Christianity in the late Antiquity

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Abstract

From the early fourth century to the late seventh century, North Africa was a Christian land. Alexandria produced great scholars such as Tertullian and Cyprian. The Egyptian or Coptic Churches spread the Christian faith in the local (Coptic) language, and many churches emerged in the interior of Egypt. The Roman government's fitful campaign to suppress Christianity reached its peak when Emperor Diocletian launched a major attack against Christians during 303–305, but this suppression came to an end in the year 312 when a pro-Christian emperor, Constantine, issued a decree of religious freedom.

The Future of Agricultural Credit in Zimbabwe: A Stakeholder-Perspective

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Abstract

This study explores the experience of giving agricultural credit under volatile macroeconomic conditions. It focuses on a case study of Zimbabwe, whose hyperinflationary levels reached over 3 000% in 2007 and a monthly rate of 79,6 billion percent in mid-November 2008. Findings from interviews with key-informants from stakeholder institutions in the agricultural sector revealed that the problem of agricultural credit in Zimbabwe was not only due to hyperinflation but also due to poor institutional capacity and dual agricultural policies. Some of these problems existed before hyperinflation and are likely to exist even after hyperinflation. It is argued that the future of agricultural credit in Zimbabwe is anchored on three pillars. The first is a stable macroeconomic environment. This involves bringing down hyperinflation, establishing land tenure security and other rights and improving rural infrastructure. The second is development of financial institutions and systems, which includes building institutional capacity, a culture of loan repayment as well as promoting capitalisation through establishment of public-private-partnership. The third and final pillar is necessary political will, whereby political leaders are challenged to go beyond their rhetoric, ensuring, not only the formulation but also implementation of appropriate policies.

Zimbabwe's Medical Brain Drain: Impact Assessment on Health Service Delivery and Examination of Policy Responses – *A Literature Review*

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Abstract

The migration of health professionals to greener pastures negatively impacts on the health service delivery of the source countries. The trend is that doctors and nurses migrate from rural areas to urban areas or from developing countries to developed countries in search of better economic welfare and working conditions. In search of the same conditions, health professionals also migrate from the public sector to the private sector. The causes for this migration, which are largely viewed to be of economic nature, constitute the 'push' and 'pull' factors. It is these factors that policy-makers should carefully study in order to arrest the medical brain drain. Zimbabwe has not been spared of this phenomenon. In the process, the poor, and especially in rural areas, have been the worst victims. Zimbabwean Government policies, though well-intended, have not been adequate enough to arrest the situation. This paper argues that an integrated policy approach is best positioned to address the brain drain problem, which has negatively impacted on the health service delivery system. The integrated policy approach takes cognizance of the various factors that constitute the complex nature of the brain drain. Such factors include global, regional, national, international market labour, development theory and practice, and human rights and justice issues, which, unfortunately, are not usually given much consideration during the policy formulation process.

South Africa's HIV and AIDS Policy and Legislation: An Analysis

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Abstract

In contrast with the HIV and AIDS policy formulation trend in first decade of attaining democracy in South Africa, recent policy and legislation regarding HIV and AIDS show great determination by Government in reversing the epidemic. The South African Government's present collaboration with civil society demonstrates an understanding that the fight against HIV and AIDS is a shared responsibility. While paying attention to various groups, women, children and men in particular, this desk review paper argues that South Africa has adopted sound HIV and AIDS policy and legislation but its main challenge remains that of implementation.

"Politics of Exclusion": The Political Parties (Finance) Act and the Electoral Campaign Corruption in Zimbabwe's Elections since 2000.

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Abstract
Since independence from Britain in 1980, Zimbabwe's elections have been characterized by the exclusion of smaller opposition parties, a trend that increased tremendously from 2000. The opposition candidates have cried foul over the funding of political parties by the Government under the Political Parties (Finance) Act, which spells out conditions under which political parties receive funding from the government. The legislation excludes smaller parties by setting stringent conditions of having garnered five percent of the votes in the previous election and as a result bars the rise of new parties due to financial constraints. The costs of inspecting the voter's roll, campaigning and even registering a candidate are so prohibitive that those without funds cannot compete with the ruling party. This 'unfair legislation' makes it illegal for a political party to accept foreign donations while the ruling party has unfettered access to state resources, as there is no distinction between the ruling party and the government. This has stopped many aspiring candidates from campaigning for office, as the playing field is not level. The paper argues that due to this legislation, the government has been accused of 'funding' other parties that would have failed to register so as to split the votes for its benefit. The paper concentrates on the challenges faced by opposition parties in financing their election campaigns in a country bedeviled by economic problems. In the same vein, the paper also focuses on the other forms of political corruption by those in power who commandeer state resources for their benefits.

Hunhu/ Ubuntu Philosophy incompatible with Business Ethics? Reflections on business viability in rural Shona communities in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Business has always been an important component of society from time immemorial. It is difficult to imagine a society that does not have a business sector where the exchange of goods and services takes place. However, business takes place within socio-cultural and ethical contexts. This article revisits Hunhu/ Ubuntu Philosophy (good ethical human behaviour) as observed by the Shona people of Zimbabwe and considers how it shapes business in rural Shona communities in Zimbabwe. It critically reflects on how rural businesspersons fare within the expectations of Hunhu/ Ubuntu viz-a-viz Western business approaches. Data were obtained from 100 informants randomly selected from rural Shona communities. The participants were former and current businesspersons involved in various lines of business. Among other issues, the interview questions were directed towards the people's motivation in starting business, the effects of Hunhu/ Ubuntu on business and the subsequent viability of rural businesses over the years. The responses provided helpful insights on the place of Hunhu/ Ubuntu in the African business environment.

Key words: Business, Hunhu/ Ubuntu, Shona community, sustainability.

