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The politics of sustainability: Discourse and power in post-2000 Zimbabwean political texts

by

Tsiidzai Matsika

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Supervisor: Dr Oliver Nyambi

Co-supervisor: Dr Marthinus Conradie

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ABSTRACT

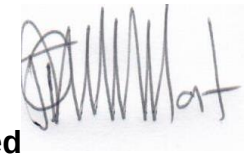
Discourse (language in social context) has 'dimensions' that make and unmake power. Power is created, sustained and contested through language. This is mainly because by its nature, if not forcibly acquired, power is discursively attained. As the chief mechanism of enabling (and also disabling) power, discourse is an indispensable site to understand Zimbabwean politics and policies shaped by the economic crisis of the post-2000 period. Yet despite its important significance and function as a medium of self-articulation and identification, very little research has been done on the potential of discourse approaches to dynamics and dimensions of the Zimbabwean crisis. Shifting focus to previously unstudied sites of Zimbabwean political discourse (political texts - mainly party manifestos), this study extends what is known about the uses of rhetoric and discourse in guiding perceptions and conceptions of the crisis and connected to that, the making, sustenance and unmaking of power. The question that this thesis answers concerns how, what is said as part of political promises makes political sense vis-à-vis the urgency of containing the crisis and, related to that, gaining or maintaining power to run the nation. This involves a careful analysis of rhetoric to ascertain the political function of discourse in concretising certain conceptions of the crisis, how it can be addressed and who is (and is not) best suited to address it. At the centre of the crisis discourse in Zimbabwe is the agenda for sustainable socio-economic development and contestation for power. In contemporary Zimbabwe, sustainability is a concept that has taken a wide range of meanings, inter alia, because of its natural relevance to economic development paradigms in the face of the economic crisis characterising the post-2000 period. Central to the concept of sustainability discourse are political promises to deal with the crisis, eradicate poverty, protect the environment, address equity imbalances and safeguard national sovereignty. However, underlying discourses on sustainability are numerous conflicting assumptions and guidelines for action. Such contradictions emanate from the fact that in a crisis situation, what is sustainable vis-à-vis strategies for economic recovery is often political and politicised, thus policies on sustainable national development are (re)packaged, (re)modelled, and (re)presented to serve both institutional (party) politics and policies. That Zimbabwe has been experiencing an economic and political crisis is not the debate; rather, what is in question concerns what necessary interventions are needed and adjunct to this, who is best situated to intervene. These are the questions that political parties, such as, the ruling party, Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) in *#Team ZANU PF* (2013*), Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (Zim Asset*) (2013) and *The People's Voice*

(2018); and oppositional parties such as the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in *Jobs, Upliftment, Investment Capital and Environmen*t (*JUICE*) (2013), Zimbabwe People First (Zim PF) and National People's Party in *Blueprint to Unlock Investment and Leverage for Development* (*BUILD*) (2015) and People's Rainbow Coalition (PRC) in *Inclusive Development Agenda* (*IDEA*) (2018) are grappling with in contemporary Zimbabwe. The questions have informed policy and more importantly (with regards to this study's focus) the discourse of policy. Guided mainly by Fairclough's theorisation on the ways in which representing reality is informed by and reflect (on) ideologies impacting various forms of power relations, this study explores the politics of rhetoric in post- 2000 Zimbabwe. The study asks the following questions: what is the nature of the Zimbabwean crisis as perceived from the various political vantage points in political texts; what characterises the rhetoric on who and/or what is responsible for the crisis; what are the discursive strategies used by parties to influence people to align with certain interpretations of the crisis (believability) and suspect others, and lastly, how does a discourse-focused approach to the politics of representing the Zimbabwean crisis refresh modes and epistemologies of knowing its nature, historical trajectory and how it has shaped policy and political practice in contemporary Zimbabwe?

DECLARATION

I declare that "**The Politics of Sustainability: Discourse and Power in Post-2000 Zimbabwean Political Texts"** that I herewith submit at the University of the Free State, is my independent work and that I have not previously submitted it for qualification at another institution of higher education.

Tsiidzai Matsika **December 2019**

Signed 

DEDICATION

To my Nokutenda Kelly and Tinodiwanashe Karl – The earth is a fine place worth fighting for. Strength and growth only come through continuous effort and struggle. Hard work wins, if you can't excel with talent, triumph with effort.

I dedicate this to all that understand that **We Do Not Inherit the Earth from Our Ancestors; We Borrow It from Our Children** (Dennis Hall, 1975)- Those who have undertaken to cherish our world, make it secure for future generations and do it no harm, not because they are duty-bound, but because they love the world and love our children.

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My greatest appreciation to my mother. The strong woman to whose upbringing and steadfastness l owe most of my ideals, aspirations and intellectual capacities. Despite the many life struggles and harsh fortunes, you have always fought for our education, intellectual and spiritual development. My siblings, Nyaradzo, Kudzi and Nyasha thanks for being there for me, all the way, through all.

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To God be all the Glory.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The Zimbabwean crisis of the past two decades has attracted scholarly attention from across the globe[1]. Inter/trans/-and-multi-disciplinary enquiries have attempted to understand its nature and various dimensions of its historical evolution. The post-2000 period in Zimbabwean history dramatically captured by many as the "era of crisis," (Bond and Manyanya, 2003; Raftopoulos and Mlambo, 2009:201; Sachikonye, 2012) presents a new and complex socio-economic and political terrain. It is characterised by a socio- economic meltdown upon which various political parties attempt to set out rationale for their political project(s). What makes this period unique is that, at the peak of the crisis there emerged a strong opposition in the form of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). So, besides the quest to address the socio-economic crunch, the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) was also "literally fighting for its survival after the constitutional referendum defeat in 2000 and the substantial erosion of its majority in the 2000 election," (Sachikonye 2012:99).

As De Rycker and Don (2013: 13) note, in times of crisis, "new and recovered/re-politicized imaginaries compete in their bid to simplify and structure the complexities of crisis, and ultimately, to inform private and public strategic and policy initiatives to manage the crisis and/or move beyond it through imagined recoveries". Imaginaries of the Zimbabwean crisis, that is, the set of discourses, values and symbols associated with especially political institutions, have recently been at the centre of critical reflection in various disciplines. These imaginaries construct politically interested narratives and knowledges that reflect and refract the contestedness of the crisis and its temporalities. Selected knowledge of the crisis accentuates certain urgencies and fix identities of agents best suited to deal with the crisis. In this light, this study focuses on relations between power, discourse, agency, political institutions and practices in the context of the economic and political crisis in Zimbabwe. It critically analyses how, through discourse, competing views and conceptualisations of economic and political (un)sustainability are discursively implied and implicated in strategies for power. Discourse provides an entry point to the politics of institutional identity and how

[1] See scholars such as Hammar, Raftopoulos and Jensen (eds) (2003), *Zimbabwe's Unfinished Business*; Bond and . Manyanya (2003), *Zimbabwe's Plunge: Exhausted Nationalism, Neoliberalism and the Search for Social Justice*, Raftopoulos and Phimister (2004), *'Zimbabwe Now: The Political Economy of Crisis and Coercion', Historical Materialism*, 12, pp. 355-82, Davies (2005), 'Memories of Underdevelopment: A Personal Interpretation of Zimbabwe's Economic Decline', in Raftopoulos and Savage (eds), *Zimbabwe: Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Moore (2005), *Suffering for Territory: Race, Space and Power in Zimbabwe*, Moyo, and Yeros , (2007) ' The Radicalised State: Zimbabwe's Interrupted Revolution '.

certain language-mediated political identities make and unmake power in post-2000 Zimbabwe. The study examines how the Zimbabwean crisis is mediated for political purposes in selected policy texts. Using political texts (primarily election manifestos): ZANU PF's 2013 election manifesto *#Team ZANU PF* (2013), the 2013-2018 economic blueprint *Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Agend*a (*Zim Asset*), and the 2018 election manifesto, The People's Manifesto (2018); MDC-Tsvangirai's *Jobs, Upliftment, Investment Capital, Environment* (*JUICE*) (2013), Zimbabwe People First (Zim PF) and National People's Party *Blueprint to Unlock and Leverage for Development* (*BUILD*) (2015) and PRC's 2018 election manifesto *Inclusive Development Agenda* (*IDEA*) (2018), the study explores the political deployment of rhetoric in (re)constructions of the crisis time-space and how such (re)constructions reflect the nature of shifting political identities and political contestation in contemporary Zimbabwe.

I argue in this study that language plays a significant role in the discursive construction of the crisis as a socio-economic phenomenon with far-reaching political implications. The study explores the relations between rhetoric and political practice in post-2000 Zimbabwe and how the crisis influences and is influenced by discourse. As Bourdieu puts it in another context (1991: 26):

> For the political field is, among other things, the site *par excellence* in which agents seek to form and transform the visions of the world and thereby the world itself: it is the site *par excellence* in which words are actions and the symbolic character of power is at stake. Through the production of slogans, programmes and commentaries of various kinds, agents in the political field are continuously engaged in a labour of representation by which they seek to construct and impose a particular vision of the social world while at the same time seeking to mobilize the support of those upon whom their power ultimately depends.

As ideological constructions, political texts do not exist outside embodied agency, ideologies, cognitions and actions. Selected texts in this study are political because they are source of information about the policy positions of political actors contesting for political power. These texts are strategic as they are premised on the reflexive definition, monitoring, management and resolution of the crisis. Paying attention to the texts' discourses can reveal the extent to which language plays a role in shaping perceptions about agents and urgencies related to the crisis. It is my contention in this thesis that a fuller understanding of the crisis calls for an interrogation of the metaphors, theories, models and strategies that are summoned in promoting and co-ordinating processes and actions to deal with the crisis. Using a Critical Discourse Approach (CDA), the study examines how discourse is deployed in the service of power and

its contestation in Zimbabwe; that is, how discourses and narratives from different political parties are influenced by underlying strategies and interests shaped by spatio-temporal political identities and interests.

Background and context

In politics, sustainability is a concept that has been widely used especially in environmental, social, economic and political discourses globally. Many 'working definitions' of this concept can be seen in mission statements, objectives, advertisements, marketing materials and 'blue-prints' of organisations, especially those 'concerned' with (or 'serving') people. The definitions are often designed to cast the organisations' mind-sets and character as pro-active and responsive to prevailing challenges. The concept highlights an interest in transitory movement(s), through lessons and experience, from problematic past and present into a better future. As defined in the Brundtland Commission's (1987:43) report, sustainable development is, "development which meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Discourses on sustainability thus entail grappling with complex intersecting socio-economic, ecological and political challenges that threaten human livelihoods and generate momentum in countries facing economic and political volatility such as Zimbabwe. In such countries, sustainability has become a buzz-word for politicians in their thinking, planning, political mobilisation and policy change. There is a palpable alacrity to invoke and insert sustainability into policy discourse especially during periods of political campaigns, mainly because the term and concept are synonymous with discourses of change and a sense of responsibility for making change happen. However, in its deliberation it is often not clear exactly what is to be sustained and at what scale, (by who), or whether the concept refers to a philosophy, a process, a program or a product, or all of these.

As Tendi (2010) argues, the crisis that has engulfed Zimbabwe since 2000 cannot be reduced to the nation's economic meltdown and the struggle against absolute rule. Rather, the crisis extends to the struggle over ideas and deep-seated historical issues connected to the unfinished business of decolonisation. Robert Mugabe's ZANU PF, Simba Makoni's Mavambo/Dawn/Kusile, Joice Mujuru's Zimbabwe People First (Zim PF), National People's Party (NPP) and People's Rainbow Coalition (PRC**)**, Morgan Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change-Tsvangirai (MDC-T), Welshman Ncube's Movement for Democratic Change-N (MDC-N) and many other "opposition's opposition" groups are vying to define the

crisis and, from the point of view of their interested definitions, map out economic trajectories towards sustainable development. Since independence in 1980, ZANU PF has come up with many economic policies, several of which have been abandoned before full implementation. Raftopoulos (2014) argues that most of the economic blueprints that followed the ill-fated Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in the early 90s were discontinued prematurely. Commenting on post-2000 ruling party policies, Raftopoulos (2014) contends that:

> The policy interventions are more akin to a hybrid mix of attempts to move beyond the crisis management of much of the 2000's, while ensuring complete control of the party state and the politico-economic networks that have developed in the crisis period.

Such politically-informed economic interventions have taken place in the context of an opposition that has internecine divisions which threaten their sustainability as viable alternatives. As the complex mosaic unfolds, all the political parties move towards a "consensus on the need for sustainable development, some form of socio-economic 'stabilisation', the parameters of which are still unclear, but are being contested within a narrowing agenda of development alternatives" (Raftopoulos, 2014).

As Kress (1993:174), asserts, "the everyday, innocent and innocuous, mundane text is as ideologically saturated as a text which wears its ideological constitution overtly." In light of this assertion, the wider post-2000 socio-economic and political discourses are key to our understanding of the politics behind the rhetoric in MDC-T's *JUICE,* the ruling ZANU PF's *#Team ZANU PF*, 2013-2018 economic blueprint *Zim Asset* and *The People's Manifesto*; Zim PF and NPP's *BUILD* and the PRC's *IDEA*. These texts reflect complexities at the heart of power, legitimacy, culture, ideology, identity and history in relation to the crisis and its historical evolution and manifestations over time. This study centres the concept and/or discourse of sustainability and explores its treatment in the selected political texts in relation to the broader political, economic and historical discourses in contemporary Zimbabwe. Analysing these texts involves, inter alia, examining their discursive form, intertextuality and communicative/semantic function. This involves focusing on diction, grammar, symbolism, metaphors, allegories, visual images and many other forms of narrative style which give the policy documents their unique ideological textuality, effect and discursive power. The study will thus dig beneath the semantic codes and signs of textual rhetoric to unravel connections between discourses of sustainability and broader issues of agency, legitimacy, decoloniality, national history and identity in the post-colony.

In this study, discourse is conceptualised in the Foucauldian sense as "designat[ing] the forms of representation, codes, conventions and habits of language that produce specific fields of culturally and historically located meanings" (Xu Gang, 2014:53). Foucault observes "'discursive practices' and 'discursive formation' in texts in relation to the analysis of particular institutions and their ways of establishing orders of truth, or what is accepted as 'reality' in a given society" (Taylor, 2004). In Foucault's words, "whenever, between objects, types of statements, concepts, or thematic choices, one can define a regularity (an order, correlations, positions, functionings and transformations), we will say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a discursive formation" (Foucault, 1972:38). This is when concepts seem to be related but can operate and denote different and often contrasting things. For example, the land reform beginning circa 2000 is captured by the ruling ZANU PF as the Third Chimurenga (revolution/liberation struggle). It represents the ongoing struggle against colonial privatisation of the resource but opposing debates highlight that land was used as a political gimmick for ZANU PF to win 2000 elections (see Chung, 2007). It is therefore critical to understand that the relations between discourses are multiple, shifting and even dissonant to be taken for granted as objective realities. A given discourse highlights and obfuscates much through sudden ingressions, modifications, ambiguities, and adaptations as it does through consistency.

