

Mugabe Power Plunder And The Struggle For Zimbabwe

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robert mugabe came to power in zimbabwe in 1980 after a long civil war in rhodesia the white minority government had become an international outcast in refusing to give in to the inevitability of black majority rule finally the defiant white prime minister ian smith was forced to step down and mugabe was elected president initially he promised reconciliation between white and blacks encouraged zimbabwe s economic and social development and was admired throughout the world as one of the leaders of the emerging nations and as a model for a transition from colonial leadership but as martin meredith shows in this history of mugabe s rule mugabe from the beginning was sacrificing his purported ideals and zimbabwe s potential to the goal of extending and cementing his autocratic leadership over

time mugabe has become ever more dictatorial and seemingly less and less interested in the welfare of his people treating zimbabwe s wealth and resources as spoils of war for his inner circle in recent years he has unleashed a reign of terror and corruption in his country like the congo angola rwanda sierra leone and liberia zimbabwe has been on a steady slide to disaster now for the first time the whole story is told in detail by an expert it is a riveting and tragic political story a morality tale and an essential text for understanding today s africa

this retrospective offers a first hand account on internal conflicts in zanu during the 1970s which resulted in the defeat of its left wing chung s narratives include her experiences in two guerrilla camps she recalls her encounters with the charismatic josiah tongogara a legendary military commander during zimbabwe s liberation war known as the second chimurenga who died at the threshold to independence the personal recollection of a transition to national sovereignty concludes with an incisive analysis of developments after independence it ends with chung s vision for the zimbabwe of the future fay chung served within the ministry of education in post colonial zimbabwe for a total of fourteen years at the end as the minister of education and culture her autobiographical account has the childhood experiences in colonial rhodesia as a point of departure like many other zimbabwean intellectuals she joined the liberation struggle from the mid 1970s she worked within the zanu organised educational sphere

this is an elucidation of accumulation of personal experience within the context of socio cultural internalization in particular and the socio political environment in general that is intended to provide some insights into a plethora of ingredients that converged and crystallized into a catalytic impetus that socially transformed my generation from village boys to highly politicised freedom fighters during the 1960s to the 1970s in rhodesia i hvae done this by tracing the footprints of my experience which show multiple stages and strands of cultural social political and physical determinants that landed themselves on my growth path starting from socialization in my parents home all the way through the local community traditions and schooling to active service for the freedom of my country at local and national levels here the crucial elements that moulded my social being in a very profound way have been ventilated to show when and how i became able to distinguish antagonistic differences between justice and injustice at my very early age proceeding from here i have brought out how i teamed up with others whose political outlook and aspirations were identical with mine as we all voluntarily joined anti colonial struggle starting from invisible low intensity activism in schools and towns up to risky adventures that finished up in armed struggle within a broad national perspective the narration further demonstrates the domesticity of the movements that championed liberation struggle as drivers were citizens who grew up in the rural villages and urban african townships where they progressively became aware that they were born unlike their parents in a country under colonial administration in doing all this i had to spell out how my interaction with informative social vectors brought awareness on