Disputing Development-Induced Displacements: An Ethical Appraisal of the Macdom ARDA Chisumbanje ethanol project in Chipinge, South-eastern Zimbabwe

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Abstract

African governments' elitist socio-economic policies have remained largely responsible for community displacements in many countries. Previously, colonial governments established land-intensive projects which became major disruptive phenomena for the affected communities in Africa. Experience has shown that displacement unsettles communities, upsets cultural or traditional practices, justice systems and communal livelihoods. In some instances, communal displacement represents low regard for human rights by state and non-state actors. Ironically, planners of displacements often adopt and deploy the rhetoric of development and modernism. In Zimbabwe, the persistent conclusion in displacement narratives is that land dispossessions pushed Africans into supporting the nationalist movements of the 1960s and the liberation struggle of the 1970s. However, post-independence state-sponsored projects have continued to haunt communities. This paper tackles the moral issues associated with development-induced displacements and resettlement. It provides the communal narratives emanating from the grand state-sponsored Macdom-ARDA Chisumbanje ethanol project, arguing that the project's establishment is morally objectionable.

Acculturation and Religious Ingenuity key for African Independent Churches (AICs): The case of Guta Ra Jehovah (G.R.J.) Church in Zimbabwe.

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Abstract

There is an abounding plurality and rich diversity of cultures and religions in the contemporary world– both in terms of cultural and religious beliefs and practices – and globalisation has created a widespread awareness of this fact. Perhaps, not surprisingly though, many African Independent Churches (AICs) leaders had no option but to embrace the cultural and religious appreciation of their followers for both the establishment and survival of their church organisations. This suggests that interreligious and cultural harmony can be achieved by developing an understanding of other cultural and religious traditions and appreciating the value inherent within them. This paper investigates the religious diversity of African Independent Churches in accommodating cultural beliefs that their followers found hard to leave behind when converted. The research focuses on the Guta Ra Jehovah (G.R.J.) Church of Mrs Chaza in Zimbabwe and explores the church's theological deportment in respect of the practice of appeasing avenging spirits *(kuripa ngozi)* as a religious and cultural belief of the Shona people. Through structured and unstructured interview questions, the participant observation strategy and informed by the case study research design, the researchers gathered data sufficient to disclose that, through acculturation, some African Independent Churches appreciate and accommodate African certain cultural and religious practices. A sample of ten African Independent Churches was drawn from across the country and the G.R.J. Church of Mrs Chaza was used as a case study. The results demonstrated that African Independent Churches did not move far away from their followers' beliefs before conversion to Christianity as these churches developed ways of solving avenging spirits *(ngozi)*-related social problems of their members without completely losing members to African Traditional Religion (ATR).

Keywords: Acculturation; African Independent Churches; Avenging spirits (ngozi); Appeasement; Religious diversity.

Melodies to God': The Place of Music, Instruments and Dance in the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Masvingo Province, Zimbabwe

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Abstract

This paper examines the type of music played in the Seventh Day Adventist churches in Masvingo Province, Zimbabwe. Although the Seventh Day Adventist Church in general allows the use of instruments and dance in worship, the Seventh day Adventist churches in Masvingo condemns such practices. Their music is essentially a capella. The paper contends that such a stance perpetuates the early missionary attitude that tended to denigrate African cultural elements in worship. It is argued in this paper that instrumental music and dance enriches African spirituality and that the Seventh Day Adventist Churches in Masvingo should incorporate African instruments and dance to a certain extent if they are to make significant impact on the indigenous people. It advocates mission by translation as opposed to mission by diffusion.

Implications and Complexities of Bride Price Payment among the Shona and the Ndebele of Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Marriage is an institution that exists in all human societies. For most African cultures, it involves the bridegroom paying bride price to the bride's family, what is known in Ndebele and Shona as *amalobol*o and *roora* respectively. The payment is made in 'order to legalize the marriage' and any marriage that does not involve the payment of the bride price 'looks like casual sex or prostitution'. Bride price payment also exists in other non-African societies, but not all societies demand the payment. Hence, payment of bride price is not a universal human practice. The position of this paper is to show the controversy that surrounds the payment of bride price in contemporary thinking. We seek to demonstrate how in most cases the noble idea of starting a new family is defeated by the various implications of the payment. We shall also explore the various uncompromising positions that women find themselves in the payment or non – payment of the bride price. Also in the renewed interest of women empowerment and emancipation, we argue that the payment of *roora* or *amaloblolo* is one of the hindrances of the quest.

Re-visiting the Christian concept of Resurrection in light of the indigenous Shona notions of the After-life in Zimbabwe: A metaphysical-theological reflection

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Abstract

The article discusses the seemingly old debate on the resurrection of Jesus in light of the indigenous African conceptions of the After-life. The focus is on highlighting the theories on the resurrection and alluding them to the Shona notions of the after-life in the Zimbabwean context. The paper claims that whereas the historicity of the resurrection of Jesus is contentious, the belief in the resurrection is not uniquely Christian. Rather, it must be pointed out that several cultures have some conspicuous ideas of the after-life that are close to the Christocentric tenet of the resurrection. This thesis is ascertained by the Shona metaphysical notions of after-life. In addition, the paper maintains that there are strong parallels of the Shona metaphysical beliefs of the after-life with the Biblical or Scriptural resurrection narratives. The study concludes by positing that it is this apparent 'synoptic understanding' which makes the need for the inter- religious dialogue possible between Christianity and the African Indigenous Religion in Zimbabwe, in particular and Africa, in general.

Key Words: After-life, Culture, Interreligious dialogue, Resurrection, Shona, Zimbabwe

African Theology and Identity: Reflections on Zion Christian Church Experiences and Responses to the Zimbabwean Crisis, 2000-2010

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Abstract

The contemporary Christian church in Zimbabwe is at crossroads owing to the political, economic and social crises that have affected the country for the past decade. Using the Zion Christian Church (ZCC) as a case study, the study examines the experiences of the church and its role in the reconstruction of the country as part of its historical divine mandate. It studies the experiences and contributions of the ZCC in Masvingo Province. The study argues that Christian churches in general and the ZCC in particular can forge an African identity as a *sine qua non* for a vibrant and harmonious society. It is our conviction that churches, as key stakeholders in the search for a new dispensation, have the potential to brave the challenges bedevilling Zimbabwe.

Keywords:　Zion Christian Church, African Theology, reconstruction theology, Zimbabwean crisis, identity.

