁶ The land redistribution programme is a programme aimed at achieving an equal distribution of land in Zimbabwe which was abused by the ZANU PF elites.

holder farmers, the very people Mugabe claimed the land reform policy sought to help. Zim NET radio understands that the confidential audit has also revealed that the land policy has not only precipitated a catastrophic reduction in crop production, but has financially benefited the elite of Mugabe's ruling Zanu PF (<http://zimnetradio.com>).

From this report it is clear that powerful politicians and military commanders' dispossessed landless people who had welcomed the land reform programme thinking that it was a solution to their quest for land. The report also focuses on a catastrophic reduction in crop production which implies that the new military aligned farmers did not make good use of the invaded farms. Mugabe's failure to take action against the abuse of power by the ZANU PF elite betrays one who is more interested in political survival than sound economic management of Zimbabwe for the benefit of all.

The speech made by John Worsley Worswick, a spokesperson of the pressure group Justice for Agriculture which has been campaigning for many years on behalf of commercial farmers further strengthens the assertion that Mugabe's commitment to a meaningful land reform has always been questionable. For example, there are reports of looting of funds that were committed to land reform by the British government way back in the 1980s. It is baffling to note that Mugabe did not take any action to discipline the culprits. In an interview Worswick puts it thus:

Certainly with regard to the 3.8 million hectares of land that was immediately available for resettlement, we should have monitored that and been actively involved in the allocation process and making sure that it was a success.

... the British government did fund the purchase of those farms, it wasn't a transparent process, for example where farmers had left the country and were being made offers for those farms that should have been paid in foreign currency outside the country, it didn't happen.
(<http://www.swradioafrica.com/hotseat>).

Worswick's statement shows that at independence there was a substantial amount of land available for resettlement of those who needed land. It also shows that money meant for compensation of farmers whose farms had been taken for resettlement on a willing buyer willing seller basis never reached the intended beneficiaries. So, what was wrong at this stage?

Worswick gives the answer as follows:

...But that was on the one side, on the other side, those farms went into resettlement and the British funded purchase of farms which we are led to believe was only a third of the funding that was available, the other two thirds of the funding was multi donor funding for the development of these resettlement areas and that was being looted on a wholesale basis to the extent that very little of it was finding its way onto the ground and there was no way they could possibly become a success story given that there was no title transferred with this land. So there was the inability to raise the capital required.<http://www.swradioafrica.com/hotseat>

Worswick's speech shows that there was lack of commitment by the Zimbabwean government on the land reform programme right from the onset. Looting of resettlement funds that was donated by the British government and other donor organizations forced the British and other donor organizations to abandon the project as funds were not reaching the intended beneficiaries.

The following statement by Worswick confirms that the 2000 (and on going) land invasions in Zimbabwe were a ZANU PF political programme rather than a planned land redistribution programme aimed at equitably redistributing land in Zimbabwe. This speech by Worswick confirms that the land rhetoric by Zimbabwe government officials is for political reasons. Thus, it is an abuse of this noble art of rhetoric whose foundation is associated with benefiting communities rather than individuals. Part of the speech reads:

Well one must understand that the invasion of farms predated the fast track land reform programme of 2000 by two or three years and with the donors having pulled out of funding land reform, the 1999 donor conference was an attempt to reengage and set the terms of reference for that and Mugabe threw that out the window in its entirety to pursue a different programme.

In a time span between that, farmers took it upon themselves to try and engage and to put together a model for meaningful resettlement and this was the Zigiri (inaudible) programme where 50,000 hectares was earmarked on a voluntary submission basis, farmers would relinquish land and not only would they relinquish land, they would provide the capital and the stakeholders were involved in supplying that capital as well.

We certainly didn't have a shortage of land, there's never been a shortage of land in Zimbabwe and we would argue also that there hasn't been a land hunger in Zimbabwe. <http://www.swradioafrica.com/hotseat>

Even though one does not agree with Worswick's last statement that there was never a land hunger in Zimbabwe, what emerges is that Mugabe appeared to have preferred a chaotic rather than a more carefully planned

land redistribution programme. This raises more questions than answers. Was he committed to land reform or did he want to use land reform to achieve a hidden agenda? What was this hidden agenda or rather was it a hidden agenda?

