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Jongwe's Fist: Mugabe and His Magic of Paradox

Mbizo Chirasha · Wednesday, October 2nd, 2019

My father went to the grave as a staunch Mugabe supporter. His regalia was always emblazoned with Mugabe's fist of defiance. He and other villagers liked Mugabe to the inner core of their marrow. The Mugabe fame grew louder and much fatter on the eve of the new Zimbabwe, after a decade long struggle for liberation. His party Zanu PFs symbols were a black cockerel and a fist of defiance. That symbol gave the youth the insatiable desire for violence. They misconstrued the fist slogan to clobbering and beating of those who opposed their party. Mugabe was the 1980 hero and then later betrayed the povo with mass killings in Matabeleland commonly dubbed Gukurahundi. A political controversy that haunted his life and career.



The controversial land invasions at the flip of the millennium were received with mix feelings. His political opponents felt it was not an honest project, but a catalytic strategy to keep him on the reins of the state. The strategy pleased his majority of voters that included few in the state officialdoms and the rural folk that depend on rain and faith to live. The majority of excombatants and war collaborators embraced the land grab so well and they argued that land is a symbol of ownership and total independence. They became Mugabe's commissars in this era of political gnashing. Pan Africanist and pro-black activists praised him as a firebrand African statesmen. Extremists suggested that he must be the president of Africa. Land invasions were controversial in their approach; they were mired in corruption, wanton killings, beatings and cruel evacuations of white farmers. And his commissars sang hymns and the land was grabbed by grandchildren of the once colonized ancestors .



VA Mugabe vakataura regera kuchema

Regera kuchema bhunu richazochemema

Shuwa vakaura regera kuchema, regera kuchema

VaMugabe vakataura regera kuchema

Bhunu richazomanya

Mugabe had his own positive glows on this earth, despite his tyranny and political cruelty. He

invested abundantly in educational infrastructure; most Zimbabweans who took to learning between 1980 and 1992 are highly educated. Due to the advent of digital and technical learning revolutions, many argue that the Zimbabwean curriculum is colonial and theoretically lacks the creative and industrial clout to take the country forward.

Mugabe's first days in office were marked with a corrupt free system and sparkling, glitter-clean bureaucracy. His continued grip on echelons of power created a lot of young Mugabes who looted and killed using his name, totem and presidency. That plundered the economy. Banks lost their economic muscle and the social fabric got ragged. Zimbabwe became a wretched vagabond. It is still an economic hermit. It needs to bathe in corrupt free waters and repent to heal from this malaise. The masses are suffering still. Diamonds, gold and money were looted for more than decades by cruel zealots and vultures. Today the country trembles from hard blows of inflation.

The 1980s Gukurahundi killings left people harvesting death. They bathed in the blood of their clansmen due brutal killings. Nights of long knives. Despite all that brutality and his heavy handedness towards Joshua Nkomo, the Zapu high held command and supporters. Zanu Pf loyalists in his home province and regions didn't lose hope on Mugabe—he remained their revered leader.

Jongwe

Vhoterayi

Jongwe

Vhoterayi

Jongwe

They sang of him, they died or killed for him. They safeguarded his power with their blood and soul. They didn't want another war. Maybe the reason is that they slept with enough death during the struggle for independence. They had watched horror movies of war and death for more than a decade.

Again, it was that Mugabe himself had also bewitched peasants' minds with his Stalinist revolutionary whisky. He clutched their emotions and spirits with his fervent oratory dexterity and hypnotic propaganda skills. His eloquent speeches and flawless Oxford vocci-laced verbiage sozzled the war tired peasants to the dregs.

Most of them had nothing to show off their lives but the Mugabeist ideology, Mugabe wartime photos, slogans, fear and poverty. Their poverty smelling bedrooms were galleries of Mugabe political outfit, photography and fist of defiance. It is proof that his ideological concoction was heavily inoculated into their mental boxes. It was hard to exorcise the Mugabe spirit off their souls. Many died and got buried wrapped with regalia emblazoned with Mugabe's fist.

To many of us, 1980 was a year of good harvest. The freedom rain poured and filled the hearts of many with joy and abundant hope. The sun of colonialism had set with streaks of blood on its face over the hills of home, hills that once bathed in blood and suffocated under the grip of gun smoke. The hills had remained resilient still even after experiencing traumatic grenade thunders. The Rhodesian sun had set and the resilient hills remained still. Ian Douglas Smith's dream of

perpetuating black oppression for another one thousand years died a scowling death. It was strangled on the cross of black freedom. Hope was born.

The sun of Zimbabwe had risen with glow of freedom on its rays. Mugabe's name and totem, speeches and his communist-combat was the graffiti that crowded lampposts and beer halls. Praise poetry, Kongonya jive and freedom songs reverberated throughout villages and cities. Youth from the bush, graduates from Western schools and Red Army cadets had been already injected with Mugabeist political theory. That was a concoction of Nkurumaism, Nyerereism, Maoism and Leninism and they were ready to serve the nation alongside their political grandmaster. Their DNA carried such a crude system and they passed that to their forthcoming descendants. A lot joined the statecraft at different capacities. They served the state and the revolutionary party with ideological zeal and revolutionary diligence. They were awarded with ambassadorial roles, cabinet positions, military promotions, vast tracks of land and mining licences.