Going an Extra Mile: Linking Religion to Family Diet and Consumer Patterns in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Consumer patterns mirrored in family diets are determined by intertwined factors like the social, economic, political, technological, cultural and religious ones. In general, solutions on family diet and health issues have been following some conventional ways modeled on western patterns. This study engages a new paradigm anchored on religion. It seeks to link religion to consumer patterns, which shape the diet of many ordinary families in Zimbabwe. Specifically, the study posits that religion plays a pivotal role in determining the quality and quantity of food consumed in families. A religiously-determined diet helps to avert the impact of some killer diseases common in Sub Saharan Africa such as tuberculosis, kwashiorkor, diabetes and HIV and AIDS. In our view, adopting the religious paradigm to dietary issues is 'going an extra mile'. In this context, an 'extra mile' implies the espousal of some methods, techniques, advice and ethics on diet inspired by religion. The research utilised 12 unstructured in-depth interviews and data from 80 questionnaires administered equitably to adherents of Christianity, Islam, Rastafari and African Traditional Religions based in Masvingo province. The phenomenological method also informed the study. The study established that majority of adherents strictly observed some dietary rules and taboos for spiritual development, health and identity. The researchers concluded that religion significantly influenced family diet and consumer patterns in Zimbabwe for moral and practical reasons.

Keywords: Consumer Patterns, Diet, Nutrition, Religion, Zimbabwe

"Indigenous African rituals and child-feeding": Critical reflections on the Shona cultural practices in the context of HIV and AIDS, Zimbabwe.

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Abstract

Next to the severity of the scourge of civil wars, HIV and AIDS is an epidemic that has caused existential despondency for humanity in the sub Saharan African region. Whereas the HIV infection among adults is principally accounted for by heterosexual intercourse, virtually all infections in infants are due to mother-to-children transmission (MTCT) largely through breast-feeding. A study of this nature is essential and desirable because child feeding and breast feeding in particular has become a source of anxiety and psychological distress among HIV positive mothers. Cultural beliefs and indigenous practices are still influencing what constitutes appropriate child feeding even when they are contradictory to the recommended modern child feeding practices in the contemporary era of HIV and AIDS epidemic. The paper observed that breast-feeding is a complex process governed by psychological and physiological factors which in turn, are conditioned by a wide spectrum of socio-economic and cultural circumstances. The study reflected on the indigenous cultural practices among the Shona people in southeastern Zimbabwe which could be used to compliment modern public health education in the advocacy towards reducing the transmission of HIV virus from mothers to children and thereby improving their maternal well-being. In the context of the HIV and AIDS, the study established that a child born to an HIV-infected and affected mother is stigmatised to the extent that the child is labelled as totemless and thereby disrupts the legitimacy to survive well both in the family and society as a whole.

Miracles or Magic?: Theological Reflections on the Healing Ministry in Pentecostal Churches in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The world over, Christianity is one of the most populous and non-homogeneous religious groups. In the African context, the heterogeneity of Christianity is evidenced by the existence of the various strands such as the main-line churches, evangelical churches, African Initiated churches and the Pentecostal churches. This African scenario also manifests in the Zimbabwean context. The purpose of this study is to investigate the extent to which the healing ministry in Pentecostal churches in Zimbabwe is a result of miracles or magic. The study posits that some leaders in the Pentecostal churches manipulate magical powers in order to gain authority, prestige, popularity and wealth by any means necessary. The study utilised documentary analysis, in-depth interviews and observation to gather data. The phenomenological and sociological methods also informed the research. The study established two main strands pertaining to the performance of miracles in Pentecostal churches in Zimbabwe. On one hand, some respondents felt that the miracles are a result of God's presence whereas on the other hand a significant proportion regarded the miracles as a farce and the works of magic. On the basis of these findings, the research concluded that not all miraculous works in Pentecostal churches must be taken as authentic as some people who perform miracles are not innocent and immune from subversion and manipulation.

Key words: healing, magic, miracles, Pentecostal churches, Zimbabwe

Conservation and sustainable agricultural practices of pre-colonial African peoples of Charter District in Zimbabwe, 1800-1890

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Abstract

This presentation seeks to demonstrate that pre-colonial African communities practised sustainable animal husbandry and agricultural techniques. It is a direct reaction to Neo-Malthusian orthodoxies which claimed that African traditional agricultural and animal husbandry practices, traditional dependency on wood for fuel and for building resources, traditional land tenure systems and cultural burdens on women created a major source of forest destruction and the resultant land degradation. The paper believes that these fears were deliberately propagated to justify land redistribution and usher in misguided colonial land management policies.

The paper argues that African communities had abundant knowledge of both food production and animal keeping which they pursued for many centuries before being interrupted by the arrival of a colonial hegemony which imposed its own system of production and subsequently altered peasant production. Therefore, it is colonial economic policies which shattered peasant production and ushered in a new era of economic stagnation and subjugation, underdevelopment and land appropriation. These unequal and exploitative systems account for the overcrowded conditions, environmental degradation and poverty experienced today in Charter District.

It is the intention of this presentation to argue that indigenous peoples developed traditional medicines and prevention skills and practices to deal with ravages of tropical diseases like malaria which were rampant in the areas stretching from Save to Nyazvidzi Rivers. Indeed contemporary evidence shows that Shona people rarely depend on Western medicine when sick but still consult African Traditional Healers and herbs specialists for cures to minor and major ailments.

Furthermore, African Traditional Religion and taboos played a great role in conservation practices and as a result forests, mountains, deep river pools and caves in Charter District are still ecologically intact even in present day Zimbabwe because of these practices which encouraged citizens to use such resources with reverence and fear. Traditional leaders of royal lineages were buried in caves scattered all over Charter. Mountains were no-go areas and deep pools were said to be the domicile of mermaids and claims that these are sighted regularly are abound in Charter and therefore, conservation was indeed practised by design as evidenced by the existence of virgin forests, deep pools and ever-green mountainous areas. Yet the rest of Charter District is desolate and bare except for these areas cited above which seem like virgin islands in the middle of a desert!