Aims and Objectives

This study aims to examine the importance of a discourse approach to understanding some of the most significant dimensions and dynamics of the Zimbabwean crisis and the various socio-political interventions to it in recent years. Focusing on the discursive construction of the crisis in selected official political texts, the study analyses how the texts can be read as constituting political discourse that politically frames ways of comprehending the crisis. It further examines how these texts converse with (and/or contest) each other as well as other socio-political discourses shaped by the Zimbabwean crisis. As hinted above, sustainability is a catchword that encapsulates, among other things, statements of purpose to save the present as an interventionist way of securing the future.

Texts are fundamentally sites of struggle (Wodak, 1999:10). In this light, the focal political texts shall be conceptualised as expressive products of political parties which bear their political identities, strategies and ideologies that directly and indirectly relate to the problematic historical situation. Political parties are discrete entities with respective social bases, histories,

identities, goals, cultures, appeals and many other distinctive features. In light of this study's focus, the immediate question would be: what aspects of form and content of the respective political texts can be related to these inherent distinguishing features and how do they (political texts) function inter alia as propaganda? Analysing such texts as constituting the respective parties' political discourse gives insight into the discursive processes of agenda setting and the relationship between what is said, how it is said, why it is said, and to what possible effect in relation to the text's historical situation.

The study therefore explores the dialectical relationship between the texts and the agency of their (un)making and textuality, highlighting how they (texts) have been used as mechanisms of political agenda-setting through deliberate and selective application of memory, perception and language. The specific objectives of this study are thus:

- to examine the treatment of the theme of economic (sustainable) development in Zimbabwean political texts in the context of the Zimbabwean political and socio-economic crisis of the post-2000 period.
- to interrogate the rhetorical strategies and functions of narrative style and form in generating specific discourses of the Zimbabwean crisis
- to explore the connections between the discourse of the political texts and other dominant discourses shaped by the crisis.
- to examine the relationship between textual discourse and the respective parties' broader political identities and ideologies.
- to understand "the social uses of symbolic forms" and "meaning in the service of power" (Thompson, 1990:7-).
- to examine gaps between rhetorical representations of socio-economic issues and current social realities in Zimbabwe

Research problem and rationale for the study

A major aspect of the of the Zimbabwean crisis is the polarisation of ideas marked by the discursive struggle to create and control systems of social meaning. The ongoing Zimbabwean political debates have extensively focused on how individual agents, structures, processes and issues have affected and effected the ongoing crisis. However, the 'crisis of discourse' in the post-2000 context has not been given much prominence. It is critical to understand how the socio-economic meltdown has been exploited to appeal to people and how social processes and

relations have been constructed and cemented through the use of discourse. Sustainability discourses and party visions at times have been routinely created in "formulaic processes as part of strategic planning procedures" (Ehrenfeld, 2013:49) without reflecting realities of the Zimbabwean situation. In this context, this study explores the discursive construction of national agendas in political manifestos and party blueprints. It reflects on how language, history and culture have been raw materials in the framing and representation of the crises. How discourses have been appropriated in polity and policy to produce, naturalise, maintain specific social actions and at times, to deconstruct these notions reveal its importance as a site for understanding the politics of representing the crisis.

Like any other forms of texts, political texts are, above all, "conditioned by time, and represent humanity in so far as it corresponds to the ideas and aspirations, the needs and hopes of a particular historical situation" (Fischer, 1978: 12). Given this context-specific discursivity of texts, the selected texts can be thought of as complex historical records reflecting the temporality of both the crisis and contestations about its representation. In this light, policy documents such as *#Team ZANU PF (2013), Zim Asset (2013), JUICE (2013), BUILD (2015), IDEA (2018)* and *The People's Manifesto (2018)* can be interpreted as metaphors of modern politics, political planning and administration. My understanding of political texts, then, is that they are deliberately constructed narrative forms which reflect "the play of Machiavellian princes[2], Nietzschean will to power[3]" and Foucauldian discursive formations.

Political discourse especially in times of crisis is always strategic. It is critical to understand how discourses on the Zimbabwean crisis and development in general have been employed and deployed in the service, dis-service and contestations of power. CDA concepts of power and knowledge mainly framed by Foucault hold that all forms of knowledge and truth are not a

[2] As Machiavelli (1532) puts it in *The Prince*, "In the actions of all men, especially princes, where there is no recourse to justice, the end is all that counts. A prince should only be concerned with conquering or maintaining a state, for the means will always be judged to be honourable and praiseworthy by each and every person, because the masses always follow appearances and the outcomes of affairs, and the world is nothing than the masses." The question is not what makes a good human being, but what makes a good ruler.

[3] The will to power is exactly this: the will to create or uphold a metaphysical interpretation of the world which puts *you* in a position of power not necessarily over others (although that too is implied), but over *life* (a privileged concept in Nietzsche's philosophy), and the interpretation of that life. Nietzsche believes nothing else is "given" as real except world of desires and passions, there is no other "reality" besides the reality of our drives, thinking is merely in relation to these drives to each other. Reality is constructed in relation to what you want.

reflection of reality but discursive and subjective constructs. Jorgensen and Phillips (2002:14) explain that:

> Power is responsible *both* for creating our social world *and* for the particular ways in which the world is formed and can be talked about, ruling out alternative ways of being and talking. Power is thus both a productive and a constraining force.

In this context, it is critical to examine how, in the context of crisis, different political parties frame their knowledge of the crisis to ensure relevance. Relevance, which is closely related to power, influences knowledge systems and what can be asserted as 'reality'. Flyvbjerg (1998:226) elucidates that:

> …not only is knowledge power, but more important, power is knowledge. Power determines what counts as knowledge, what kind of interpretation attains authority as the dominant interpretation. Power procures the knowledge which supports its purposes, while it ignores or suppresses that knowledge which does not serve it.

This study is not the first to attempt a close reading of political texts in Zimbabwe. Close analyses of policy documents such as political texts and manifestos has been done in the fields of economic analysis and political science. However, in such studies, the approach has been to highlight the range of problems in relation to context – the focus is mainly on what worked, works and cannot work in approaches to fixing the Zimbabwean crisis. Policy analysis in Economic and Political Science studies is designed to inform rational models of decision making. Typically, texts such as *Zimbabwe's Development Experiences Since 1980: Challenges and Prospects of the Future (*Maphosa, Kujinga and Chingarande, (*eds*) 2007) trace the contradictions and inconsistencies of Zimbabwe's post-independence policies and their influence on the socio-economic, political and cultural development in context of the crises.

Taylor (2004) argues that policy-making is an arena of struggle over meanings, and that policies are seen as the outcomes of struggles "between contenders of competing objectives, where language - or more specifically discourse - is used tactically" (Fulcher, 1989: 7). Policy narratives such as the texts under study in this thesis have to be understood as strategic constructions of reality promoted by actors that are seeking relevance and dominance in public policy battles. Zhou and Zvoushe (2012) assert that in post 2000 Zimbabwe, policy making is focused on interventionism; political expediency and survival rather than long term socio-economic welfare of the nation. They explain that policy interventionism is often inspired by the need to control the apparatus of the state and safeguard political turf. Political blue-prints serve as machineries of crisis management, harnessing and harmonising competing values and

interests within the nation and individuals who hold different and often conflicting values on what problems, goals and options should be prioritised at a given time. As Anderson (1978:23) posits, "the deliberation of public policy takes place within a realm of discourse…policies are made within some system of ideas and standards which is comprehensive and plausible to the actors involved." Policy narratives consist of generalisable strategic policy constructions with instrumental goals. This insight is important to my analysis of the politics of discourse in policy and in exploring the relationship between policy texts and their historical, political, social and cultural contexts. It shows how "truth effects" or "matter-of-facts" are created and embedded in contexts. A study of post-2000 political texts unravels Zimbabwe's socio-economic and political dynamics influencing the texts' approaches and dominant practices.

Porter (2005:3) argues that identity resides at the heart of sustainability discourse and debates, and ultimately it is the "fear of identity loss rather than economic profit or scientific rationality that underlies organisations' discourse on sustainability." In the Zimbabwean context, as the crisis unfolds various agents assume speaking positions highlighting their obligations and partisan perceptions relative to sustainable modes of containing the crisis. Agents conflate their subject positions with identities that are unique, adaptable and coherent with the ongoing pressures of the crisis. As observed by Czarniawska (1997:41), despite the claim that "machines are the most popular images of organisations another metaphorical character that is always forgotten and taken for granted is the organisation as a super-person." A narrative approach to the discursive construction of identity and policy considers institutions such as ZANU PF, MDCs and Zim PF to be central symbols in the texts. There is need to analyse these institutions in terms of how they deploy discourse to create and sustain identities that speak to their positions vis-vis-vis the national crisis. In this light, the selected texts *#Team ZANU PF*, *Zim Asset, JUICE, BUILD, IDEA* and *The People's Manifesto* are treated as identity projects with inherent political objectives. Studying their discourse is therefore an attempt to encounter the politics of self-representation. The study is therefore not merely about what these texts say, but how and what they say reflect deeper issues at the heart of institutional identity, policy and visions for the country.

Theoretical framework

Working within a discourse framework, this study deploys an eclectic approach that will harness as many relevant theories as possible in its endeavour to understand the discursive aesthetics of political texts. This study is generally underpinned by broad theories of social

constructionism popularised by Berger and Luckmann in their text *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966*).* Social constructionism rests on philosophical assumptions that there are multiple versions of representation and interpretation of 'reality'. A social construct is a notion or idea that is created to appear natural and obvious to people but may or may not represent reality. So, it is generally a subjective artifice of a given individual, institution or group.

Social constructionism is an umbrella term for a range of theories about culture and society, and discourse analysis is one of the most widely used social constructionist approaches (Jorgensen and Phillip, 2002). The theory calls for the grounding of knowledge in the context of its cultural and social production given the fact that the ways in which people perceive and represent the world are contingent, historically and culturally subjective. As Burr argues, "within a particular worldview, some forms of action are natural(ised), others made unthinkable" (1995:4). Repetition of certain actions and processes reinforces common knowledge systems of 'reality'. Thus, for Burr (cited in Jorgensen and Phillip):

> Our knowledge of the world should not be treated as objective truth. Reality is only accessible to us through categories, so our knowledge and representations of the world are not reflections of the reality 'out there', but rather are products of our ways of categorising the world, or, in discursive analytical terms, products of discourse (Jorgensen and Phillip, 2002: 5).

Political groups are yet another subjectively constructed entity. While individuals and groups appear to represent the same national phenomenon, they define, ascribe meanings and relevance to issues, objects, events, interactions, actions and relationships according to their own knowledge systems, worldviews and interests. Social constructionism seeks to uncover the ways in which taken-for-granted realities are related to dialectics of agency in constructions of social reality.

Since the study is basically about discursive approaches to the nation, it is natural that theories of nation(alism) be incorporated. My approach to nationalism as a social constructivist theory focuses on its notions of the political constructedness of nations. Thus, my interest will be on how discourse is mastered to reveal the relationship between what Bhabha (1990) has famously called "nation and narration". Similarly, Giddens has defined nationalism as "the existence of symbols and beliefs which are either propagated by elite groups, or held by many of the members of regional, ethnic, or linguistic categories of a population and which imply a community between them" (1984: 190-191). He further explains that nationalism can be seen as a response to certain "needs and dispositions" which would appear at a time when, "as a

result of the commodification of time and space, the individual has lost his ontological security" (Giddens, 1984: 191). Class domination and uneven development strongly influence the "origins of oppositional nationalism" (Giddens, 1984:220). Perspectives on the theory and practice of nation (un)making are invoked to understand the dimensions and dynamics of discursive framings of the nation in focal political texts.

Finlayson (1998: 99) points out that individual nationalisms "always contain particular 'content' that aims to define the general culture and values of the 'national' people and which, in turn, is related to the construction and deployment of such values within political ideological discourse." The constructedness of nations make them products of subjective interests by people and institutions privileged to influence their constructions. This is one of the main reasons why in much of Africa, liberation movements that played instrumental roles in constructing postcolonial nations enjoy long stays in power. Nationalist struggles for independence shape the envisioned nations with all its constitutive and defining aspects such as names, national flag etc. However, over time, these aspects of nationness get contested and re-shaped in various forms of power contestation. Discourse becomes the major site for either defending the nation's status quo, or subverting its fundamentals and envisioning new forms of becoming a nation. Invoking concepts of nationalism in this study enables us to understand the centrality of nation in framing modern political discourse and its crucial place in the ideological construction of nation, providing appearances of 'closure' and 'unity' where there are inherent diversions and inconsistencies. When political parties in Zimbabwe talk about the crisis and sustainability vis-à-vis concepts of nation, national identity and national development, discourse reflects what is emphasised, and CDA-focused approaches to this discourse reveal why it is emphasised in the context of temporal influences. Constructing and framing nations are knowledge projects, but the question is, whose knowledge? This study uses a CDA approach to unveil power dynamics attendant upon discursive practices in the (un)making of the nation, especially in the context of crisis. The objective is to interrogate how political texts have discursively framed the post-2000 socio-economic and political impasse and contributed to the creation, sustenance and contestation of knowledge about the crisis.

To better comprehend the political function of discourse in post-2000 Zimbabwe, it is crucial to understand the context in which it is formulated and operationalised. Discourses of sustainability are bound up with politics, particularly the politics of the crisis, its origins, causes, trajectory and possibilities for intervention. The crisis has brought to the fore several

questions related to policies, political practices and identities. As Masunungure and Chimanikire (2007:9) highlight:

> That Zimbabwe is undergoing a profound economic and existential crisis is… beyond dispute. What is contestable is the scope and depth of the crisis and its depth of the crisis and its drivers. Contestations also centre on what is to be done to remedy the dire situation. In fact, Zimbabwe is going through, not a single crisis, but a syndrome of crises and the multiple crises are interconnected.

Many scholars such as Sachikonye, (2012); Bond and Manyanya, (2003); Raftopoulos, Hammar and Jansen (*eds),* (2003); Kagoro (2008); Primorac and Chan (*eds*), (2007) have written about the Zimbabwean crisis, focusing on how it reflects on the state of politics, governance and culture of liberation. Their studies have been very important in dissecting and illuminating the dynamics of the crisis. However, as Illie (2010) highlights, there has been limited research on the "linguistic strategies, argumentation patterns and rhetorical structures" (Illie, 2010) of political texts that influenced Zimbabwean politics at the turn of the century. This entails how the socio-economic impasse has been exploited literary and linguistically to appeal to people and how social processes and relations have been constructed and cemented through use of discourse by political agents. This thesis seeks to extend on that and explore in depth the dominant 'crisis of discourse' in the Zimbabwean crisis.

Methodology

Since policy and polity issues are both complex and contested, an examination of the constitutive relations between texts, discourse and context prompts qualitative critical social research methods such as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Narrative Analysis. In the context of the Zimbabwean crisis, it is helpful to explore how varying political organisations present the multiple, contested and competing discourses. CDA as a multi-perspective research method explores the relationships between "discursive practices, events and texts; and wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes" (Taylor, 2004). It examines how texts construct "representations of the world, social relationships and social identities, highlighting how such practices and texts are ideologically shaped by relations of power" (Fairclough, 2001; 2003).