The majority in villages and townships wallowed in abject poverty, dejected and rejected. They were only invited to dance and ululate at electioneering rallies. Walking gruesome journeys to hospitals and township centres. Paradox. They danced still, they sang still, they praised still and they voted still. Such was the Mugabe Magic.



To bring some sort of harmony after the Matebeland killings, Mugabe made and signed a reconciliation set up with his political nemesis, Father of the Nation, Joshua Nkomo. Die-hards and Zapu extremists like the late Lookout Masuku labeled Nkomo and his Unity Accord praise band unrepentant traitors. That same year Mugabe, through his Harvard carved constitutional law spin doctor, altered the constitution to attain executive presidency. That irked his longtime strongman and cadre Edgar Tekere, who later formed ZUM with Patrick Kombayi, another liberation stalwart. The duo's fierce battle with the political tiger in Mugabe didn't end well. ZUM died a mysterious death and its curators became political wanderers. Later on, Gods placed them in his wardrobe to rest from the maddening political drama. Mugabe remained Zimbabwe's political God. Always right and untouchable. Fear and intimidation gripped heavily unto the nation. A Stalinist securocratic machinery was created to preserve and protect the reins of power of a man who had imbibed Nkurumaist and Maoist ideological brew to the last drop. A man who munched the Communist manifesto and chewed the Leninist principles into an African nationalistic socialism, a veil of Stalinist and Leninist Five Year Plans. A devout catholic who always branded his mother's rosary in his palms or pockets, proud of having fully acquired Cambridge educational prowess. Another paradox.

Come Grace Mugabe. Zimbabwe's Iron lady Macbeth had her own share in the collapse of Zimbabwean economy and Mugabe's glittering political revolutionary career was burnt in fires of expediency. They all fall from revolutionary grace. Their last days at statehouse were not rosy.



Despite having led the struggle for liberation with intellectual magic and revolutionary zeal, the once revered but controversial politician's regime is characterized by vicious securocratic set up that maimed, killed, troubled and plundered many in many sessions of devilish political sins. In Matebeleland the sun of peace hasn't risen yet. Many are still grieving from scars of horror. More reconciliatory interventions have to be implemented to bring forth closure and harmony in the hearts of those who suffered and experienced traumas during this moment of the imbecility.

Demolishing of houses in poverty riddled high density suburbs of Zimbabwe is another glitch denting Mugabe statesmanship resume. Many were left to die and homeless. Their big sin was supporting the late General Change, Morgan Save Tsvangirai, as 2008 marks a complete fall and political miscalculation of Mugabe's regime reputation. The regime received hard blows from international media. The media charade drowned the ship to the bottom. The regime lost its character. The revolution had gobbled its own eggs. It was further punished by international diplomatic isolation, more economic sanctions. The whip of cholera left many dead. Hunger sat with its folded legs on many doorsteps, prices skyrocketed, inflation parachuted upwards. Banks had become birthing labs of cockroaches and mice. The last ray of hope sank with the last breath of the regime. To add more salt to the gash, factional fights reared more havoc as many revolutionaries in Mugabe's party jostled for positions in the fierce succession tiger tussles. Mugabe's age was now demanding a replacement, a new leader with good memory and new sparkling ideas to revive a nation in intensive care unit.

The remaining political and the paltry diplomatic reputation had fallen off like a wilting petal. Zimbabwe had already left the Commonwealth. Many died, many opposition leaders disappeared or were killed. Many were exiled, as many lost their hands and legs. We lost the last ounce of Zimbabwe's breath in 2008. The country was fast grinding into a banana republic haunted by disease, poverty, extreme violence and dictatorial tendencies. The unrepentant leader had dented his glittering revolutionary resume with the blood of people he freed from the Golgotha of colonialist yoke. A shame, a shame not expected from a learned, devoted Christian and a once revered liberator.

Days boiled into weeks, weeks simmered into months, months choked into seasons, seasons wept into years. November drizzle swept away the defiant fist of the African political lion off the throne. November brought a sacred drizzling rain and the city of Harare donned in dark green military combat. The legendary was dribbled and he fell off from political grace, he resigned and Zimbabweans celebrated the same way they did in April 1980. On the 21st of November Mountains yawned, hills smiled, the sun winked beautifully to the paradoxical cloud of November that hovered above the land of Nehanda, the mountains of Tangwena, the caves of Murenga and hilltops of Njelele. On that day the politically clueless generation danced until dogs bark and until baboons surrendered, as in later the lion of poverty visited them with its paw of hunger, raggedness, denigration, polarization, distrust, death and disharmony.



Elders say November is not the month to celebrate and inaugurate new kings. It is a holy month. Some say it was an abomination. Mugabe's political career was placed in Gods wardrobe and the November abomination haunted the Siamese twins. To most Zimbabweans, despite the November abomination. We were tired of being ruled than being led, intimidated and exiled. People were desperate, they needed the new leadership regime that would repent from sins of yester year and make Zimbabwe a livable and lovable country. Zimbabwe is the only we know, the only country we were born, the only country whose belly carries the spirits and bones of our ancestors. Let the resting of the African revolutionary lion coincide with the end to the culture of violence, sinister political crimes, cartels, massive corruption and gagging of free speech. Let's turn swords into ploughshares and guns into writing pens that one day we return to the Zimbabwe we want. Mugabe will be remembered as a brilliant orator, highly learned dictator, unrepentant tyrant, a devout Catholic, African revolutionary and an unwavering Pan-Africanist. Thus the Mugabe Magic

of Paradox.

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