Documentary evidence from Native Commissioners in the Charter District point out that the south-eastern low-veld of the area was prone to periodic drought. Indeed several droughts struck the area in the 1890s and also during the colonial epoch. It is the argument of this

paper that despite severe droughts pre-colonial African communities developed mechanisms to minimize the effects of such recurring natural phenomenon. Traditional African practices set rules and laws governing the assistance rendered to those unfortunate peoples who were affected by such natural calamities and these are still followed in present rural and urban Zimbabwe.

This paper seeks to demonstrate that pre-colonial African communities developed scientific apparatus and mechanisms for storing grain over a period of one to five years without the grain suffering any kind of spoilage. This knowledge was widespread in all Shona speaking areas of Zimbabwe. It is this traditional and scientific technology which explains why the pre-colonial African communities survived several droughts and colonial records have demonstrated that despites several droughts in Charter not even one single person perished because of hunger.

It is the intention of this paper to analyze the role of women and children in pre-colonial production. How did women and children benefit from economic production? Is it true that the introduction of the steel plough further eroded women's rights over agricultural wealth? Schmidt [1992] advances this theory but does it find any support in Charter District?

The paper is going to be based on oral research amongst peasant communities in Charter and documentary evidence from archival and related secondary sources.

Native Commissioner Records pertaining to the pre-colonial and colonial era are largely available at the National Archives in Harare and these will be thoroughly analyzed to extract data relating to Charter District.

Labour Appropriation in Buhera District, South-Eastern Zimbabwe 1890-1930: The Accidental Proletarianization of an African Peasantry by a Foreign Capitalist Oligarchic Enterprise

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Abstract
This presentation seeks to argue that before colonial rule, the African peasant population in Buhera District [formerly called Charter District] was producing only at subsistence level: they did not seek employment outside their villages because they pursued a communal system of production which was both economically self-sufficient and self-sustaining. Colonial records show that this African peasant population of Charter stood at thirty-two thousand people even as early as 1880s. [N9/1/5, NC Charter to CNC Salisbury, 31 March 1899]. The argument of this research is that such a large human population would need a consistent and reliable supply of staple grain and other traditional foods for its daily needs. Therefore pre-colonial Charter peasantry communities pursued a successful communal mode of production which largely depended on the availability of abundant, fertile and well-watered agricultural land: accompanied by huge supply of willing organized labour which was largely provided by men, women and children. Our argument stems from the fact that during this pre-colonial era, land was neither bought nor sold but belonged to the whole community under the collective management and administration of chiefs and their subordinates who distributed land to all able-bodied adult males in the community who needed such land. This paper will thus trace the attempts made by the colonial capitalist system to destroy peasant production through the introduction of forced labour recruitment practices which sought to satisfy the new demands of the colonial economic system. We will consider the measures adopted by the adult male peasantry in order to frustrate forced labour recruitment and assess the resultant success of such mechanisms. Only male Africans from 12 years upwards were targeted for labour recruitment. [N9/1/12, Annual Report, 31 December 1913] It is evident from NC documents that colonial capitalist enterprises employed child labour! This paper will establish that the colonial system was in dire need for cheap African labour to kick-start a promising mining and farming business but they accidentally created a wealthy, vibrant, prosperous and well-organized peasantry: this newly created class of wealthy peasants put up strong resistance to labour recruitment by positively responding to a huge influx of grain and livestock market and consciously increasing economic production. Despite the use of threats and force by colonial policemen during tax collections the newly [and accidentally, because it would never have been the intentions of a European colonial system to economically empower Africans !] created class of wealthy peasants easily paid off their tax obligations and continued to accrue wealth from agricultural production and livestock sales. African collaborators nicknamed **Maburakwacha:** [derogatory African name for Black watchmen] known for their brutality enforced the collection of tax and assisted in labour recruitment.

This research will largely be based on primary evidence, that is, **oral traditions** and **colonial documents** but secondary published and unpublished supplementary sources will also be consulted in our endeavour to shade light on the area under research.

The Rise of Peasant Production in Charter District, Eastern Zimbabwe: An African Response to the Failure of European Commercial Agriculture, 1890-1923

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Abstract

This presentation seeks to argue that before colonial rule, the African peasant population in Charter District was producing only at subsistence level. The population of Charter stood at thirty-two thousand people even as early as 1880s. [N9/1/5, NC Charter to CNC Salisbury, 31 March 1899]. Such a large human population would need a stable and reliable supply of staple grain and other traditional foods for its daily needs. Pre-colonial Charter communities pursued a successful communal mode of production which largely depended on the availability of abundant and fertile land supply. During this pre-colonial era land was neither bought nor sold but belonged to the whole community under the wise management and administration of chiefs and their subordinates who distributed land to anyone in the community who needed such land. This paper will thus trace the factors leading to the rise of peasant production in satisfying the new demands of the colonial economic system. We will consider the measures adopted by the peasantry in order to meet and benefit from this seemingly insatiable grain and livestock market which was catapulted by the development of early European mining enterprises and the failure to take-off of the European commercial agricultural sector. The paper will establish that just as the Colonial Capitalist Economy benefited tremendously from African peasantry entrepreneurship during the early years of colonial rule they allowed this system of production to thrive for as long as it was not in direct competition with the European production sector. Therefore, it is also our intention to investigate the reasons for the calculated collapse and destruction of the same peasant production in Charter District.

This research will largely be based on primary evidence, that is, **oral traditions** and **colonial documents** but secondary published and unpublished supplementary sources will also be consulted in our endeavour to shade light on the area under research.