CDA extends the notion of discourse beyond utterances and texts to social practices and is strongly tied to narrative analysis. Porter (2005) theorises texts as fundamental units of analysis

which inscribe their subjects and 'subjectness' in inherent systems of meaning. CDA in this research draws from different perspectives from varying scholars such as Foucault, Wodak, Van Dijk and mainly from frameworks popularised by Fairclough, that "texts are open to diverse interpretations," "ideologies reside in texts," and that "it is not possible to "read off ideologies from texts" (Fairclough, 2005: 34). Evident in the texts under study are "multiple realities that compete for truth and legitimacy" (Fairhurst and Grant, 2010: 174). Given the struggle between different knowledge claims in the Zimbabwean context, political texts could be "understood and empirically explored as a struggle between different discourses which represent different ways of understanding aspects of the world and construct different identities" (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002: 2). Through nationalistic discourse ZANU PF tends to narrow down the crisis to a foreign-induced problem that demands the party's 'tested' experience dealing with imperial forces. On the other hand, opposition parties also tend to narrow down the crisis to lack of democracy which culminates in a crisis of policy and governance.

Narrative analysis is based on the "notion that all texts tell stories, which is the basis on which discourse constructs realities" (Porter, 2005:3). It is an interpretive approach that involves studying the "subjectivity and influence of culture and identity" on social processes. The story "becomes an object of study, focusing on how individuals or groups make sense of events and actions in their lives" (Mitchell and Egudo, 2003: 5). In this light, this study conceptualises political texts as narrative texts which have explicit and implied subjects, objects, styles, linguistic devices and implicit storylines/plots defining problems, elucidating their genesis, elaborating consequences and outlining solutions.

Narrative analysis enables one to "capture social representation processes such as feelings, images, and time. It offers the potential to address ambiguity, complexity, and dynamism of individual, group, and organisational phenomena" (Mitchell and Egudo, 2003). Thus, a narrative-focused analysis of political texts such as *Zim Asset, JUICE, BUILD, IDEA* and *The People's Manifesto* is crucial in understanding how individual narratives reflect and/or simultaneously conceal deeper, more pervasive narratives linked to social processes, social interactions, interests and social 'constructs' related to the Zimbabwean crisis.

Delimitation

Though this study explores the wider post-2000 context, the selected texts in this study are all post-2013 and post-Government of National Unity (GNU) (between ZANU PF and the two MDC formations, MDC-T and MDC- M, for Mutambara). These texts were selected because they capture the bigger picture of Zimbabwean post-2000 politics and the ongoing crisis from the past, the present state and how the crisis in discourse continue to impact on Zimbabwean politics. They are representative of the parties and issues to be discussed in this thesis and enable a dissection of the discourses and power contestations that have characterised Zimbabwean politics since the emergence of a strong opposition contender, the Movement for Democratic Change in 2000. The post-GNU period presents a unique period because despite 2000 – 2008 having been dubbed a "a lost decade" (Sachikonye, 2012) as the nation sank into serious socio-economic meltdown, the 2009 – 2013 period of GNU demonstrated potential for national stability, development and integration. Though there were inherent tensions within the political arrangement there was glimmering hope during this period as the economy stabilised with the introduction of multi-currency system, with inflation being pegged at below 5% and improvements in social services (Mukuhlani, 2014). The period to some extent represented hope for transition and potential for transformation.

This research is not about who (in the context of Zimbabwe's polarised and polarising political and economic crisis) is right or wrong or factually true, because truth is subjective. It is an attempt to understand how the Zimbabwean crisis is framed in contemporary political discourse. The objective is to identify why issues are framed in certain ways and to what effect, political continuities and discontinuities in such frames reflect the contestedness of power in post-2000 Zimbabwe. The study therefore limits itself to the question of language and discourse in constructions of socio-political identities, and how certain political identities are favoured, revered and subverted in context of the unfolding crisis. This research seeks to explore how, in the context of crisis, policies are communicated and political processes and policy practices are justified and /or contested through discourse. Policies are terrains of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic contestation.

Chapter layout

This introductory chapter lays the basis of this study. It provides the contextual background and situates the focus of the study. It explores how development agendas and contestations for power unfolds via discourse. The chapter outlines the aims of the research, the rationale, the methodological and theoretical approaches and the chapter delineation of this study. Chapter Two expands on the introductory chapter – it gives a detailed overview of the relationship between key aspects and concepts in this study. It extends the literature review and critically engages with other studies on the Zimbabwean crisis, sustainability and discourse analysis as a way of establishing relevance for the critical, theoretical and methodological approaches. The chapter explores the context that informs the study, the relationship between discourse, the crisis, conceptions of sustainable development, the politics of representation and the applicability of CDA approaches. The chapter draws attention to the constitutive, innovative and transformative power of discourse and locates language as the source of agency and power in politics as reflected in the policy texts.

Chapter Three titled "Saving and Serving the Nation" focuses on the dynamics of ZANU PF's representation of the Zimbabwean crisis through an analysis of the party's 2013 election manifesto *#Team ZANU PF* and the 2013-2018 economic blueprint, *Zim Asset*. These policy texts provide windows into ZANU PF's organisational structures and practices that discursively sustain its hegemony. The chapter explores how ZANU PF's framing of the Zimbabwean crisis relates to its modes of shifting blame while at the same time entrenching its political relevance. The chapter explores the means through which issues central to ZANU PF's institutionalisation of power such as history, the liberation struggle and heroism are appropriated through discourse and used to curve space for entrenching the party's power. The chapter examines ways in which legacies of the liberation struggle are implicated in developmentalism. Developmentalism is conceived here as a set of ideologies that place economic development at the centre of ZANU PF's political endeavours to establish legitimacy and reinforce its capacity as the 'indispensable' agency in transforming the nation. The chapter thus examines how ZANU PF articulates continuities and discontinuities in the historical continuum leading to the crisis in ways which reflect the party's sense of relevance in efforts to combat the crisis. The interest in this chapter is on the aesthetics of ZANU PF's discourse and its affects.

Chapter Four entitled "Alternative democracy: Crisis discourse and the politics of opposition" analyses the Movement for Democratic Change-Tsvangirai's (MDC-T) 2013 election manifesto, *JUICE* with close reference to the MDC breakaway faction MDC-Ncube's 2013 manifesto *Devolution is the New Revolution!* The focus in this chapter is on the inherent politics of democracy and change discourse as a mechanism of contesting in order to gain power. The focus of this chapter is analysis of how the theory and discourse of democracy is operationalised in the opposition's framing of alternative forms of economic and social needs. Democracy incorporates multiple layers of meanings and practices and this chapter will explore how it is institutionalised in MDC's thought patterns and philosophies. This chapter also focuses on how the MDC narrative and stylistic designs are incorporated into its strategies of agenda setting, identity construction and discursive legitimation of opposition.

Chapter Five, "The (un)sustainability of gendered identities in Zimbabwe: Politics, language and gender in Joice Mujuru-related political texts", explores how, mediated through discourse, development agendas intersect with gender and other aspects of identity and social categorisation. *BUILD* and *IDEA* present a relevant case study for the analysis of political initiatives and feminist politics as conceptions of gender and political milieu are (re)defined, contested and negotiated by Joice Mujuru and her parties. The texts intertwine women's needs with the nation's socio-economic interests in ways that moralise gender-sensitive transformation and development. Despite constant expressions of commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment in government policies over the years, women have largely remained marginal players in Zimbabwean politics and policy making. Analysis of *BUILD* and *IDEA* give insight into how Zimbabwean politics and policies are gendered. Power is masculinised. In analysing the intertwining operations of gender, ideology and politics, this chapter looks at how gender politics is infused in opposition politics as a site for advocating for inclusivity. The chapter examines how, through discourse, development agendas and contest for power are subsumed into the gender struggle. It explores the discursive ways in which *BUILD* and *IDEA* engage marginalities (gender and otherwise) and, in particular, create the case for women's political involvement. The chapter gives insight into how gendered identities in post-2000 Zimbabwe are strategically activated to challenge social hierarchies sustained through gendered notions of power.

Chapter Six, "The 'New' Dispensation' and the 'Second' Republic: Discoursing transition in the post-Mugabe era" examines the politics of transition in policy discourses. The chapter interrogates ZANU PF's 2018 election manifesto, *The People's Manifesto*, focusing on how

the post-Mugabe era (in the party's diction) necessitates the renewal of both the party and its legacy as a liberation movement. The shifts in discourses of iconography fuelled by Mugabe's deposition constitutes a rich site for theorising instabilities in the (neo)nationalist project. Anecdotes of "Restoring Legacy" and a "New Dispensation" become conceptual metaphors that reconfigure the new world order, where the "revolutionary and democratic ZANU PF party continues to seek broad based development and economic emancipation of the people" (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 1). The impetus for transition reflects a particular diagnosis of the Zimbabwean crisis and the persistent challenges being attributed to ZANU PF policies and political practice. Resolution of these persistent problems require structural and long-term transformation. This chapter explores how the discursive construction of transition navigates ambiguities, paradoxes and contradictions attendant on ZANU PF's political philosophies and practice in relation to the unfolding economic crisis. Focus is placed on the rhetorical aspects of discourse and how they frame the 2017 coup as a virtuous occasion that signifies the party's inherent capacity for self-renewal. Attention to the recurring motifs and metaphors of newness, renewal, 'second republic' are analysed in the context of the urgency to disentangle ZANU PF from its own rule during the Mugabe era.

Chapter Seven entitled "Conclusion: Reality through a stained glass" concludes this thesis. It reflects on the study's main thesis, questions and hypotheses, making surmising arguments on how they have been treated in the thesis. The chapter deliberates on the implications for discourse/linguistic approaches to political texts and development. It delineates the study's contributions to knowledge and discusses its significance to the broader discipline and method of CDA. It ends with a discussion of the limitations of methodological approaches used, and makes recommendations on future research trajectories.

Conclusion

In summation, this study is concerned with contestations at the heart of representing the Zimbabwean crisis and development policy in the context of unprecedented political polarisation. The main focus is on how competing interests claim legitimacy through discourse. There is (to the best of my knowledge), no existing detailed study that examines Zimbabwe's post-2000 tumultuous socio-economic and political situation and policy texts from the point of view of literary analysis. The study therefore aims to refresh methods and epistemological sites of understanding the otherwise widely researched Zimbabwean crisis, economics and politics.

CHAPTER 2: THE DISCOURSE OF CRISIS AND THE CRISIS OF DISCOURSE: A HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL BACKGROUND

All things are subject to interpretation; whichever interpretation prevails at a given time is a function of power and not truth (Friedrich Nietzsche, 1844-1900).

Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to critically engage literature on the politics of discourse and sustainability in Zimbabwean political texts of the crisis period. Drawing on development discourses and how power is constituted and constitutes context-related interpretation and meaning, the chapter provides an overview of the state of knowledge on issues to be discussed in this thesis. The Zimbabwean era of crisis has birthed varying forms of hybrid texts, discourses and identities. The era has received much attention in many critical, historical and literary contexts. Consequently, this chapter seeks to highlight and critically engage with what has been written about discourse and power in post-2000 Zimbabwe as a way of establishing relevance for my critical, theoretical and methodological approaches. As highlighted in the first chapter, there seems to be consensus on the view that Zimbabwe has been experiencing socio-political and economic crisis for over a decade. The Zimbabwean situation has been subject to varying forms of interpretations as different scholars frame its many dimensions in divergent and politically-interested ways.

On one hand is "patriotic history" (Ranger, 2004: 144) – a state-sanctioned narrative of the nation intend on portraying the crisis as a product of Western machinations, while on the other hand lies what in state circles is perceived as neo-colonial, "mercenary" narratives of "puppetry" that are antithetical to the former. A large body of literature that provides substantive insights into the Zimbabwean socio-economic trajectory exists. It highlights different views of what constitutes the crises and how varying factors have shaped the decade of crisis. Scholars such as Sachikonye, (2012); Bond and Manyanya, (2003); Raftopoulos, Hammar and Jansen (*eds),* (2003); Kagoro (2008); Primorac and Chan (*eds*), (2007) have discoursed the Zimbabwean crisis in detail, problematising dominant state-circumscribed notions of the genesis of the crisis, its ideological concerns and physiognomies, tracing the trajectories of the crisis and reflecting on existing political and conceptual interventions. Within this broader critical context, this thesis explores how the socio-economic crisis has been exploited linguistically for hegemonic and counter-hegemonic purposes to appeal to people.

In light of major theoretical and methodological debates in sustainability and discourse studies, this chapter further interrogates how political identities are (re)formed and negotiated through textualised discourse in the context of crisis. The discussion takes cognisance of the fact that political texts such as manifestoes and political parties' policy blueprints are malleable narratives that can be read from political, cultural, sociological, historical as well as literary perspectives. I demonstrate how familiar methods of CDA and textual analysis focusing on the semantics and aesthetics of style (usually applied to the study of literary texts) can be used in analysing the discourse of political texts in ways that reveal their political significance and effectiveness. This study largely focuses on the linguistic and narrative construction of discourse in the selected political texts. This is informed in part by Riessman's (2005: 1) conception of political texts as essentially discursive narratives in which:

> […] nations and governments construct preferred narratives about history, so do social movements, organisations, scientists, other professionals, ethnic/racial groups, and individuals in stories of experience. What makes such diverse texts "narrative" is sequence and consequence: events are selected, organised, connected, and evaluated as meaningful for a particular audience. Storytellers interpret the world and experience in it; they sometimes create moral tales – how the world should be. Narratives represent storied ways of knowing and communicating (Riessman, 2005:1)

Riessman's view is that dominant narratives constructed by institutions and organisations aspire for 'truth' and believability. As she explains, narratives do not mirror history or the world, rather they refract it, as storytellers subjectively re-order realities shaping the nation and their identities. This illuminates how "imagination and strategic interests influence how storytellers choose to connect events and make them meaningful" (Riessman, 2005:6). Processes of political discourse formation in politically contested spaces involve deliberate and unintended omissions and commissions. This conditions the messages so that they perform the political tasks at hand. Thus, far from being self-contained factual texts, political texts such *as #Team Zanu PF, Zim Asset, JUICE, BUILD*, *IDEA* and *The People's Manifesto* are, in fact, storied. In this light, della Faille (2011: 215) notes how "analysis that examines dynamics of power through the study of speech, text and images has not broken through into mainstream debates and remains a marginal field of analysis in addressing the challenges bedevilling the Zimbabwean nation." In order to contextualise my focus, theory and method, I limit my literature review to the following issues:

- The paradox of representations of the Zimbabwean crisis and notions of sustainability.

- The role of language in policy framing in the Zimbabwean context.
- Theoretical issues of critical discourse analysis.
- Conceptions of agency and how it is mediated, performed and contested through discourse in particular contexts .
- Critical scholarship on the trajectories of the Zimbabwean socio-economic malaise.