Land, Sovereignty and the New thinking

The fact that land redistribution was abused to further up Mugabe's political ambition has been the source of debate and even frustration to many concerned people. Such debate has even shaken the Unit Government as revealed by the speech made by the Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Mutambara at the recently held Zimbabwe Investment Centre. Mutambara lamented:

More than 80% of indigenous people now have land. There is enough land for everyone but we continue to face food shortages. What is needed is productivity, productivity; productivity...Sovereignty is not about ownership. (<http://www.allafrica.com/stories/2009>).

Mutambara's definition of sovereignty certainly contradicts Mugabe's very conceptualization of the same term as revealed by his 2008 election campaign messages. Mugabe's sovereignty rhetoric appears to be intended to dissuade the world from criticizing what his critics have often referred to as a dictatorial leadership style. For instance, his withdrawal of Zimbabwe's membership from the Common Wealth Countries can be regarded as symbolizing that Mugabe did not want to be held accountable by any country or any association. It also showed that he did not mind the consequences of such action to his subjects. The pulling out of the Common Wealth meant the forfeiture of benefits like scholarships and other grants that were associated with such membership. Is this sovereignty? It also marked the beginning of the most ever painful isolation of Zimbabwe which culminated in total international isolation.

Part of President Obama's speech to the Ghanaian parliament on 11 July 2009 shows that in the new political dispensation, sovereignty is being challenged by a new world order characterized by interconnectivity of various parts of the world due to technological advancement and other challenges. Additionally, the world has become so interdependent that no part of the globe can afford to go it alone. Clearly sovereignty should now be considered side by side with global demands made upon individual states by modernity. In fact, Obama's message implies that the likes of Mugabe are living dangerously and unrealistically like the dinosaur. Part of the speech reads:

This is the simple truth of a time when the boundaries between people are overwhelmed by our connections. Your prosperity can expand America's prosperity. Your health and security can contribute to the world's health and security. And the strength of your democracy can help advance human rights for people everywhere. So I do not see the countries and peoples of Africa as a world apart; I see Africa as a fundamental part of our interconnected world — (*applause*) — as partners with America on behalf of the future we want for all of our children. That partnership must be grounded in mutual responsibility and mutual respect.

From this we see the folly of sovereign rhetoric particularly in a world that has become a global village. Technology such as the internet and other products of industrialization makes one to rethink the rhetoric that Mugabe and his officials used during the 2008 elections. The defeat by Mugan Tsvangirai during this election showed that Mugabe had misread the political terrain.

Tsvangirai, the three Bs and the Economy.

In ZANU PF political rhetoric associated with the 2008 electioneering, the current Prime Minister of Zimbabwe, Morgan Tsvangirai is labeled as a traitor. He is depicted as a headless front of the three Bs, who are the former United States President George Bush, Tony Blair (former British Prime Minister) and the current British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown. Mugabe's anti-imperialist discourse has been met with serious criticism. For example in a recent media article entitled, "A response to Mugabe: African journalists have a duty to report the truth," Kagumire asserts:

To an ordinary person and indeed to the media, Mugabe and imperialists are the same. He sends goons to kill miners, arrests opposition members for simply opposing him, and uses violence as a tool of oppression. Like many other African leaders, he believes he is the only one with a vision for the continent and thus continues to stifle debate and proper political participation. Similarly many leaders give the shares in the best companies to their relatives and cronies, and appoint leaders on tribal lines. So how is all this different from imperialism? The difference is that the colonial imperialism was foreign and this is homegrown. I happen to believe the homegrown imperialism is actually more painful.
(http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/jul/29_2009.html).

What one gathers from this is that there should be a new thinking around the anti-colonial rhetoric by a number of failed African dictators. It appears that anti-colonial rhetoric is used by such leaders as a scapegoat to

cover up on their administrative blunders whose price is paid for heavily by their subordinates. In this chapter I argue that Mugabe's anti-imperialist arguments are an outdated cliché that overlooks the mutual relations among nations that characterise today's world.