how my country zimbabwe was colonized and governed by europeans without the consent of the indigenous natives who showed their resentment to foreign rule by rebelling first chimurenga within six years of colonization but failed only to succeed in the second rebellion second chimurenga after ninety years of racial domination furthermore i believe i have laid bare how i became a civilian freedom fighter together with peers of my generation in the second rebellion where intorable weight of oppression caused us to abandon nonviolent methods of struggle in favour of using arms of war to face a cobweb of security forces led by superb military machine of the colonial state wherein lay formidable challenges confronting rebelling citizens the armed struggle phase meant that fighters and their collaborators had to face those challenges in the theatre of operation initially they exhibited more weaknesses than strengths and lost opportunities that were in the form of abundance of political support of masses of people in the country the overall process of the struggle exhibited strengths and costly weaknesses right from the civilian phase up to the armed struggle phase with or without my participation it was not until freedom fighters gained experience in planning and undertaking field operations that they became able to apply appropriate tactics that caused the struggle to gain sustainability in the theatre of operation more importantly the narration makes the point that the rhodesian colonial system was presided over by european settler leaders who hardly recognized african citizens as entitled to participation in governance of the country with equal rights in social political economical and juridical spheres of societal setting of two main races exclusion of african from consensus on the act of unilateral declaration of independence udi by ian douglas smith was a fundamental blunder that precipitated nationwide fury that lead to a civil war in which a deprived citizen fought against a privileged citizen who was indoctrinated with falsehood that his adversary freedom fighter was sponsored by foreign powers of a communist type while the latter rightly believed that he was fighting to free his country from racially imposed injustices of deprivation more importantly the narration lays emphasis on the creation of massive political structures throughout the country well below the radar of legality for the purpose of sustaining guerrilla warfare in the face of the super professional rhodesian security forces in this connection the final phase of armed struggle demonstrated to all at home and abroad that freedom fighters became significantly effective because they were politically rooted in the oppressed population whence came their strength against superior military hard ware and a water tight counter insurgency strategy of the rhodesian security forces essenially it was that political strength not communist powers or betrayal by the west which caused all stakeholders to become willing to come to a negotiating table at lancaster house in brittain in 1979 to settle the armed conflict decisively

this book provides a timely reconceptualization of zimbabwe s anti colonial liberation struggle resisting simple binaries in favour of more nuanced critical analysis most historiographies characterize zimbabwe s liberation struggle as being defined by simple bifurcations along racial ethnic class and ideological perspectives this book argues that the

nationalist struggle is far more complex than such simple configurations would suggest and that many actors have been overlooked in the analysis the book broadens our understanding by analysing the roles of a wide range of political figures organizations and members of the military as well as the media and the often overlooked part that women played over the course of the book the contributors also reflect on the ways in which revolutionary figures have been repainted as sellouts in particular by the zanu pf ruling party and what that means for the country s interpretation of their recent past highlighting in particular the expertise of leading scholars from within zimbabwe across a range of disciplines this book will be of interest to researchers of african history politics and postcolonial studies

with a foreword by terence ranger this book offers a thought provoking analysis of women s experiences with zanla during the war of independence it challenges official orthodoxy that a gender revolution occurred in this period and that a generation of liberated women emerged from the struggle the research demonstrates that while zanla extensively mobilised women as porters nurses teachers secretaries and cooks all crucial to the struggle and glorified in the rhetoric in substance the movement perceived these roles as secondary to the activities of men the author who has had access to the zanu archives scrutinises a doctrinal terrain laced with tension between ideology and tradition principles between the more and less educated cadres and between the women on the ground and the leadership

here is an opportunity for readers to understand the silent and unrecorded side of the struggle for independence in zimbabwe this is a true narration of events experienced by the writer as far as he recalls from the early years just as he began to follow other boys as they herd cattle in the bushes of zimbabwe to the time zimbabwe got independence the book is meant to appreciate the work done by every zimbabweans fathers mothers boys mujibhas and girls chimbwidos throughout the armed struggle

this book is a pioneering study of joshua mqabuko nkomo a zimbabwean nationalist whose crucial role in the country s anti colonial struggle has largely gone unrecognized these essays trace his early influence on zimbabwean nationalism in the late 1950s and his leadership in the armed liberation movement and postcolonial national building processes as well as his denigration by the winners of the 1980 elections mugabe s zimbabwe african national union patriotic front the nkomo that emerges is complex and contested the embodiment of zimbabwe s tortured trajectory from colony to independent postcolonial state this is an essential corrective to the standard history of twentieth century zimbabwe and an invaluable resource for scholars of african nationalist liberation movements and nation building

published between 1985 and 1998 the five volumes in this set explore a wide range of

themes and topics relating to postcolonial security studies offering both broader overviews of political and military regimes across the world and more focused examinations of specific areas and conflicts such as africa cuba and the falklands war they provide a wealth of information that will appeal to those with an interest in military and strategic studies political and military history political and military theory and international relations

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