I put forward the argument that in a period of increasing shifts in development paradigms and political polarisation, political texts become critical sites to encounter discursively re(shaped) and (re)framed political subjectivities that construct various aspects of the Zimbabwean crisis.

Tracing the trajectory

Engaging the interface of discourses and analysis of the network of power highlights the dynamics and paradoxes of transition trajectories in Zimbabwe. At the heart of political contestations in the crisis period are disputed ideologies, versions and conceptualisations of development, its roots and routes. As Murisa and Chikweche (2015) emphasise, for any prospects of transformation in Zimbabwe there is need to go beyond narrowly focused and politicised discussions on the nation's crisis of development. In *Beyond the Crisis: Zimbabwe's Prospects of Transformation,* Murisa and Chikweche (2015: xv) posit that narratives defining the Zimbabwean present are polarised for many (especially political) reasons. Considering the polarities and uncertainties that characterise the crisis discourse, Ndlovu - Gatsheni strongly feels that, "what is at stake and in crisis is the idea of progress itself" (2013:240). This is closely related to the crisis of representing the crisis, especially in the context of legislated and violently enforced 'nationalist' ways of seeing and making sense of the Zimbabwe situation. It is in this light that l seek to examine the 'semiotic economies'[4] in Zimbabwe, "where language, text and discourse become the principal modes of social relations, civic and political life, economic behaviour and activity" (Luke, 2002:97). My point of departure is that political texts are complex sites of discourses that reflect fundamental historical processes and their relationship with reality. In policy texts such as those under study in this thesis, language is used to represent the world with the ultimate goal to dominate that world, how it is encountered and known.

[4] Words have no subsistent meaning; they have multiple referents depending on one's interests. The flexibility of some words makes it more convenient in addressing conundrum like the interplay of sustainability. Omissions and intended slips also constitute the basis for interpretive inference.

Zimbabwe's Lost Decade (Sachikonye, 2012) and *Zimbabwe's Development Experiences since 1980: Challenges and Prospects for the Future* (eds. Maphosa, Kujinga and Chingarande, 2007) are some of the texts preoccupied with the nation's development trajectory. They engage the pervasive contradictions, inconsistencies and constraints that have led to the crisis. These texts give an evaluative overview of the Zimbabwean crisis and pay special attention to the interplay between politics and socio-economic development policies in Zimbabwe. Sachikonye (2012) argues that independence provided opportunities for notable progress but in later decades, such progress was unsustainable. Whilst *Zimbabwe's Lost Decade* focuses specifically on the characteristics of the crisis, *Zimbabwe's Development Experiences since 1980: Challenges and Prospects for the Future* traces Zimbabwe's post-independence development shortcomings from 1980 to the post 2000 period. In a chapter that focuses on paradigm shifts in policy, Masunungure and Chimanikire describe this period as characterised by "non-systematic variability" and presents "an anarchic pattern of formlessness and unpredictability" (2011:9). Dominant in the analyses, are the development policies and ideological ruptures which have contributed to the crisis in the country. These texts both appreciate the strides made during the early decades after independence and are optimistic that the crafting and implementation of relevant, inclusive policies can foster development without which the policies will be mere rhetoric and will remain irrelevant. Using such texts as contextual background information, this study focuses on the linguistic constructions and reconfigurations of the crisis in the context of the post-2000 hegemonic and counter-hegemonic politics.

Though some scholars have studied discourse in specific domains in the context of the Zimbabwean crisis, discourse-focused analysis of political texts remains a mostly unexplored territory. Tendi (2010) examines how 'patriotic history' (Ranger 2004) has been strategically deployed to cement the ruling party's legitimacy in the face of the crisis. His monograph focuses mainly on the perversion of nationalism for Mugabe's (ZANU PF) consolidation of power. He reveals how patriotic history is centred on themes of land, race, rejection of Western interference and binaries between ostensible 'sell-outs' and 'patriots.' Tendi's point of departure is how history has been the raw material and appropriated in the context of the ongoing contentions whilst my point of departure is how development discourse is the resource for the dominant actions and processes. Jakaza's (2016) doctoral thesis based on the appraisal and evaluation of discourse, focuses specifically on Zimbabwean parliamentary discourse on the crisis and how it is represented in newspapers. As he explains, "with the increasing

paradigm shifts and political polarisations, it has become increasingly important to examine the language and discourse that express the political agendas, the argumentation strategies, the deeper motivations and the ultimate goals of actors on the political stage in general" (Jakaza, 2012:1). My research extends Jakaza's findings by shifting focus to new sites of discourse, that is, political texts, and how 'textualised' discourse constructs policy in ways that promote and/or contest representations of the Zimbabwean crisis.

Generally, studies have tended to overlook the discursive and artistic dimensions of political texts and how they enable the texts' function as complex instruments of communication, repositories of elastic ideas, paradoxes and intriguing political creativity. This study explores the discursive potentialities of political texts, arguing that they are charged, sensualised, and invested with metaphoric effects that relate to the politics of development in a crisis situation. These texts, like works of art, are inherently aesthetic and reflect the historical processes underpinning their production. Manifestos are aestheticised political texts that invest in the effects, affects and efficacy of language. Mostly scholars such as Hammar and Raftopoulos (2003); Muponde and Primorac (2005); Crush and Tevera (2010); Chiumbu, and Muchaparara (2012) and many others focus on the physical configurations that is, the synopsis of the Zimbabwean situation and façades that make up 'reality' in various contexts. To extend on scholars such as Tendi (2010) and Ranger (2004) who focus on historical trajectories of the Zimbabwean crisis, the study examines how the world of meanings in political texts is conventionalised and how meaning conventionalises the world; as language constitutes the world and the world also constitutes language. As Mbembe (2001:103) explains, "[t]he signs, vocabulary and narratives … produce[d] are not merely meant to be symbols but are officially invested with a surplus of meanings that are not negotiable and that people are officially forbidden to depart from or challenge". Mbembe expands that, to ensure that no challenges take place; owners of state power "invent entire constellations of ideas and adopt a distinct set of cultural repertoires and powerfully evocative forms" (2001:103). Deconstructing how meanings are ordered through discourse, "types of institutions, the knowledges, norms and practices structuring the common sense" illuminates the "nature of domination and subordination" (Mbembe, 2001:193) – a key dimension to the discourse on power and development in post-colonial Zimbabwe.

To appreciate the function of discourse in contested conceptions of sustainable development, we have to understand the malleable nature of sustainability as a concept that is "much more than just a socio-economic endeavour" but "a perception which models reality, a myth which

comforts societies, and a fantasy which unleashes passions" (Sachs, 1996:1). As Cornwall asserts, "words make worlds. The language of development defines worlds-in-the-making, animating and justifying intervention in currently existing worlds with fulsome promises of the possible" (Cornwall, 2010: 471). Because "the formation of policy seldom draws on the full range of relevant knowledge, or utilise critical resources and overall social capabilities," (Choucri, 2004:3) it is critical to analyse the discursive processes of agenda setting and the relationship between textualised discourse and political agency.

Unlike available studies that mainly focus on events, ideologies and processes informing the complexity of sustainability, especially amidst an economic crisis, this research focuses on the rhetorical deployment of the notion of sustainability in selected official political texts in the post-2000 Zimbabwean context. The focus is on how meanings are (re)produced, ordered, institutionalised and effected in political institutions to create and sustain political legitimacy and agency. I explore the dialectical relationship between texts and how they conjure up and facilitate the political agency of their authors vis-à-vis discourses about sustainable routes out of the national crisis. The study therefore interrogates the linguistic potential of texts as strategic mechanisms for political agenda-setting. The analysis of texts in relation to their social context prompts my foregrounding of Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) conceptions of the nature and method of political discourse. According to Fairclough and Fairclough:

> […] primarily argumentative discourse involves practical reasoning or practical argumentation and argumentative genres (deliberation) and activity types; to integrate analysis of theoretical (epistemic) reasoning and non-argumentative pre-genres (narrative description, explanation) within an approach that gives primacy to practical argumentation (2012:1).

Fairclough and Fairclough (2012:1) further assert that "politics is fundamentally about making choices about how to act in response to circumstances and goals, it is about choosing policies, and such choices and the action which follow from them are based upon practical argumentation." Looking at the political and ideological 'schizophrenias' at the heart of ways of representing and seeing the problematic development agenda in Zimbabwe, it is important to find out how discourse enables and disables, encourages and discourages certain modes of thinking the nation. Gaps in representations of the socio-economic issues and current social realities reflect "conscious attempts to shape and control language to meet institutional and organisational objectives" (Fairclough, 2001:231). In a country facing so many challenges,

political communication becomes critical in attempts and counter-attempts to convince the suffering people that one's conception of the crisis and ways of negotiating it are sustainable.

Scholars such as Hammar, Raftopoulos and Jensen (2003); Muponde and Primorac (2005); Bond and Manyanya (2003); Chiumbu, and Muchaparara (2012); Alexander and McGregor (2013) and Tendi (2010) generally confirm the view that "space for public expression and debate concerning these aspects of the crisis has been increasingly constricted as the ruling elite sought to project self-legitimating representations…" (Nyambi, 2013: 4). In his study of 'alternative' literary representations of the crisis period in Zimbabwe, Nyambi (2013:3) asserts that, "[t]here are two dominant and predictably antagonistic narratives of the origins, causes and nature of the post-2000 Zimbabwean crisis" and "these can be easily located in the unprecedented polarisation of political discourse that characterizes the period". In the study Nyambi sums that the "political polarisation of perspectives on the post-2000 crisis in Zimbabwe is readily discernible as replicated in cultural representations and interpretations of the land question" (2013:6). My research departs from the realm of fictional representation to focus on how political campaign texts foreground language to package the unravelling crisis in ways that construct certain politically-viable identities, beliefs and knowledge. As Nye (2004: 6) explains, the power of language lies in its ability to persuade:

> When you can get others to admire your ideals and to want what you want, you do not have to spend as much on sticks and carrots to move them in your direction. Seduction is always more effective than coercion, and many values like democracy, human rights, and individual opportunities are deeply seductive … Soft power is a staple of daily democratic politics. The ability to establish preferences tends to be associated with intangible assets such as an attractive personality, culture, political values and institutions, and policies that are seen as legitimate or having moral authority. If a leader represents values that others want to follow, it will cost less to lead.

It is one thing to have progressive values and quite another to translate them into objects of attraction for purposes of gaining support. The key part in Nye's argument above is therefore the question of how "the leader represents values" in ways that make it "cost less to lead". Of interest in my analysis, then, is how language is 'rhetorised' so that it becomes a mechanism of "soft power" in the urgent process of interpreting the crisis and charting development trajectories out of it. Fairclough and Fairclough note how crisis situations 'necessitate' certain forms of discursive representation:

> Crises create a space for competing strategic interventions to significantly redirect the course of events as well as for attempts to "muddle through"

> and which strategies prevail partly depends upon discursive struggles between different narratives of the nature, causes and significance of the crisis and how it might be resolved including economic and political imaginaries for possible future states of affairs and system (2012:3).

Generated meanings and explanations of the crisis govern the logics, processes and relations that underlie all the means to development, legitimacy and power. Thus, as Zizek (2009) clarifies, "the outcome of a crisis depends on how the crisis is symbolised, which ideological interpretation or story or narrative imposes itself and determines the general perception of the self".

Discourse and Power in Zimbabwe

As hinted above, studies on the Zimbabwean crisis have tended to overlook the mastery, effectiveness and affectiveness of language as a powerful and power tool. In *Zimbabwe's Lost Decade* Sachikonye (2012) notes the shift of discourse in issues to do with 'Democracy, Constitutionalism and Participation', especially in relation to development. However, the book limits its discussion on the Zimbabwean crisis to a discourse on democracy in relation to conditions informing the fairness or lack thereof of electoral processes. Departing from this approach, this study looks at the messages and language in selected political campaign texts which emphasise on development agendas. From the point of view of discourse analysis, development can be defined "as a field of political, social and cultural struggles between worldviews and ethical ideals where inequality and differences are organized into problems, solutions are debated, policies designed and programs dispensed" (della Faille, 2011: 218). Political texts (political manifestos and policy blueprints) provide fascinating insights into the power of language; that is, how language performs power. As Fairclough and Fairclough explain, "a proper understanding of the argumentative nature of political reasoning explains how agency and structures are connected: *structures provide agents with reasons for action*" (2012:12, italics in original). Fairclough and Fairclough clarify that power itself provides reasons and can be understood in relation to how it is engaged in agents' reasoning processes. In their arguments, agents draw on their distinctive discourses and their selections are linked to the group's special interests and goals. This prompts the CDA, an approach which systematically analyses issues on domination, manipulation and ideologies.

As highlighted in the foreword of *The Chomsky-Foucault Debate* (2006: xiv), analyses of discourse, which is "more than making information publicly available… is an attempt to interrupt and "problematize" things taken for granted in our habits of thinking". Ball (1994: 15) notes that, "when the meaning of policy is taken for granted ... theoretical and epistemological dry rot is built into the analytical structures they construct". In line with this, Fairclough and Fairclough (2012: 13) highlight that confusions in political debates rest on failure to understand and distinguish between "the actualities of political discourse and normative models of what political discourse should be like, between descriptive and normative levels of analysis". Also mistaken are conceptions of human rationality, in which people's reasoning (arguments) play a part. Power and structural factors can limit capacities for human agency and progress. Hence recognition and analysis of the relations between discourse, power, political institutions and practices effectively contribute to an understanding of political dimensions to the Zimbabwean crisis. This section will highlight how within discourses, relations of power are actually exercised, inculcated and enacted through the discourse of sustainability.

Discourse (and discourse analysis) is a vast field; it is an institutionalised discipline with varying paradigms and diverse theoretical orientations.[5] Some of the most distinct orientations are van Dijk's (2001) socio-cognitive analysis that highlights that the relationship between discourse and society are cognitively mediated and emphasises that texts can only make sense and be interpreted through shared socio-cultural knowledge. Wodak's Discourse Historical Analysis (DHA) is, "distinctive both at the level of research interest and theoretical and methodical orientation (where it displays an interest in identity construction and in unjustified discrimination and a focus on the historical dimensions of discourse formation)" (Wodak, 2015: 276). According to Fairclough (2010) social practice does not only reflect reality; it can change reality. Similarly, Breeze (2013) explains that, CDA is a conscious movement with an explicit agenda, thus in all its variations it purports to be 'critical'. At political levels, and in the words of Fairclough (1989: 2), CDA seeks "to explain existing conventions as the outcome of power relations and power struggle". The neutral definition submits that the role of CDA is "to answer questions about the relationships between language and society" (Rogers et al, 2005: 365), depending on the stance of the individual researcher. In all its generality, CDA is

[5] CDA has many frameworks with Fairclough considered having contributed significantly in the field. Other frameworks include Hodge and Kress (1993); Van Leeuwen (1996); Van Dijk (1997); Wodak and Meyer (2001).

concerned with the configurations of ideology and power in society, and a specific interest in how language contributes to and perpetuates social networks. All definitions and approaches emphasise how power (political struggle, inequality, dominance) is expressed, signalled, constituted, legitimised by language (text, discourse) (Wodak and Meyer, 2001:2). It analyses knowledge systems of power in the sense that knowledge economies help deflect attention away from ideas which could lead to power relations being questioned and challenged. CDA aims to unmask ideologies and power structures, making it apparent that there are alternative causes and remedies for socio-economic problems.