In addition, it should be borne in mind that both the United States and Britain have offered massive assistance to assist Zimbabweans overcome various challenges. For example the designate US ambassador to Zimbabwe has this to say:

The United States has not sanctioned the needy and deserving of Zimbabwe. We are on their side. Thus far in Fiscal Year 2009, U.S. humanitarian aid has surpassed \$160 million for emergency assistance, including food aid and food security, refugee support, and health, water, sanitation, and hygiene programs. Our foreign assistance to Zimbabwe also focuses on laying the groundwork for a return to democracy and prosperity by supporting democratic forces and civil society. In Fiscal Year 2008, we provided more than \$186 million in humanitarian assistance to Zimbabwe. (<http://zimbabwesituation.com/jul24>).

Despite the support that Zimbabwe got from Western governments, Zimbabwean government officials seemed to go against common logic that colonialism was no longer an issue in any part of Africa due to regional groupings such as SADC, ECOWAS and AU. These institutions make re-colonization of any part of Africa unthinkable. Campaign messages of the political leadership in ZANU PF was aimed at deceiving a perceived less sophisticated majority into voting for ZANU PF and President Mugabe during the elections.

In one such deceptive message was uttered as a closing speech on the 25 May 2008 by Vice President Musika. He had this to say, "The MDC – T is Africa's worst sellout in Africa's modern history."

Morgan Tsvangirai and his Movement for Democratic Change have been addressed using words of vituperation and scathing terms embedded in imagistic metaphorical expressions. Tsvangirai has been referred to as *chituta* (one who is idiotic), *mutenges* (a sellout), *teaboy* (This refers to the widely circulated rumor that he once worked as a teaboy at Trojan Mine). He has also been referred to as an ugly person (*Chematama*). These apt names given to Tsvangirai were meant to cause people to hate him firstly as a failure in life and also as deformed figure of a person who was unnaturally fit to lead the country. Even the ZTV the sole television station would at times present deformed portraits of Tsvangirai to depict him as one who was unfit to assume any leadership position in Zimbabwe.

In state controlled newspapers such as the Herald and the Sunday Mail, political adverts were crafted in a manner that depicted MDC as a party of

traitors. Thus state controlled media complemented ZANU PF's campaign messages. One such advert entitled, *Boka Revakundikani* (A group of failures), showed portraits of Morgan Tsvangirai, George Bush, Tony Blair and Gordon Brown side by side. This juxtaposition of Tsvangirai's image with those of American and British presidents was meant to inform the public that Tsvangirai and his MDC party, were a bunch of traitors whose mandate was to return Zimbabwe back to the whites. Hence, on the launch of his run-off election campaign on 25 May 2008 (Africa Day), president Mugabe argued that the election pitted him against the former colonizers pointing out that the MDC was a front used by the whites in their come – back campaign. President Mugabe proceeded to say,

We know others are helped with a lot of funds from the imperialists abroad. Our strength lies in our people. Every Zimbabwean has a share of sovereignty. You should not lose it. You should fight for it and even die for it." ... Kuti bhunu riuye futi richiti, "Puma lapa loo farm ena kamina." (For the white farmer to come back and say, "Leave this farm, its mine?)

These statements show that imperialist rhetoric and white farmer rhetoric were used to dissuade Zimbabweans from supporting the Movement for Democratic Change. By doing so Mugabe sought to exploit history, the past, to win support. In the same speech he became so desperate that he urged his supporters to be violent. He asserted, "I say we don't want violence at all. But if you are provoked attack. Unotushurwazve nepfumo. (If you do not fight back you risk being butchered by the sword). Mugabe's rhetoric reflects a politician who had been put to a corner. However, hardships faced by people in Zimbabwe as a result of Mugabe's misrule became the real threat to his rule. Reality has it that people do not live in the past particularly when the current circumstances are so dire as was the case in Zimbabwe during the time of Mugabe's campaign.

Electioneering and the hyperinflationary environment

The 2008 election period was characterised by the worst inflation to have ever struck Zimbabwe. Everything was in a state of collapse. The country had literally collapsed. To give a picture of the fact that economic hardships naturally made Zimbabweans to shun Mugabe's rhetoric I give Hanke's table that shows the rate of inflation that became Mugabe's worst enemy.

Writing in February 2009, Steve Hanke, the Applied Economics Professor at Johns Hopkins University argued that by that time Zimbabwe had claimed second place in the world's hyperinflation record books.