Aspects of Ndebele Idiomatic Language Change

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Abstract

This paper seeks to analyse Ndebele language change with regards to idiomatic expressions. It is an analysis of the derivation of new proverbs and sayings in Ndebele, which amounts to language change, as Ndebele does not remain the same when new idiomatic expressions, are now part of the language. The paper looks at the sources of these new expressions and how they are encoded into the Ndebele language as idiomatic expressions. The new expressions are then evaluated to establish whether they satisfy the notion and function of idiomatic expressions in Ndebele. Idiomatic expressions are part of folklore. For the purposes of this paper, these include proverbs and sayings. Languages change semantically, lexically and phonetically, these changes affect idiomatic expressions because proverbs and sayings rely on other areas of a language as they are syntagmatic in form. This paper explores language expansion and change through proverbs and sayings. It further analyses the attitude of the Ndebele towards these new idiomatic expressions. Languages change to accommodate change from outside, which is non-linguistic change. Language contact is almost synonymous with language change, linguistic processes of borrowing, coining and loan translating affect idiomatic expressions as much as they affect other areas of the language. The paper also investigates the contribution of 'fashion trends' type of language change in the development of new idiomatic expressions in Ndebele. The aspects that help develop new proverbs and sayings in Ndebele are identified, analysed and the products are evaluated using Ndebele and linguistic standards of idiomatic expressions.

Colonial Legacy in the Ndebele Ethnocentric Retronym

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the effects of British colonialism on the way the Ndebele derive ethnocentric retronyms. Retronymy is a major contributor to Ndebele lexical expansion. There are many ethnocentric retronyms in the Ndebele lexicon. Ethnocentric retronymy enables a language to accommodate concepts from other cultures. Colonialism was not only a physical and political system, but it also included psychological and philosophical subjugation of the other. Ndebele ethnocentric retronyms are evidence of how the British colonized the collective mind of the Ndebele which derives the ethnocentric retronyms. New concepts are identified with their type in Ndebele culture and then retro named using the culture of origin. Inconsistencies are only found in ethnocentric retronyms, yet in other retronyms the 'type' in Ndebele culture is used to retro name new concepts in a regular pattern. In ethnocentric Ndebele retronyms English or European is for 'superior' concepts, while 'inferior' is for Ndebele. Other cultures are either non-existent or used to retroname in a manner that is derogatory to the source culture and at times just to derive humour.

Mediation as Conflict Resolution in Traditional Ndebele Society

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Abstract
Conflict is a part of any human aggregate; it is an inevitable part of all human societies. The African continent is constantly underdeveloped by conflicts that occur across institutions from individuals, families, communities up to nations. This paper analyses the institution of mediation in Ndebele traditional society, and how it helps in resolving conflicts. The paper seeks to establish who the mediators are and the qualities they have to be appointed mediators in particular situations of conflict. The Ndebele society was not without conflicts, but the use of mediation to resolve conflicts created a peaceful working and community relations. Subjective, prejudicial mediation, that is always influenced by hatred and greed in Africa creates not peace but intensifies conflict, with the mediator joining the conflict instead of resolving it. Mediation Successes in Ndebele traditional society can be an example to the leaders in Africa of how mediation can be conflict resolution.

Retronym: The Missing Entry in the Ndebele Monolingual Dictionary

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Abstract

This article seeks to explore the novel phenomenon of retronymy in linguistics and accommodates it in Ndebele lexicography. Retronyms are a special class of compound nouns that is not catered for in the Isichazamazwi sesiNdebele (ISN). Retronymy becomes part of derivational morphology because nouns are derived by combining different parts of speech in retronymy. This process is a major contributor to Ndebele lexical expansion. The process enables the language to accommodate new concepts as it is influenced by other cultures and technology. Retro naming is an area in Ndebele morphology that has not had much attention from linguists compared to other noun derivatives. The Ndebele language now operates in a global village where many cultures meet and mix. This creates a situation whereby many concepts are borrowed from other cultures and some from technology; most of these are retro named. Ndebele dictionaries cannot afford to ignore retronyms in future. While the Isichazamazwi sesiNdebele is a breakthrough in Ndebele monolingual dictionary work, it leaves out a very important entry the retronym.

Structural and philosophical aspects in Ndebele retronym derivation

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Abstract

This article seeks to analyse the philosophical and structural aspects behind retro naming in Ndebele. Retronymy becomes part of derivational morphology because nouns are derived by combining different parts of speech. This process is a major contributor to Ndebele lexical expansion. The process enables the language to accommodate new concepts as it is influenced by other cultures and technology. Retronyms are derived following certain morphological rules in Ndebele; these rules are the interest of this article together with the philosophy that guides retro naming. Retro naming is an area in Ndebele morphology that has not had much attention from linguists compared to other derivatives like de-verbative nouns, yet retronyms form a greater part of the Ndebele lexicon today. The Ndebele language now operates in a global village where many cultures meet and mix. This creates a situation whereby many concepts are borrowed from other cultures and from technology; most of these are retro named. The tendency is to name and differentiate simultaneously. That is to say a new concept is named using a known concept in the language while at the same time it is differentiated from the known concept.

Historicity of Some Ndebele Toponyms in Zimbabwe.

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Abstract

Names can be a repository of a people's past, experiences can be ordered into toponyms and the toponyms intern preserves the past experiences. This paper looks at some toponyms as named by the Ndebele and analyses how these are derived from history to Ndebele place names. The paper also analyses the sound and morphological processes that take place for Ndebele toponyms to be derived from history. Particular emphasis is placed on the history that led to the derivation of the toponyms and how the names preserve that history. The paper analyses Ndebele toponyms under categories of history that are; the royal Ndebele history, colonial history, post colonial history, Ndebele military history and those from past topography, topography and past activities. People name their environment, hence the names are taken from Ndebele areas in Zimbabwe that are Matabeleland, Bulawayo and Midlands provinces.

Zimbabwean Politics and Ndebele Folktales: Machiavellian Parallels

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Abstract

This paper interrogates the negative parallels between Ndebele folktales and the contemporary Zimbabwean politics. There is an acceptable belief that folktales contributed positively to the conduct of politics. However, there are reflections of Machiavellianism in the folktales which are not emphasized especially in the domain of African and Zimbabwean politics. Certain villainous animal characters in Ndebele folktales incarnate themselves in Zimbabwean political spheres where some politicians survive politically by assuming Machiavellian tactics as reflected in the folktale characters .Folktales, which were in most cases the first form of schooling for Africans, bear both positive and negative influences on the people as well as how they are governed. Thus folktales, like other forms of orature, have contributed a lot to the contemporary ideas of despotism, violence, patronage and corruption which are characteristic of Zimbabwean politics. There are some folktales which openly violate democratic principles drawing parallels with the Zimbabwean political conduct since independence. This paper will use selected Ndebele folktales to draw the Machiavellian parallels between the folktales and the Zimbabwean political systems. It will draw parallels between animal characters in Zimbabwean politics, governance systems juxtaposed with undemocratic political conduct in Zimbabwe. The tendency in both (folktales and Zimbabwean politics) is that good political governance is consciously eliminated and deliberately superseded by bad political tendencies.