Although this thesis uses CDA in an inclusive sense, pitching varying exponents of discourse and discourse analysis (DA), it mainly draws from Fairclough's school of CDA. Fairclough's CDA provides a distinctive theoretical and methodological basis for engagement with the linguistic dimensions of social change and organisational discourses. His theorisations of discourse are mainly drawn from Foucault's critical realist notions of power-knowledge relations and their significance in control and resistance of power. Fairclough credits Foucault with the "constitutive view of discourse which involves seeing discourse as actively constituting or constructing society on various dimensions" (Fairclough, 1992: 39- 40), "the discursive nature of power" and "the political nature of discourse" (Fairclough, 1992: 55-6). Fairclough extends on Foucault's conceptualisation of discourse and power by clarifying how discursive agency interacts with underlying social structures.

This study is largely premised on Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) conceptions of (and approaches to analysing) political discourse. Their argument that analysis of political discourse should be centred on practical argumentation informs this research. This means that texts have to be analysed primarily in relation to action and context, and not focusing on texts as isolated entities. Fairclough and Fairclough's conception of the relationship between deliberation, decision and action forms the backbone of my research. According to them:

> Crises have an objective or systemic aspect …, but they also have a necessary and indeed crucial subjective aspect, which is agentive and strategic. In a crisis, people have to make decisions about how to act in response and to develop strategies for pursuing particular courses of action or policies which will hopefully restore balance and rationality... Agents' choices, decisions and strategies are political in nature, they are contested by groups of people with different interests and objectives, who are competing to make their own particular choices, policies and strategies prevail (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012:3).

This conception of the nature and function of discourse in crisis situations frames my reading of constructions of the Zimbabwean crisis by ZANU PF, MDCs[6], ZimPF, NPP and PRC[7]. Informed by Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) argument that crises trigger discursive uses of language in pursuit of turf to claim agency to deal with it, my analysis focuses on the discourse of the powerful (the ruling ZANU PF party) in relation to the counter-discourse of opposition parties especially the MDC, Zim PF, NPP and PRC. Focus will be placed inter alia on how the parties' framing of their political identities informs their conceptions and accounts of the socio-political and economic meltdown. Adjunct to this, my analysis of texts and narratives of the nation in crisis in official party publications seeks to establish the influence of certain practices of agency (in the case of the ruling party) and aspired agency (in the case of opposition parties) in ways of seeing, thinking and talking about undesirability of the 'reality' and desirability of their interventions.

Political parties have one goal; they attempt to influence attitude and actions, opinions and decisions through the production of persuasive public discourse – this, broadly speaking, is rhetoric. In this light, the study examines the rhetoricity of policy documents relative to the Zimbabwean crisis with the aim of understanding the discursive ways in which the nature of the crisis and possible solutions are described and negotiated for political purposes. This speaks to Fairclough's (1989: 47) assertion that "[p]ower in discourse is to do with powerful participants controlling and constraining the contributions of non-powerful participants". Fairclough's assertion resonates with Bourdieu's view that, "all linguistic practices are measured against legitimate practices, that is, the practices of those who are dominant" (Bourdieu, 1991:52).

Connected to Fairclough's notions of the politics of discourse is della Faille's (2011) inference that discourse should be understood as involving particular ways of organising meaning-making practices. Discourse analysis studies the "circulation and the imposition of values through organised, socially constructed and maintained systems of domination" (Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999:6). It is concerned with instabilities attending concepts of knowledge, truth and power. A similar conception is given by Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999:6) who

[6] I will focus on the MDC-T led by Tsvangirai, which was later led by Chamisa under the banner of MDC-Alliance (MDC-A).

[7]After Joice Mujuru was ousted from ZANU PF following allegations of plotting to topple Mugabe she and her other expelled allies formed Zimbabwe People First (ZimPF). They split over internal disagreements and Mujuru formed another party called National People's Party (NPP). She was later elected president of an alliance of smaller parties known as People's Rainbow Coalition (PRC).

view discourse as, "a form of power, a mode of formation of beliefs/values/desires, an institution, a mode of social relating, a material practice."

In examining the linguistic construction of discourse in political texts, this study is essentially analysing the grammars of policy. As Gale (1999) notes, policy is the sum total of both text and action. Texts in this sense are fundamentally both modes and sites of action. This means that the analysis of my focal texts has to go beyond the semantics of written words to focus on how the rhetoricity of texts reflects agentive aspirations to frame the Zimbabwean developmental agenda in certain political ways. The term 'text' is used loosely to denote and connote (following Gale, 1999:394) "speeches (concrete utterances), written documents, non-verbal forms of communication accomplished through body movements and expressions (action), and visual means of representation such as images". A similar conceptualisation by Gale (1999: 396) that links texts to agency and the politics of power cites that a policy text:

> …delimits an array of possible practices under its authority and organises the articulation of these practices within time and space although in different ways and often unequally for different people... [It] delimits fields of relevance, allocates legitimate perspectives and fixes standards for concept elaboration and expression of experiences.

This quotation implies that meaning-making does not happen in isolation, but in a social, economic and political context that forms complexes that are organised contingently through time and space (Gale, 1999). In this vein, Ball (1994:19) views policy texts as both products and tools of meaning production "where the translation of the crude, abstract simplicities of policy texts into interactive and sustainable practices of some sort involves productive thought, invention and adaptation". This means that in policy texts, meanings are produced, inculcated, enacted in relation to ideas within specific temporal situations.

Fairclough (1992:2) argues that the "exercise of power, in modern society, is increasingly achieved through ideology, and more particularly through the ideological workings of language". This is much akin to what Orwell says in 'Politics and the English Language' where he contends that words, and "in our time, political speech and writing, are largely the defence of the indefensible" (Orwell, 1968:136). These conceptions of the interface between language, reality and power suggests the necessity of going beyond media headlines in order to have a fuller insight into political conceptions of the crisis in Zimbabwe. Fairclough (1993) views this growing importance of language as part of a widening of the promotional or consumer culture (feeding into) the marketisation and commodification of discourse as a vehicle for selling organisations, ideas and people. This is evident in contemporary Zimbabwean political culture

where the orders of discourse are quite radical and there is widespread instrumentalisation of discursive practices whereby events, actions, ideas, individuals and personalities are given "modes of signification" (Lash, 1990). Evident in political manifestoes such as *BUILD, IDEA, Zim Asset* and *JUICE* is what Savola (2006) has described (in another context) as "[t]he pervasiveness of promotional language and market inspired vocabulary into the sphere of manifesto writing". One can already see in the acronyms above, metaphorised words that are in fact symbols that point to a specific social, political and economic agenda. In such symbolically modelled metaphorical acronyms, modes of representation and reference that may reflect particular realities are highlighted. These are discursive and subject to interpretation as they are social constructions. The symbolic signification of manifesto acronyms such as the ones mentioned above therefore draw from reality and connects the manifestoes with what is teleological vis-à-vis the necessary socio-economic and political interventions to the national crisis. Such strategies of linguistic self-presentation, then, are in fact strategies of self-conception that seek to create consensus, acceptance and the legitimacy of the speaking political party.

Generally, analyses and discussions in this study are premised on how political language foregrounds certain symbols and images to influence ways of seeing and talking about sustainable socio-economic development in the context of crisis. The persuasive function of discourse is emphasised, for as Foucault (1980: 100-1) argues:

> Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it, any more than silences are. We must make allowance for the concepts' complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it.

Discourse is thus viewed in this study as "a relational force that permeates every social process and connects all social modes of speaking and creating social meanings" Foucault (1980: 100-1). Within the ambit of discourse, relations of power are constituted, exercised and sanctioned in contestations for the right to influence the meanings of transformation. For Fairclough, discourse's relationship with change go beyond its usability as a mechanism of change:

> [T]o give accounts – and more precise accounts than one tends to find in social research on change - of the ways in which and extent to which social changes are changes in discourse, and the relations between changes in discourse and changes in other, non-discoursal, elements or 'moments' of

> social life (including therefore the question of the senses and ways in which discourse '(re)constructs' social life in processes of social change) (2001:1).

This means that any form of change that Zimbabweans must envisage, should start with change in discourse. Discourse can mask realities that need to be addressed thus its analysis can be a tool to explore the gaps between rhetorical representations of socio-economic issues and contemporary social realities in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean crisis can be summed up as a problem of what Pepetela calls "schematism in politics" (1980:49). For Pepetela, politics is like a religion where things and ideas become sacred and fetishised to entrench certain political identities. CDA enquiries offer ways of reflecting on some of the most disingenuous and duplicitous constructions of the Zimbabwean crisis. For example, in attempts to cushion its sites of political legitimacy, ZANU PF resorts to the appropriation of history and nationalistic discourses to exclude supposedly non-revolutionary parties and individuals from power. Nyambi (2013: 6) expounds that "the official narrative of the nation is characterised by discernible politically-motivated exclusions, deletions and censorship of other narratives," what Tendi (2010) refers to as 'rewriting of history.' In this light, it is critical to explore the discursive construction of meaning through language to find out how political players use certain rhetorical strategies to project their subjective opinions as the reality.

Language is a critical medium through which constructed meanings of everyday life are naturalised as truth. Perhaps the best conception of words (in light of my CDA focus) was made by hooks when she says:

> Like desire, language disrupts, [and] refuses to be contained within boundaries. It speaks itself against our will, in words and thoughts that intrude, even violate the most private spaces of mind and body […]. Words impose themselves, like root in our memory against our will" (hooks, 1994:167-175)

Words are thus essentially 'bewitching' – they can influence not only what we see, but what we think about that which we see. Pepetela, (1980:138) illuminates the power of words through the character, Fearless in *Mayombe* when he says that, "people believe in words as gods." Exploring and assessing rhetoric in relation to the socio-political realities is tantamount to a revolution audit as it highlights the processes of socio-economic transformation or lack thereof (Melber, 2003). This resonates with the contention in this study that "recognition of the relationship between power, discourse, political institutions and practices" (Abrahamsen 2003:200) has much to contribute to a critical comprehension of the Zimbabwean crisis and its politics. Thus, words go a long way in shaping worldviews, at times at subconscious and

unconscious levels, thereby entrenching and affirming ideologies that may not go along with sustainable development.

Discourse and ideology in post-2000 Zimbabwe

Post-2000 Zimbabwe manifests a unique return of the Chimurenga (liberation struggle) nationalism that foregrounds radical decolonisation as an empowering policy and discourse. It is no wonder, then that ZANU PF named its post-2000 struggle for land, The Third Chimurenga – a teleological nomenclature deliberately meant to connect the intentions and concerns of the post-2000 struggle to those of the First Chimurenga (1896- 97) and Second Chimurenga (1966-79). The function of language in not only ideologising the Third Chimurenga but justifying what can easily be inferred in such feisty slogans as "Zimbabwe will never be a colony again",[8] which targeted Zimbabweans' memories of colonial injustices. In resuscitating the language and grammar of the liberation struggle, ZANU PF manufactured a necessity to trust its ideology and its contemporary political struggles in the post-2000 context.

As in most politically contested societies, discourse in post-2000 Zimbabwe is entangled with both ideology and power. The relationship between discourse and ideology is important because it opens us to the deeper intentions behind certain (especially linguistic) ways of legitimating as well as resisting systems of domination. Through ideological inculcation, people can be led, consciously or sub/un/consciously, to feel that they are participating in a group effort necessary to sustain their group identity as liberated people. Such people are led to feel that they too have the agency to "own' discourses, to position themselves inside them, to act and think and talk and see themselves in terms of discourses" (Fairclough, 2003:208). In the dialectics of discourse, what begins as "self-conscious rhetorical deployment becomes "ownership," – people become unconsciously positioned within a discourse (Fairclough, 2003: 208). This is akin to what the former ZANU PF 'spin doctor' Jonathan Moyo ironically referred to as the "*chinhu chedu*"[9] (our thing) syndrome – a sense of entitlement that makes ZANU PF believe that the people are destined to identify with the party's conception of the unfolding

[8] This was regularly invoked in Mugabe's speeches which stressed that the country's sovereignty was under threat from Western forces. It was alleged that they were the force behind the rising oppositional party, MDC.
[9] Jonathan Moyo presenting on the topic, 'Whither the Nationalist Project in Zimbabwe?' In his discussion he focused on successionist forces within ZANU PF which is basically Team Lacoste vs G40 (a group to which Jonathan Moyo is pinpointed as one of the chief architects). He attacked Team Lacoste, accused them of harbouring interests to succeed the President, Robert Mugabe. The group allegedly backed Mnangagwa as the successor. So Moyo was explaining that Lacoste was not legitimate as they were trying to subvert democracy (means of getting into power) by harbouring an ambition for Presidency. He emphasised the contenders were trying to personalise power making it "chinhu chedu" because they had fought the liberation struggle.

crisis and its notions of sustainable solutions. Thus, for Thram (2006: 75), ZANU PF has focused its campaign on appropriating national history and culture "in its relentless effort to convince the citizenry that the on-going crisis in Zimbabwe is a continuation of the liberation struggle", over which ZANU-PF alone is qualified to preside.

Key to understanding the workings of ZANU PF's ideological premise and method of its post-2000 political campaign is language, particularly 'language in (political) action' – discourse. CDA can help us to understand the politics of (un)making knowledge and truth, considering that these concepts are essentially discursive constructs. The link between knowledge and power is encapsulated in Foucault's phrase "regimes of truth". Foucault explains that:

> Truth isn't outside power … Truth is a thing of this world; it is produced only by multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth; that is the types of discourse it accepts and makes function as true, the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned … the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (1980: 131).

This notion of power suggests the importance of critically examining the discursive framing, through discourse, of what is known about the post-2000 Zimbabwean crisis. In Savola's (2006:14) words "to have power is to have the ability to control and modify discourse and thus our knowledge and this, without a doubt, is the greatest power that exists". In the same vein, Foucault (1977: 27) further argues that "there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time, power relations". This view of knowledge as a product of power reminds us of Nietzsche's timeless dictum that "all things are subject to interpretation; whichever interpretation prevails at a given time is a function of power and not truth."

In this thesis, it is not my place to provide answers to the question of what needs to be done in response to Zimbabwe's challenges. Rather, the study is an attempt to reframe the nature of interrogations of "modes of political engagement that inhabit our current political field of possibilities" (Zizek, 2009). In accord with Zizek:

> […] in a radical revolution, people not only 'realize their old (emancipatory, etc.) dreams; rather they have to reinvent their very modes of dreaming'. Here revolution cannot simply be situated at the level of the material, of shifts in conditions of production, but must also be situated at the level of the cultural or symbolic. Without these shifts in the symbolic,

> we remain tied to particular conditions of production and power, simply reproducing them in another form (2009:24).

In this light, my view of language conceptualises it as fundamentally symbolic, especially when used by individuals and institutions opposing and competing ends of power. That is, language is essentially self-reflexive – it refracts and reflects the political underpinnings behind its usage and the overt and hidden identities of the user.

Metaphors of sustainability

As hinted in Chapter 1, sustainability in this study is understood in the context of the Zimbabwean crisis as a concept that constitutes a mode and means of rescuing a nation in crisis. Development in this context encompasses "a spectrum of related aspects of a society including the social, political, cultural and economic dimensions" (Maphosa, 2007:1). One has to understand that the notion of sustainability is not only about socio-economic transformation but also a redefinition of Zimbabwean reality relative to the differing stakeholders' political designs to ascertain political ascendancy . Sachs (1996:8) notes that:

> Development occupies the centre of an incredibly powerful semantic constellation. There is nothing in modern mentality comparable to it as a force guiding thought and behaviour. At the same time, very few words are as feeble, as fragile and as incapable of giving substance and meaning to thought and behaviour.

In the face of the ongoing socio-economic crisis, political leaders have adopted and institutionalised the terms "sustainable development", "sustainability" and "sustainable" as pervasive and unifying 'metaphors' indicating their intentions (and methods) of tackling the unfolding crisis. The context abets the reinforcement of certain narratives, ideologies, personalities, actions and relationships through language. In a crisis situation, sustainability easily became a buzz-word and campaign theme for virtually all political parties because, among other things, as Tregidga, Milne and Kearins (2013: 105) note in another context, "[k]nowledge claims produced by organisations about sustainable development are embedded within relations of power and have performative effects". They further view the constitution of sustainability to be a result of a political process where "not only is knowledge produced but alternative knowledges are marginalised or subjugated" (Tregidga et al, 2013).

It is imperative from the outset to highlight the paradoxes of discursive constructions of sustainable economic recovery in Zimbabwe and acknowledge the diverse, ambiguous and at times contentious nature of this term in conceptual terms as well as in its deployment in political

discourses. In its complexity, the concept highlights the kind of conversations, ideas, processes, programs and/ products that easily become urgent in a crisis situation such as the Zimbabwean post-2000 era. From the point of view of discourse analysis, there are considerable, overgeneralisations, "ambiguities and interconnections among various facets of human activities, about the constituent elements of sustainability, and about the proverbial matter of 'inter-linkages" (Choucri, 2007:13). Scholars such as Jacobs (1999), claim that it is the complex and normative nature of the concept which leads to contestation and political struggle. For Jacobs (1999: 25), contest occurs in relation to politically interested notions and ideas of what sustainable development actually 'means'. He argues that the contestation inherent in sustainability discourses:

> …shouldn't be perceived as a remediable lack of precision over what sustainable development 'means': rather, such contestation also *constitutes* the political struggle over the direction of social and economic development. That is, disagreements over the 'meaning of sustainable development' are not semantic disputations but *are* the substantive political arguments with which the term is concerned (Jacobs, 1999:26, emphasis in original).

As hinted above, the pervasive presence of economic sustainability in political discourses of the post-2000 period in Zimbabwe is to be expected. This is because, among other things, the term and the concepts it define are often read on the 'simple' plane as refracting the urgency in the necessity to "rejuvenate a common dream of nearly all humanity: to satisfy basic material and spiritual needs, to progress, to have security, and even to acquire power" (Frazier, 1997:188). Crush (1995) points out this interventionist cum messianic conception of sustainability (in a crisis setting) in his notion of 'escapism'. For Crush (1995), sustainability suggests a disjuncture from a time of suffering and offers a vista to refuge for the victims of crisis situations. He says: "the metaphorical power of sustainability in contemporary development, however, lies in its promise of 'escape from the environmentally destructive record' of past practice" (Crush, 1995:15). He views sustainability as akin to a political metaphor that "establishes authority and provides a device for making sense, creating order and certainty" (Crush, 1995:15). Sustainability in this sense is framed as equating concepts of perpetual economic 'safety'.

Metaphors easily become part of political words, discourses and grammars for one main reason – politics is concerned with strategies of guided perception. Metaphors are thus critical as methods of (and media for) guiding perception. This is mainly because metaphors are essentially concerned with connecting concepts in ways that vividly image desired concepts.

For example, in ZANU PF's revived nationalist discourse, the party frames a return to liberation struggle ethic as the single most important fundamental to end the suffering of the people. On the other hand, the opposition framed the same (ZANU PF's) liberation ideology, particularly focusing on its catastrophic economic implications, as the source and therefore part of the crisis. In this view, the ZANU PF-constructed conceptual metaphor SUSTAINABILITY = LIBERATION WAR ETHIC and the opposition's LIBERATION WAR ETHIC = CRISIS reproduces slippery and antagonistic ideologies that indicate equally contentious courses of actions. In this sense and as Edelman (1971: 68) has hinted in another context:

> Metaphor, therefore, defines the pattern of perception to which people respond […] Each metaphor intensifies selected perceptions and ignores others, thereby helping one to concentrate on desired consequences of favoured public policies and helping one to ignore their unwanted, unthinkable, or irrelevant premises and aftermaths. Each metaphor can be a subtle way of highlighting what one wants to believe and avoiding what one does not wish to face.

Tacitly, "metaphors constitute the starting point of 'what is' and simultaneously convey a normative sense of 'what ought to be done" (Fairclough 1992:194). Larkoff and Johnson (2003) understand the metaphor as a "means of structuring conceptual systems and the kinds of everyday activities that are performed." Metaphors are a critical political tool and method especially in situations where believability depends on the extent to which the message is vividly conveyed. Metaphors give meaning, through concepts, to certain aspects of reality. Thus, in the words of Larkoff and Johnson (2003: 145-6), "it is reasonable enough to assume that words alone do not change reality, but changes in our conceptual system do change what is real for us and affect how we perceive the world and act upon those perceptions." When ZANU PF, for instance, metaphorically conceptualises the economy as land and vice versa, in the party's 2000 slogan "The land is the economy, the economy is the land", it is essentially framing its solution in a way that suggests the party's indispensability to the nation's political future and identity. Read in the context of both an impending election and the ongoing Third Chimurenga land invasions, the metaphors LAND=ECONOMY and ECONOMY=LAND indicate ZANU PF's projection of land reform and the liberation ideology it presupposes as inherently imperative to the 'solution'. As Larkoff and Johnson (2003:158) note, "[i]n most cases, what is at issue is not the truth or falsity of a metaphor but the perceptions and inferences that follow from it and the actions that are sanctioned by it." What matters is not just the choice of terms, or even the choice of what is important in relation to context. As part of a hegemonic

method, the metaphor is critical in the process of ascribing political identities to concepts that dominate the public sphere as imperative to discussions around solutions to the ongoing crisis. In the above-mentioned metaphors, land as a conceptual domain synchronises with Third Chimurenga discourse, not only sanitising its violent and haphazard manner but also connecting it to 'the solution'.

Policy framing: The politics of representation

Questions abound as to why in the middle of a gripping crisis, Zimbabweans (barring the effects of intimidation) trusted ZANU PF to lead them out of a crisis that the party, in many ways, caused. There are many responses to this question which coalesce around Larkoff's (2009:12) vehement explanation, in another context, that "It's the framing, stupid!" In his analysis of political debates, Lakoff argues that "[i]n politics, our frames shape our social policies and the institutions we form to carry our policies. To change our frames is to change all of this. Reframing is social change" (Lakoff 2009: xv). The importance of framing, especially in political contests can be inferred from its psychological dimensions as reflected in Larkoff's definition below:

> Frames are mental structures that shape the way we see the world. As a result, they shape the goals we seek, the plans we make, the way we act, and what counts as a good or bad outcome of our actions. In politics our frames shape our social policies and the institutions we form to carry out policies (2009: xv).

This conception of frames indicates their usability as methods of facilitating – not only processes of political self-designing and identification, but also subverting favourable designs and identifications of the rival other. Framing is therefore largely self-reflexive. This is because in analysing what is said, we can infer why it is said and this inference can lead us to overt and covert, conscious and unconscious identities and intentions of the speaker. In politics, then, framing cannot be reliant on instrumental rationality because the logic of identifying both the self and the rival other is politically framed; that is, it is informed by an underlying intention to shore up the self's political electability and undermining that of the rival. Lee, Mcleod and Shah's (2008) notion of frames complement Larkoff's; it suggests the psychological dimension to frames and framing that reflects their political nature, origins, intentions and functions. For Lee et al (2008: 695), framing is "a cognitive process in which the message influences how individuals weigh existing considerations." Frames are thus aesthetic mirror images of the self that – in their obsessions with the politically convenient

aspects of the self, can covertly serve as windows to certain inconvenient dimensions of the self.

As hinted above in my discussion of the discursivity of political metaphors, the aesthetic tendencies of frames can be inferred from the representational and rhetorical techniques used to cast the self as different from the rival other. Going back to the example of the conceptual metaphor LAND=ECONOMY, one can see how the metaphorisation of land as the economy reflects ZANU PF's strategic deployment of the narrative of decolonisation to etch itself as consistent in discussions about solutions to the crisis. This is because as a concept, land is synonymous with the liberation struggle that is in turn synonymous with ZANU PF. In essence and effect, vis-à-vis the metaphor LAND=ECONOMY, one can argue that in framing (through metaphorising) land as the economy, ZANU PF is in fact tactically narrowing conceptions of the crisis and economy in a way that make the party a principal player in discussions around solutions. The political implications of this framing and metaphorisation are that ZANU PF emerges as critical to the nation as is both the economy and the land. Understanding frames clarify how political and politicised concepts of sustainability as well as its attendant vocabularies such as indigenisation, empowerment, freedom sovereignty, democracy and transformation are powered. Larkoff (2009: xiii) highlights the importance of linguistic framing in political discourse:

> Progressives have been under the illusion that if only people understood the facts, we'd be fine. Wrong. The facts alone will not set us free. People make decisions about politics and candidates based on their value system, and the language and frames that invoke those values. Their values – strict authoritarian values in the conservatives' case – are what motivate them to enter the voting booth.

An example can suffice in indicating how linguistic framing not only reflects and refracts political intentions and ideas but also betray the framer's underlying political identity and strategy. At the height of the crisis in 2008, Tsvangirai asked people at a rally in Manicaland, ''*Mati mune nzara? Hamuna chekudya*? (You say, you are hungry? You don't have anything to eat?). People affirmed in loud unison and Tsvangirai responded, that, "*Zvino muchanyatsoshaisisa chaizvo-izvo*!" (Now, you haven't started, it will get really worse!). Clearly, in the 'oppositional' frame, Tsvangirai was creating a frame that casts the ruling party as the agent of the crisis. This frame not only identifies ZANU PF on the basis of its destructive tendencies but also frames continued support of the party as synonymous with supporting the continuing deterioration of the country's economy. In this way, the linguistic frame guiding

Tsvangirai's oppositional discourse reflects, among other things, the opposition party's notion of political and economic sustainability, campaign strategy, and political philosophy. In response, to that statement and indeed the frame, Tsvangirai and the MDC were projected in ZANU PF campaign discourse as the local catalysts of western originators of the crisis, particularly Britain and the USA which had slapped the ZANU PF regime with economic and political sanctions. ZANU PF's neo-nationalist frame does not merely decampaign Tsvangirai and the MDC, in fact, the ruling party's frame creates political leverage and advantage for ZANU PF by de-leveraging and disadvantaging the rival. Through this frame, ZANU PF projected the MDC as an extension of hostile neo-colonial forces and in the process identifying the opposition as a national liability. The frame consequently re-casts ZANU PF as more grounded in the people and their struggles, thereby cementing the party's historical self-construction as the defender of the people. Frames are not only mechanisms of linguistic counter-fights, they are also connected to political dogmas and norms, philosophies and policies of political parties. Policies conceptualised in this study as the 'operational statements of values' or the 'authoritative allocation of values' (Kogan, 1975:55), define and identify the political parties in ways that often relate to the party's relevance to the most pressing issues of the day. This means that understanding the functions and motivations of frames in political discourses can potentially pull the veil off the intricacies of policy contestations between rival parties and the politics of continuities and discontinuities in the narrative and substance of defining political and economic policies.

Perhaps most importantly, framing entails identity formation. Framing in political texts involves strategic linguistic attempts to claim suitability for fixing the pressing issues affecting the people at a given historical moment. Porter explains that, "identity resides at the heart of sustainability discourse and sustainability debates, and ultimately it is the fear of identity-loss rather than economic profit or scientific rationality that underlies discourse on […] sustainability" (2005:1). Frames are thus catalyses of perceptions which are meant to influence how citizens reflect on who they are, who they want to be, how they know themselves and the values they uphold. As Wafawarova (2015) has noted, "in Zimbabwe there are singular political identities that could be good for the benefit of politicians, but they are detrimental to people's freedom and to the general development of the country." He further explains that, issues of political identity are some of the major causes of political violence and polarisation resulting from the "fixation with dogmatic political brands that are narrowly defined by singular group identities." Ideologies are deeply entrenched in identity formations that guide

party conduct, thus, "…Zanu-PF lays claim to the value of patriotism, while those in the MDC formations lay claim to the value of democracy, and even some in … the media describes the MDC as the "democratic movement," and Zanu-PF as the "revolutionary party." Studying linguistic framing in this context of unprecedented political contestations in the post-2000 Zimbabwe reveals apparent, underlying structures and layers of political identities that shape certain forms of political strategies and the ways that these strategies and identities are circulated, vouched for, defended and fetishised through language.

Political identities constructed out of certain linguistic and ideological frames informed by context reveal the fundamental goals of political parties vis-à-vis their imagining of sustainable economic and political solutions to the crisis. At the heart of such identities is the overarching concern for projecting the self as the natural political missing link to the solution equation. Political identities are thus products of frames that reveal overt and hidden patterns of political thought as shaped by particular historical circumstances. In the Zimbabwean context, the nation is in a state of crises which has been ongoing and whose intensity and effects citizens are not even certain because of the polarisation of the narrators, their political identities and indeed their narratives. A range of values, beliefs, people and views are inscribed on fixed political identities that are often at polar ends of each other. ZANU PF invokes its liberation war history to re-inscribe itself as a patriotic institution called upon by the neo-imperial threat caused by Western powers fronted locally by the MDC. Political identities framed around polarised concepts of the authentic self and the inadequate rival other leads to contested labels such as patriotism, democracy, nationalism, native and foreign. Identities are dichotomised, binarised and dualised in ways that divide the nation into patriots and sell-outs, nationalists and betrayers of the revolution, democrats and dictators.