Historical Derivation of Some Miscellaneous Ndebele Names and Name-Derived Terminology

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Abstract

Names are part of a people's language; they, like language itself, derive from the experiences of the people. History is used in Ndebele to derive miscellaneous names and these names are further used to derive terminology which is referred to as name-derived terminology in this article. Both miscellaneous names and name-derived terminology discussed in the article are historically derived and preserve history. The article also analyses the sound and morphological changes that take place for miscellaneous Ndebele names to be derived from history and how some terminology is derived from names. The article analyses these names in two categories:those derived from international history, and those derived from Zimbabwean history. The article then goes on to look at terminology that is derived from historical names;of interest are names that connect to Ndebele or global history. Some of the names however are not derived by the Ndebele, but are adopted by the language as loan words. These adoptives carry a history from their source language and this history is also preserved in Ndebele names and terminology.

Digging for Diamonds, Wielding New Words: A Linguistic Perspective on Zimbabwe's 'Blood Diamonds

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The history of diamond mining in Africa is long, complex and heterogeneous. In post-colonial Zimbabwe, before 2006, two diamond mines operated at River Ranch in Beitbridge and Murowa in Zvishavane, which both had Kimberley Process Certification. However, the 2006 discovery of diamond at Chiadzwa in Marange, near Mutare, brought about a dramatic change to Zimbabwe's mining landscape. Propelled by Zimbabwe's deepening economic crisis, soon after this discovery of diamonds was made public, the Chiadzwa diamond fields were invaded by an avalanche if illegal diamond miners from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Chiadzwa became a dynamic site of struggle where new cultural and social identities, languages and consumption patterns emerged in a remarkably short space of time. This study delineates and explicates the new linguistic terms and expressions that rapidly developed among this new, transient community of illegal diamond panners at Chiadzwa in order to describe their activities, experiences and interactions. The study focuses on the period 2006 to 2008 when the Zimbabwean crisis was at its worst, and the diamond rush was at its peak. Its aim is to analyse the linguistic strategies involved in these illegal miners' emergent 'language', and its socio-economic and political functions in the milieu of Chiadzwa. The article shows that as the illegal diamond miners at Chiadzwa were 'digging for diamonds' they were also, 'wielding new words', suggesting these phenomena are explicable through notions of 'antilanguages' and 'antistructure'. By triangulating a phenomenological approach with interviews and observations, the study explores how Chiadzwa became a highly contested but hugely creative space in which a rich new 'vocabulary' was forged, that reflected the vagaries and complexities of life in the midst of a diamond rush, even as Zimbabwe's economic and political crisis worsened deeply around it.

The Impact of Rastafari Ecological Ethic in Zimbabwe: A Contemporary Discourse

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Abstract
Climate change is a critical challenge that the world is facing today. The impact of climate change has resulted in a global climactic disaster on the environment and humanity. Nevertheless, the commitment from some rich nations towards reducing the effects of anthropogenic global warming is half-hearted to the detriment of the poorer ones. Whereas a number of contributions to the ongoing debate on the climate change have emanated from sectors such as social sciences, environmental studies and politics, this study adopts a fresh paradigm by engaging religion. Specifically, the study seeks to examine the contribution of Rastafari faith to the preservation and reclamation of the environment. The paper posits that religion has a vital role to play in the mitigation of the climate change which has brought environmental disaster. Therefore, it is urgent to involve religious players in strategies and actions that are meant to address environmental degradation. The study examines the efforts of the Marcus Garvey Rastafari House of Nyahbinghi Order in Zimbabwe. The paper utilises the grassroots methodology, interviews and observation techniques to gather data that is corroborated with the phenomenological approach to unravel the trend in its milieu. In the final analysis, the study concludes that Rastafari ecological ethics plays a complementary role to the national and global action in the preservation of the environment.

'Where are the Ancestors?: Theological Reflections on the Impact of Inter-denominational Sunday Services at Great Zimbabwe University

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Abstract

Zimbabwe is a home to a plethora of religious traditions such as African Traditional Religions, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Bahai Faith and Rastafari Faith. In postcolonial Zimbabwe, the government promoted freedom of worship and a multi-faith approach. In general, the western missionary colonial historiography has enabled Christianity to remain a dominant religious tradition in all spheres of life. Notably, Christianity claims to have a large following of up to approximately 80% of the population in Zimbabwe. In principle, a long standing campaign from the Christian fraternity to declare Zimbabwe a Christian state in recent years was unsuccessful. Paradoxically, in practice, the state largely utilises Christianity at state functions in political, social, economic, legal and religious spectrums. This double-edged scenario greatly influences the religious experience at institutions of higher learning such as Great Zimbabwe University (GZU). This paper focuses on the impact of the Inter-denominational Sunday services at GZU, a cosmopolitan community whose niche is to be the centre of excellence in creative arts, culture and technology. Evidently, belonging to a non-Christian religion attracts stigma at GZU. It is further argued that it is a misconception to regard both students and staff of GZU as solely Christians, something that triggers the question: 'where are the ancestors?' By utilising interviews, questionnaires and participant observation to gather data, the study established that GZU's Inter-denominational sermons and procedures tend to pursue a colonial legacy that elevates Christianity but militates against multiculturalism that would propel its niche. It is our conviction that the University urgently needs to transform its strategy on spiritual and moral development of students and staff to sustain religious pluralism and social identity in Zimbabwe.