Gasper and Apthorpe (1999) reveal the interface between language use and political identity formation, reformation and contestation, which explains certain proclivities to use certain words/nouns, verbs, metaphors etc., in linguistic descriptions and indeed conceptions of both the self and the rival other. They explain that:

> [D]iscourse analysis of development policy writing should also examine the use and effects of other figures of speech and stylistic devices. For example: the status given to nouns as compared with verbs; the status of many official terms as normative not descriptive statements; use of keywords as banners … and as slogans to parade grand strategies such as 'basic needs'. In policy and policy analysis 'basic' means basic to values held or attributed. The scores on policy indicators paraded in this as well

> as other areas are vindicators more than just descriptors (Gasper and Apthorpe, 1999: 8).

In this light, labels and the choice of words (frames) used to describe, defend and politically operationalise them reflect the respective party's underlying philosophies and methods of campaigning and decampaining each other.

Privileged narratives: Unravelling the threads of storytelling and narration of sustainability in the context of crisis

According to Fischer (1978: ix) "humans are essentially storytellers, and all forms of human communication are most usefully interpreted and assessed from a narrative perspective". He postulates that, "beneath the learned and imposed structures by means of which we give discourse such forms as "argument," "exposition," "drama," and "fiction," the human species is always pursuing a narrative logic" (Fischer, 1978: ix). Narration is here conceptualised as "symbolic actions—words and/or deeds—that have sequence and meaning for those who live, create, or interpret them" (Fischer, 1978:58). This kind of narrative thread runs in ZANU PF and opposition party manifestos, speeches and actions. Narratives constitute attempts at giving form and meaning to events and situations in ways that make possible certain forms of knowledge and explanations. Party manifestoes and policy documents such as *Zim Asset* appear serious, organic, scientific and factual documents but conceptualising such documents in this way robs them of their narrativity and aesthetic texture. This study considers the language, grammars, diction, symbolisms and other forms of narrative style in focal policy texts to constitute a subjective narrative of the Zimbabwean crisis. I argue that CDA of such texts' semantic yet political structures can illuminate certain subterranean influences that frame parties' unique representations of the crisis and foreground certain ideas and identities as indispensable to the sustainable remedial of the national question. As explained by Fairclough and Fairclough, "getting people to accept a particular narrative of the crisis, to see it in a certain way, is generally a political concern precisely because it gives people *a reason* for favouring or accepting certain lines of action and policies rather than others" (2012:4) [*italics on original*].

A key element to the narrative nature and function of policy and political campaign texts is their use of language to represent reality in ways that aesthetically and discursively justify the inclusion of the authors and the exclusion of their rivals in the solution matrix. As unique forms of narratives with equally unique sets of aesthetic and discursive potentialities, these texts are

treated in this study as sites for the conscious and unconscious inscription of political subjectivity. For Fairclough and Fairclough (2012: 4), narratives are elements of practical arguments incorporated within "circumstantial premises of practical arguments (premises which represent the context of action); imaginaries for possible and desirable state of affairs […] incorporated in account(s) within goal premises". Policy and campaign texts are thus conceived as products - not only of storytelling but perhaps more importantly, of story-making. This is because narratives/stories of the nation are fundamentally representations of reality hence their inherently subjective nature. Their discourse is therefore essentially self-serving. My objective in this study is to analyse the linguistic structures of the narratives to find out how they create certain patterns that aesthetically and discursively relate the authors of the narrative to the unravelling political and economic crisis.

There are many reasons why it is critical to consider a narrative approach to the discourse of policy and campaign texts. However, I am especially drawn to the Indian-American postcolonial scholar Bhabha's (1990) conception of the nation as fundamentally a narrative construct. For Bhabha, nationalist discourses persistently attempt to produce "the idea of the nation as a continuous narration of national progress, [and] the narcissism of self-regeneration" (1990:1). As a concept, then, the nation is bound up with its narration(s). That is to say, the identity and concept of nation and 'nationess' at a particular point in historic time is dependent on the dominant narrative of the nation in circulation and indeed the identities of the narrators. Bhabha (1990: 2) clarifies that:

> To encounter the nation *as it is written* displays a temporality of culture and social consciousness more in tune with the partial, overdetermined process by which textual meaning is produced through the articulation of difference in language; more in keeping with the problem of closure which plays enigmatically in the discourse of the sign.

In light of this, policy texts are read in this study as complex modes of communicating ideas in indirect and aesthetic ways that discursively appeal to our perceptions of reality and also our sense of right and wrong in relation to what is a sustainable resolution to the national quagmire. The argument is that behind the language, grammars, metaphors, images and symbolisms in narrative projections of the nation are ideological structures, political philosophies and dogmas that reflect and refract the nature of Zimbabwe's challenges. The language of such texts comes through in this argument as ideological apparatuses of power which vouch for certain political orientations. Narratives become expedient vehicles to handle problematic aspects of the

contemporary nation. Thus, in the narratives of the crisis in my focal political texts, "[t]he stake is more than 'mere words'; it is controlling the contours of the political world, it is legitimizing policy, and it is sustaining power relations" (Fairclough, 2001:75).

Much akin to Bhabha's argument above, Jameson (1981: 9) conceptualises narrative as a key epistemological mechanism through which subjective knowledge of the world is packaged and 'sold' to the public. He argues that much of what we learn comes in the form of stories. Consequently, narratives represent the domain, or particular aspects of it, in a textual form that interpret that domain in particular ways. Typically, evident in selected policy texts under study is this overlap between the rush to represent the nation and the need to own the narrating space of the nation. In the varying political narratives, there are dominant 'master plots' that legitimise certain vantage points to reality through rhetorical appeals. The ZANU PF master narrative is conspicuous by its typical use of the language of nationalism, nativism and anti-neo-colonialism that can be traced back to its revolutionary identity. As Fairclough and Fairclough (2012: 4) explain, "a narrative which imposes itself in the discursive ideological competition which the crisis opens up will determine a general perception of the crisis". Through such timeless historiographical configurations as liberation, neo-colonialism, neo-imperialism, pan-Africanism etc., ZANU PF reduces the narrative of crisis to a mega-narrative of a protracted anti-west struggle. Through such kind of totalising master narratives, complex experiences and facets of the nation in crisis are crammed into what the Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in her famous speech, 'The Danger of a Single Story' (2009) referred to as 'single narratives' of the nation. As Adichie argues, single stories create stereotypes and "the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete as they make one story to become the only story". This character of narrative reflects the subjective nature of narration and indeed nation, which, as highlighted above, are constructions of dominant narratives and narrators at a given time.

Language makes and unmakes nations by virtue of its being the medium through which notions of 'nationess' are constructed and circulated by the powerful and also sometimes contested especially by the overpowered. Thus, according to Bhabha (1990:3):

> [T]o study the nation through its narrative address does not merely draw attention to its language and rhetoric; it also attempts to alter the conceptual object itself. If the problematic 'closure' of textuality questions the 'totalization' of national culture, then its positive value lies in displaying the wide dissemination through which we construct the field of meanings and symbols associated with national life.

So narrative analysis provides a holistic approach to "overly atomised accounts of the regime's policies" (Bacon, 2012:769). Narratives entail organisations imposing order and connecting selected, specific developments to their policy choices and ideological perspectives. Narratives that are placed at the heart of policy texts are never neutral. Paying attention to the recurring symbols and motifs illuminates motivations, political priorities, perceptions and (in)consistencies in explaining policy and addressing future concerns. Given that narrative ontology is linked to conceptualisation of self-agency and action, narrative analysis provides explanatory and critical insights into a polity. In this thesis l will adopt Bacon's approach in his analysis of public policy narratives in Russia, examining ways in which political narratives "illuminate its narrators' norms, priorities, future intentions, concerns, incoherencies and so on" (Bacon, 2012:771).

Conclusion

Complexities in the relationship between policy text, interpretation and practices are inherent in Zimbabwean policy models so the interest in discourse potentially allows for exploration of the use and usefulness of policies and policy position constructions, without conflating these directly with 'reality/practice' in a simplistic fashion. Policy texts cannot be divorced from their producers, they represent their authors' intentions and interests within and across contexts. CDA should be understood in relation to text and ideology as avenues through which policy is engaged, progressively and systematically. Policy texts are essentially linked to power struggles, drawing attention to set of concepts, ideologies, beliefs, assumptions and values that sanction events, ideas, processes, individuals and situations to be interpreted in ways that are appropriate to their respective interests and concerns. The study of policy texts in this study seeks to explore how discourses constitute and is also constituted by processes and actions in the Zimbabwean context. For all its utility, as Yanow (1987) puts it, studying policy frames warrants further development to realise its policy analytic potential in the context of intractable policy controversies, in particular with respect to the promise it holds out of a dynamic, process-oriented engagement that is politically nuanced and power-sensitive. In this context, it would be particularly suitable for understanding interactions not only in formal political arenas but also in governance networks.

An overview of the policy documents in the Zimbabwean context shows that sustainability has become an 'engendered resource' in the field of public policy. Policy texts are preferably conceptualised at the level of institutional arrangements, as the interplay between the agents

and the operational level. The dominant crises have (re)shaped policy by making 'grand theories', specific knowledge systems, 'polarised truths' and suspect categories. Consequently, I seek to explore 'big' and 'small stories', discourses, different interpretations of phenomena, fluid processes, the changing and multiple identities of actors and the semiotic construction of 'facts'. This research focuses on agency and power dynamics in the Zimbabwean socio-technical transition trajectories. *Zim Asset, #Team ZANU PF 2013, JUICE, BUILD, IDEA* and *The People's Manifesto* illuminate discourse patterns and complex dynamics of innovation in policy texts. The dominant discourses and strategies that frame and sustain positions, perspectives and interests will be explored. Since discourse has the power to enable and constrain sustainable transition through the framing of issues at stake, CDA therefore becomes an indispensable form of social transformation.

CHAPTER 3: SAVING AND SERVING THE NATION

Without knowing the force of words, it is impossible to know men."

- Confucius

Introduction

The previous chapters focused on background to the study and highlighted how development discourse is a contested terrain deserving critical analysis. Apparent is the fact that fixed and essentialised discourses on the post-2000 era in Zimbabwe have generated and reinforced political and conceptual polarities. This chapter focuses on the intersection of linguistics, socio-economic and political dynamics in ZANU PF's representation of the nation. Attention is drawn to the nature and dynamics of textual representation and its relationship to the politics of discourses of national development. The argument put forward here is that ZANU PF's discourse institutionalises 'metaphors' of development and the nation's aspirations in an attempt at gearing the nation "*Towards an Empowered Society and a Growing Economy*" (*Zim Asset*, 2013: ix). This vision is guided by an overarching mission, "To provide an enabling environment for sustainable economic empowerment and social transformation to the people of Zimbabwe" (2013: ix). As Leech et al (2010) note and as reflected in ZANU PF texts, *#Team Zanu PF* (2013) and *Zim Asse*t (2013), sustainability in general entails the capacity to withstand pressure, absorb shock and recuperate, and the degree of preparedness to build pathways to recovery in a complex crisis situation. This notion is reflected in ZANU PF's neo-nationalist thrust of "Taking back the Economy" (*#Team ZANU PF*), particularly through taking 'back' the land.

Ehrenfeld (2008) submits that for people to establish if all is right with their world, they simply have to look at and think about the signs constituting their existentiality. This prompts people to focus on things that can be seen. In the case of Zimbabwe, political texts compete to textually package these signs in ways that can influence certain ways of political consciousness and indeed the role of ZANU PF in the country's socio-economic woes reflected in infrastructural dilapidation, political polarisation, and "incomplete and competing projects of transformation, legitimation and resistance" (Hammar et al, 2003:3). In ZANU PF's discourse, the amplified signs connect the crisis time-space to the "legacy that permanently connects past, present and

future generations" and "the historic indigenisation of land whose huge success is widely acknowledged" *(#Team ZANU PF*, 2013:7,17).

The post-2000 era presents a turbulent moment within which ZANU PF's push for "sustainable economic empowerment and social transformation" (*Zim Asset*, ix) is problematised by the crisis on the ground. The crisis manifests a crisis of governance – ZANU PF governance. In *#Team ZANU PF 2013* and *Zim Asset*, ZANU PF expresses its commitment to a renewed approach to development and crisis management as it endeavours to "take back the economy to meet the goals of the people as a direct response to their grievances and needs" *(#Team ZANU PF* 2013:11). The ways social realities are conceptualised in *#Team ZANU PF* and *Zim Asset*, reflect how ZANU PF, as the ruling and governing party, politically operationalised the crisis to its hegemonic benefits. As textual policy texts, *#Team ZANU PF* and *Zim Asset* are complex products of self-construction, performance and representation. What is evoked as the reality of the crisis moment in these texts reflects the double necessity to frame the narrative of the crisis in ways that represent sustainable development and simultaneously reconstruct ZANU PF's legitimacy in the public sphere. As Crush (1995) explains, policy texts promote, licence and justify certain interventions and practices whilst delegitimising and excluding others. The textual aesthetics of self-invention in the political act of textual re-construction of the nation is what l will illuminate in this chapter.

The structure of ZANU PF's political texts analysed in this chapter, *#Team ZANU PF* and *Zim Asset* is highly stylised and repetitive. Development as a performative word and leitmotif in the texts serves to entrench politically viable identities and perceptions of the nation in crisis and has a tendency to reconcile even irreconcilable contradictions in ZANU PF's popular image. Evident in these texts is the paradox of depicting the old as the new and the new as the old. However, as Cornwall (2010:15) explains, "deconstruction of development discourse dislocates naturalised meanings, dislodges embedded associations, and de-familiarises the language that pervades development policy and practice." It is, "a means of defusing the hegemonic grip," whereby political, intellectual, and moral role of leadership is cemented by universalised world-views or "organic ideology" (Gramsci, 1971: 2). Beyond being modes of communication *#Team ZANU PF* and *Zim Asset* are sites of power and knowledge. They provide insightful windows into how ZANU PF's organisational practices are discursively designed to sustain hegemony. The study of institutional systems, devices in relation to social power (context and discourse) and how they connect to political poles, landscapes and timescapes is long overdue in Zimbabwean political discourses.

Repackaging blame: the (political) uses of language in ZANU PF texts

Wodak and Meyer (2001:15) argue that one important characteristic of CDA is the assumption that:

> [A]ll discourses are historical and can therefore only be understood with reference to their context. In accordance with this, CDA refers to such extra linguistic factors as culture, society and ideology. In any case, the notion of context is crucial for CDA, since this explicitly includes social-psychological, political and ideological components and thereby postulates an interdisciplinary procedure.

ZANU PF policy discourse appropriates what is on the ground. Textual articulations of the party's policy models and frameworks are informed by an awareness of its negative appeal in the popular imaginary linked to the crisis unravelling under its administrative watch. The Zimbabwean context, aptly delineated by Gono (2008:1) as a "casino economy" requiring extraordinary measures is complex and dynamic, but discourse packs it, makes it linear, static; simplifies it and gives it form. Feindt and Oels (2005:168) assert that, "discourses play a crucial role, not only in stating the kind of problems to be dealt with, but also in constituting the arenas in which actors can *compete*, dominate or co-operate." Hence, discourses are inherently competitive.