Experiencing Sex via the 'Blue Tooth': Phenomenological Reflections on the Nature, Use and Impact of Mubobobo in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The belief in the existence of witchcraft and magic still runs strong in the African context. Because of this, early anthropologists, missionaries and colonial administrators tended to describe African indigenous religion and culture through misleading terminologies such as 'primitive', 'superstition', 'magic', 'witchcraft' and 'fetish'. The westerners misunderstood and misinterpreted African religion and sought to pursue the philosophy of the centre to displace everything African. Nevertheless, there is good and bad heritage exists in African religion and culture. The paper explored the nature, use and impact of mubobobo, a magical remote sexual intercourse, metaphorically called 'blue tooth sex', in Masvingo province, Zimbabwe. The study posited that there are some unscrupulous individuals who practice mubobobo on unsuspecting people that results in detrimental socio-psychological experiences. The research corroborated methods to gather data and established that mubobobo is seen in ambivalence with some regarding it as an outrageous magical spiritual experience whilst others including the legal fraternity consider it as unfounded and illusionary. In the final analysis, the study concluded that mubobobo is a mysterious and mystical practice that is true to the Shona believers in phenomenological terms in the Zimbabwean context.

Key words: African indigenous religion, blue tooth sex, magic, mubobobo, witchcraft, Zimbabwe

The Ethics of ICT Assessment in Public Examinations: Reflections on the Zimbabwean Experience

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Abstract

Today, the examination system is one of the key contemporary moral issues as technology continues to play a transforming role in societies in all over the world. The prospects for the utilisation of new technologies in the field of education continue to be part of human consciousness from a number of angles. One principal angle, with a strong bearing on the assessment and evaluation of the education system, is that of public examinations. Within the dynamics of modern formal education, it is universally acclaimed that examinations are vital in determining the credibility of the quality of education that any nation offers to its citizens. The utility of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in educational assessment at national, regional and international levels require concerted efforts. Nevertheless, the study observes that the application of ICT in the assessment of examinations is experiencing some impediments in several developing countries in general and in Zimbabwe in particular. At the moment in Zimbabwe, computer-based assessment in public examinations is conspicuously elusive, given that the educational policy since independence in 1980 is miles apart from the reality in schools. The paper posits that ICT, if given adequate funding, can make immense contributions on Quality Assurance (QA) in the educational system in Zimbabwe. The study established that ICT can be utilised as an integral component to improve efficiency, effectiveness and excellence in learning, teaching and assessment. Yet, the authors are convinced that processes of assessment must be anchored in the ethics of human integrity and honesty whose moral essence is religiously informed. Though the use of ICT in educational assessment is still minimal, the study recommends that some synergies should be developed between the government and the corporate world as key stakeholders to reinvigorate the education delivery processes. Methodologically, the study utilised questionnaires, administered to Education Officers and School Administrators, teachers drawn from seven sampled Secondary schools in Masvingo District.

Key words: Assessment, Education, Ethics, Examinations, ICT.

Beyond Identity Scars: Reflections on the Vitality of Shangani Male Circumcision in the Context of HIV and AIDS in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

A broad spectrum of challenges has placed the African continent on the spot light under Cultural studies. Undoubtedly, HIV and AIDS is one of the contemporary challenges that Africa is facing. The adverse effects of HIV and AIDS on some sub Saharan African countries such as Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe continue to justify the often repeated comment that Africa is a 'continent in crisis'. Yet, the spread of the epidemic has been blamed on causes like adverse African traditional cultural practices such as polygamy, inheritance, child pawning and prescribing sex with virgins as an antidote to HIV and AIDS. This study focuses on the vitality of the Shangani traditional initiation ritual of Male Circumcision (MC) practice in the context of HIV and AIDS epidemic. The study argues that MC is one of the most elusive and peculiar cultures whose liveliness for the Shangani goes 'beyond the scars of identity' to curbing the spread of HIV and AIDS. By utilising the theory of anti-structure under the framework of a traditional rite of passage, the study seeks to show that Shangani MC is a processual mark of identity that enables young men to become adults. The paper established that the enduring cultural influence of MC is testified by its significance in HIV and AIDS contexts. The study concludes that there is need for a selective judicious integration of Shangani culture and modern health technologies to curb the epidemic and to be in sync with contemporary challenges obtaining in Zimbabwe.

'Hawks and Doves': The Impact of Operation Murambatsvina on Johane Marange Apostolic Church in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The paper discusses the socio-economic and religious impact of Operation Murambatsvina on Johane Marange Apostolic Church in Masvingo, a city and Zvishavane, a mining town. It adopts a comparative approach in order to demonstrate the extent to which this phenomenon impacted on the religious and socio-economic activities of this movement in the two urban centres. While the majority of the church members were negatively affected, there are some who unintentionally benefited from this operation. The church was threatened numerically and theologically as some members were forced to translocate to rural areas. It is argued that in spite of the continued disruptions by the government and municipal authorities, the Vapositori of Marange continue to operate their informal business and missionary activities without necessarily compromising their traditions. The paper uses the 'hawks and doves' metaphor to demonstrate the relationship between the marauding government and municipal police and the vulnerable Vapositori during and in the post-Murambatsvina era.

Keywords: Church in Zimbabwe, Apostolic Church, church and politics, Johane Marange

Beyond Y2K Compliance: The Impact of Multimedia Technology on Junior Secondary School Learners in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The need to be Y2K compliant took people by storm as the world entered the Third Millennium. Zimbabwe like the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa experienced the same grip of technological mystery, uncertainty and speculation. Educational multimedia technology is vital for a nation to be competitive in the globalized village. The various forms of multimedia systems shape the way learners communicate and learn. The paper focuses on the impact of multimedia technology on junior secondary school learners in Masvingo city, Zimbabwe. It does so by examining the use and abuse of the cell phone, satellite dish and the Internet. Although the Internet, in particular, was originally designed to survive the nuclear war, its use beyond Y2K poses an unprecedented moral time bomb in pedagogical contexts. Notwithstanding its merits, it will be further argued that the cyberspace through multimedia technology has undesirable consequences. However, it is our conviction that learners can be protected from the risks of using or abusing technologies. It is prudent that the knowledge of the Bible which says, 'Wisdom is for a protection, the same as money is for a protection' (Ecclesiates7:12 can be helpful if properly applied in education. Therefore, the paper ends by recommending for the need for schools and parents, as stakeholders, to collaboratively guide, control and manage the utility of the multimedia technology that promotes safety and effective learning. This insight is crucial in view of the need to inculcate moral and spiritual values that enhance citizenship education in Zimbabwe.

Bold Innovations at Great Zimbabwe University: The Case of Literacy in Zimbabwe's Marginalized Languages

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Abstract

The world over, the status of marginalised languages continues to generate diverse and competing political discourses. During the colonial period, Lusophone, Anglophone and Francophone countries sidelined indigenous languages. This created a centre-periphery relationship between these colonial languages and indigenous languages respectively. In the post-colonial period, linguistic re-configurations ensued. Whereas this time western languages prevailed on the basis of prestige, indigenous languages tended to be recognized on the basis of numerical superiority and linguistic affiliation of the ruling elite. This created sites of struggle that continue to re-play colonial linguistic imbalances even today. This study reflects on the literacy initiatives that promote marginalized languages in Institutions of Higher Learning in Zimbabwe. It argues that the Zimbabwean education system has stultified minority languages. Thirty years after independence, Zimbabwe is still grappling with embryonic programmes to resuscitate the status of marginalized languages through mother tongue literacy initiatives. Specifically, the study focuses on the literacy campaign efforts of Great Zimbabwe University on its mandate to promote indigenous languages in Zimbabwe.

Key words: marginalised languages, indigenous languages, colonial languages, mother tongue literacy

March or Die?: Theological Reflections on the Violation of Children's Rights in African Initiated Churches, Zimbabwe

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Abstract

In general, the numerical strength of African Instituted Churches (AICs) makes them a force to reckon within the African context. AICs have influenced a number of people and challenged historical churches in Zimbabwe. However, the operations of some AICs have come under the spotlight for violating the rights of children especially concerning education, preventable and treatable diseases and conditions. The study examines the beliefs and practices of Johane Marange Apostolic Church (JMAC) with regards to issues of health and healing, education, child marriages and human rights in Zimbabwe. The paper argues that the JMAC stultify the girl-child rights on education and also exposes children to child killer diseases such as measles, tuberculosis, malaria, HIV and AIDS because they shun conventional medical treatment on the basis of their faith. The study established that there are some clashes between the government and JMAC members for evading high impact child survival interventions such as immunisation programmes to curb communicable and on communicable diseases among children. This scenario negatively impacts on children who are made to either 'march or die'. The research utilised the phenomenological approach, observation and interviews to provide perceptual analysis as well as government and media reports for factual interrogation of data gathered.

The global political agreement (GPA) and the persistent political conflict arising there from: Is this another manifestation of the council of Jerusalem?

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Abstract
The global political agreement (GPA) and the council of Jerusalem (CJ) manifested in different times and geographical locations. The GPA is purely a political agreement signed by three political parties namely the movement for democratic change-Tsvangirai (MDC-T) led by Morgan Tsvangirai, the movement for democratic change-Mutambara (MDC-M) led by Arthur Mutambara and the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) led by Robert Mugabe. ZANU was formed in 1960 when it broke away from Zimbabwe African National People's Union (ZAPU) led by Joshua Nkomo. Reverened Ndabaningi Sithole became the first president of ZANU until Robert Mugabe assumed leadership of the party in 1975 (Chung, 2007). Both MDC political formations are an offshoot of the movement for democratic change, which Meredith (2002) says was formed in September 1999, out of Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Union (ZCTU) and members of some thirty civic groups, to challenge ZANU PF's monopoly to govern Zimbabwe. Its slogan was 'Chinja Maitiro'-Change the way you are doing things'. The movement for democratic change splited when party members could not agree on whether or not to participate in the senatorial elections of 2005. However, political analysts and critics believe that the issue of senatorial elections was just a smoke screen to an underlying power struggle that had emerged among the party leaders. The split left Morgan Tsvangirai with a bigger party while Gibson Sibanda, who was Tsvangirai's deputy, led, temporarily, the smaller party. This smaller party invited Arthur Mutambara, who, then, was outside the country, to come back to Zimbabwe and lead it. The two MDC parties had to suffix the names of their presidents on the names of their parties so as not to confuse the electorate, hence the names MDC-T and MDC-M. The GPA was meant to resolve political and economic problems which bedevilled the country before and after the 2008 general elections. These elections could not produce a decisive winner on the presidential post. A run-off vote marred by violence forced Tsvangirai to withdraw before elections. Mugabe the sole candidate was declared the winner but was not recognised by the international community (Raftopoulos, 2009). This stalemate led to the signing of the GPA. The CJ was a religious council set to resolve the problem of the inclusion of the Gentiles in the early church. There was a conflict over the demands necessary for the admission of Gentiles. The paper explores the similarities and differences between the GPA and the CJ as regards to the principal issues to be resolved and the strategies adopted thereof. The paper also argues that the GPA and the CJ controversies are similar in that the Jews and the Gentiles had different ideologies about Christianity whereas the MDC formations and ZANU PF have different political ideologies. It further argues that the GPA as well as the CJ did not totally solve the conflicts which they had set to resolve as evidenced by the persistent mudslinging episodes witnessed within the operations of government of national unity, on one hand, and the relations within the early church, on the other hand.
Keywords: Global political agreement, council of Jerusalem, early church, conflict management.

Contested Landscape: The Struggle for the Control of Gonarezhou since the Inception of Colonial Rule in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

This paper examines the intricate contest that has occurred over the control and management of Gonarezhou since the inception of colonialism in Zimbabwe. It posits that this contest is best understood from a broader perspective of land dispossession and the subsequent debate on the ownership of the area. The contest involved various players such as the state, Shangani villagers, conservationists, poachers and foreigners. The paper argues that state monopoly over the control of the wildlife of the area and the marginalisation of the indigenous people was the core of this contest. This had the tragic consequence of turning locals into unwilling 'rebels' and 'poachers' and this impacted negatively on the sustainable development of the area. The paper further contends that it is only through the full engagement of stakeholders which takes cognisance of historical realities and advocates a win-win situation that the contest would be ameliorated and sustainable development realised.