Context in CDA dictates that we do not only focus on what ZANU PF says in their texts, spoken or written. Wodak and Meyer (2001: 2) suggest a useful working framework:

> A fully 'critical' account of discourse would thus require a theoretization and description of both the social processes and structures which give rise to the production of a text and of the social structures and processes within which individuals or groups as social historical subjects, create meanings in their interaction with texts.

Drawing on Gaventa (2003), I conceptualise power as at once a necessary productive force that enables action, and also as a negative repressive force that coerces, censors, excludes, abstracts and masks reality. As Foucault (1971) asserts, in all its variations, power is a struggle because any interaction requires control. As much as *#Team ZANU PF* and *Zim Asset* "seek to address, on a sustainable basis, the numerous challenges affecting quality service delivery and economic growth" (*Zim Asset*, 2013: 10), clearly, the party cannot achieve this feat unless it remains in power. *Zim Asset* is therefore first and foremost a text of power – both a manifestation of power already held and a demonstration of expressive power that can sustain the wielded political

power. The framing of the Zimbabwean crisis involves the ordering knowledge that influence all dimensions of the nation's sustainability.

Generally, ZANU PF's discourse is 'dressed' up in a revolutionary outfit, lined up with strategic developmental goals and its discourse neatly packed within nationalist rhetoric. The party represents itself as a governing party "[i]n pursuit of a new trajectory of accelerated economic growth and wealth creation… to achieve sustainable development and social equity anchored on indigenization, empowerment and employment creation" (*Zim Asset*, iii). However, the irony in *#Team ZANU PF* and *Zim Asset* is that ZANU PF is representing a country with complex challenges and a failed economy. For more than three decades, they have been superintending over a nation punctuated by economic collapse. The political threats of this rot are neutralised by the party's portrayal of the economic crisis from a perspectival distance in a way that slyly withdraws its involvement and guilt, as can be inferred from the following:

> Zimbabwe experienced a deteriorating economic and social environment since 2000 that was caused by illegal economic sanctions imposed by the Western countries. This resulted in a deep economic and social crisis characterised by a hyperinflationary environment, industrial capacity utilization of below 10% and an overall cumulative gross Domestic Product (GDP) decline of 50% by 2008. In the social sector, health and education were also adversely affected with people succumbing to cholera and other epidemic diseases while the quality of education was compromised… (*Zim Asset*, 2013: 3-4).

It is in this vein, that ZANU PF ordains its economic blueprint an agenda for "sustainable socio-economic transformation." The Manifesto reinforces that, "the next Zanu PF Government will put in place robust measures to ensure an even more transparent, accountable, tangible, and measurable implementation matrix in the national interest" (*#Team Zanu PF*,2013: 8). The language of political persuasion emphasises newness in ways that refresh ZANU PF and re-casts it not as a party of the old, but also one for the future. In *Zim Asset*, for instance, the party announces "new plan(s) that are to offer a "new trajectory" to "ensure Government is totally committed towards building a robust and sustainable results oriented socio-economic growth and management culture" (*Zim Asset* 2013:2). In this context, the word "new" as deployed in ZANU PF texts becomes a metaphor for transformation. Connotations of newness that are recurrent in the texts are "rebirth", "dynamism", "reform", "growth", "restoration", "modernisation" and "progress". Similarly, conspicuous in its pervasive use in the political texts is the repetitive prefix "re-" in 'action words' invoked to signify new directions and ways

of tackling pressing economic issues. There are promises to "restore sanity", "re-engage with the international and multilateral finance institutions," "re-orienting Government Ministries," "rehabilitating infrastructure," "recapitalising banks," "reinventing Government business," "resuscitating of distressed industry," "reposition the country as one of the strongest economies in the region and Africa" (*Zim Asset*, 2013: iii), among a plethora of proposed 'new' strategies to pursue economic growth and development. Scanned closely, the use of the repetitive prefix "re-" suggest the continuity of old policies that are given new to meet contemporary demands.

Critical to ZANU PF political discourse is the promise to "achieve sustainable development anchored on indigenisation, empowerment and employment creation which will be largely propelled by the judicious exploitation of the country's abundant human and natural resources" (*Zim Asset*, 2013: iii). Of interest, then, given the fact the party has been in government since independence in 1980, is what has changed in how ZANU PF has been running its affairs to ensure the sustainability of its new approaches. The emphasis on the grammar of newness and change shows how ZANU PF is aware that its policies, associated with the prevailing rot, have to be repackaged to appeal to the electorate as re-energised to avoid a repeat of the failures of the past years.

Part of reinforcing newness of policies and political identity involves self-justification. There is, in ZANU PF political texts, hardly a paragraph where the crisis is defined, characterised or explained without being wrapped in by the defensive rhetoric laying blame on supposed western ploys to effect regime change in Zimbabwe. Such a stylistic regulates the crisis and foregrounds the propounded causes. This assigning of perspective and knowledge is an act of power. Knowledge is a resource that influences debate and a tool for mobilising influence. ZANU PF's narratives and policies put selective emphasis on the crisis itself, the agency and the interventions thereof. Leach et al (2010:83) assert that, "[p]erhaps most fundamentally, power dynamics inevitably encourage and enable power-holding institutions to pursue strategies that maintain the status quo." It is the ways in which ideas and discourses about stability and notions of progress "become cemented into bureaucratic, administrative and institutional practices and routines" that makes them compelling (Leach et al, 2010:84). The way that ZANU PF portrays the Zimbabwean crisis naturalises, concretises and categorises people and processes in a way that occludes debate and marginalises alternatives. This brings into play the ideological and discursive constructedness of knowledge which enables the politics of incomplete or 'perverted knowledge'. ZANU PF's framing of the crisis organises

and links issues to specific ideologies, goals and values. A good example is how patriotism is captured and predominantly linked to development. *#Team ZANU PF* highlights that:

> Patriotism is the first line of attack against foreign domination and the last line of defence against treachery. Fighting against such evils as illegal sanctions and illegal regime change is a matter of patriotism (2013: 20)

Underlying ZANU PF's definition of patriotism is a self-serving but incredibly narrow construction of opponents as unpatriotic, for in its partisan framing of nation and nationalism, ZANU PF, as a liberation movement, entrenches itself as the exclusive embodiment of patriotism. Thus:

> Enemies of patriotism are sellouts…At its core, patriotism puts Zimbabwe and therefore the people first as overarching affirmation of the historic and permanent values and ideals of the country's heroic liberation struggle…It is in this connection that Zanu PF is Zimbabwe's Patriotic Front (2013:20-1).

This definition of patriotism is contracted and institutionalised. Patriotism is given this prominence because it is linked to imperialistic machinations which are blamed for the challenges that Zimbabwe is grappling with. The way that patriotism is encoded amplifies ZANU PF's agency and legitimacy. Notions of patriotic behaviour are standardised and its meanings partially chiselled to conform to the party's perceptions and ideologies. The capacity to define, name and apportion blame is made possible by ZANU PF's inherent power as the ruling party.

ZANU PF's ways of discoursing national development conforms to its nationalist orders of discourse and regimes of truth. As Peci, Vieira and Clegg (2014) highlight, "discourse adds more dynamism to the study of processes of institutionalisation including some often neglected dimensions of institutional analysis namely normative, cognitive, affective and power dimensions." According to Eder, Jenny and Muller (2017: 78), part and parcel of the institutionalisation process - a party's development towards the consolidation or sustenance of its power are "routinization and value infusion". In general terms, routinization means that ZANU PF's processes and actions are regularised. The organisation's draws on precedents, consistently on party ideologies, to renew itself or rather, to re-cast itself as renewed. The values that are formally articulated and legally chartered in ZANU PF texts are represented as ubiquitous and politically neutral but they manifest subtle political signatures and 'ideological'

footprints that betray their hegemonic intentions. The following quotation from *#Team ZANU PF* is a good example:

> The one enduring and overarching goal of every Zimbabwean to which ZANU PF is eternally committed is to uphold, cherish and honour the values and ideals of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle. These values and ideals include but are not limited to anti-imperialism, anti-slavery, anti-colonialism, anti-racism, self-determination, national and resource sovereignty, gender equality, universal adult suffrage and the empowerment of the indigenous population through the restoration of its civil and political rights along with the restoration of its cultural, social and economic rights (2013: 19-20).

In this quotation, the obligated values are not random, but systematic in ways that organise thoughts and influence the political character of remedial actions and attitudes. These values are interlinked with ZANU PF. They are depicted as "inherent to ZANU PF's policy of "Taking back the Economy through the … thrust of Indigenisation and People's Empowerment policy" *(#Team ZANU PF*, 2013:17). ZANU PF's structural, particularly nationalist aspects are strategically installed in the discourse to ensure that the Zimbabwean situation is understood in anti-imperialistic terms. Consequently, the revolutionary stance itself becomes the metaphor of development as fighting and defending the liberation goals become ZANU PF's greatest stride towards sustainable socio-economic transformation. In the context, the party is emboldened to argue that its "pro-policy interventions have always been informed by an unwavering determination and revolutionary commitment to address and meet the goals of all Zimbabweans regardless of their social, economic, cultural or ethnic affinity, background or affiliation" *(#Team ZANU PF*, 2013: 13). The values are highly accredited to ZANU PF's practices and tradition. In discoursing the post-2000 context, *Zim Asset* illuminates that:

> Although the country is enjoying peace and tranquillity, the country continues to face the threats of interference, subversion and economic sabotage. In view of this, the security and defence forces will continue to safeguard the country's hard won independence and maintain peace and security that will guarantee Zimbabwe's sovereignty and territorial integrity, economic growth and prosperity" (*Zim Asset*: 8-9).

Here, the inscription of a nationalist flair to a principally economic phenomenon is compellingly patronising and emblematic of the ruling party's strategic use of policy space to veil and promote hegemonic interests. Words like "interference," "subversion" and "economic sabotage" constitute technical diction that enables ZANU PF to transfer crisis liability, assert their agency and provide a perspective for framing a multi-dimensional process like sustainability relative to the party's anti-imperialistic stance. As Parenti (1999) notes,

"[c]ulturalistic explanations divorced of political-economic realities readily lend themselves to obfuscation." The way each need and every challenge Zimbabwe is facing is linked to perceived imperialistic machinations by ZANU PF is one example how ways of knowing things becomes so technological and fixed in a way that underplay ambiguities and other dimensions of dynamic processes.

The political capital of ZANU PF's land discourse

At the centre of ZANU PF's conceptualisation of the post-2000 economic crisis is the land issue. The (re)constitution of land within the political and economic crisis is key in ZANU PF nationalist discourses as all other issues are anchored on this central tenet. Sachikonye (2012:108) asserts that, "[n]o account of Zimbabwean politics, economics and social development would therefore be complete without assessing the significance of the land question." He further expresses how the issue has been central to Zimbabwean politics for over a century since the country was colonised in 1890 to the nation's independence in 1980. In ZANU PF political texts, land is depicted as the driving force of the liberation struggle and therefore a central marker of the country's postcolonial identity. Hammar et al (2003) explains that while Zimbabwe's crisis is specific in its location, timing, form and effects, it is necessarily complex and dynamic. This complexity and dynamism is generated by and have generated ensembles of discourses and struggles around land, nation and citizenship, which Hammar and Raftopoulos sum as, "*the politics of land and resource distribution; reconstructions of nation and citizenship; and the remaking of state and modes of rule*" (2003:3, Italics in original). ZANU PF's discourses are framed around the nationalist rhetoric on land and appropriation of national history. Land and history are essentially privatised and personalised in ZANU PF's political discourse. They become a capital resource for power and legitimacy. History goes a long way in framing critical historical, ideological, philosophical, political, developmental and identity logics.

History is evoked in ZANU PF's political texts as synonymous with (and has come to mean) the liberation struggle. Emphasised in the discourse on the liberation struggle and history is the inherent interlink between land and the nation's economic endeavours. Hence, in *#Team ZANU PF*, the assertion is made to the effect that:

> The economy is land and land is the economy. From this flows the people's aspiration to take full control and ownership of both our land and our economy. Both our land and our economy are ideological

> expressions of indigenisation to assert our independence and our sovereignty over our natural and economic resources (2013: 31-2).

Here, history and land become integral parts of the technology of power. The land centrally constitutes ZANU PF's policies of Indigenisation and Empowerment, which anchor *#Team Zanu PF* and *Zim Asset.* It is stated that, "we must indigenise both our land and our economy (*#Team Zanu PF*, 2013:31). The land becomes critical to the nation's development in part because it is bound up with the history of the nation, which, in turn, is evoked as inherently a part of ZANU PF as a liberation movement. The maxim "The land is the economy and the economy is land" *(#Team Zanu PF*, 2013: 31) is contingent and limited. Though land has been redistributed, the agrarian revolution has so far failed to change the nation's fortunes as the national economy remains depressed (see Matondi, 2013). As Sithole (1998) points out in *Zimbabwe's Public Ey*e instead of politicising the land it should be economised. However, from the perspective of ZANU PF, the problem with economising land is that it loses its nationalist significance and with it the histories and ideologies propping up the party's political legitimacy.

Hammar and Raftopoulos (2003: 28) term ZANU PF's political use of the past as "monopolisation of history." It entails a "certain version of the inevitable unfolding of critical events sustained through a myth in which the imaginary singularity of national formations is constructed." This "patriotic history"[10] declares the permanence of the Zimbabwean revolutionary tradition (Ranger, 2004). Through such categorisations and simplifications reflected in ZANU PF discourse, "institutions are able both to articulate particular system-framings, goals and narratives, and – importantly – to discipline people into accepting such framings as part of the natural order of things" (Leach et al, 2010:84). ZANU PF naturalises its discourse on the economic and political significance of land by, among other ways, grounding it in the national Constitution which, ironically, it played a major part authoring. *#Team ZANU PF* draws from the national Constitution that:

> …under colonial domination the people of Zimbabwe were unjustifiably dispossessed of their land and other resources without compensation; the people consequently took arms in order to regain their land and political sovereignty, and this ultimately resulted in the independence of Zimbabwe in 1980 (2013: 69).

[10] See Ranger (2004) and Tendi (2010)

This quotation offers historical facts. However, the context in which these facts are cited in the political text suggest a not-so-subtle political interest. In its contextual use, the statement cited above, centralises the land issue, stretching it from being a mere resource to metaphorically represent all what the nation aspires and needs to be. The land is thus evoked as marking territory and ownership of natural resources and minerals. In this context, the history of colonialism is a metaphor of the past that is appropriated for the present as addressing racial inequalities in land ownership patterns. However, in as much as the people's history capture people's deep aspirations, its opportunistic and narrow invocations for political purposes can harm the same aspirations it claims to champion. It may be opportune here to cite Nietzsche's warning in 'On the Use and Abuses of History for Life' about 'interested' historicisations of "selfish lives". He says:

> We do need history, but quite differently from the jaded idlers in the garden of knowledge, however grandly they may look down on our rude and unpicturesque requirements. In other words, we need it for life and action, not as a convenient way to avoid life and action, or to excuse a selfish life and a cowardly or base action. We would serve history only so far as it serves life; but to value its study beyond a certain point mutilates and degrades life: and this is a fact that certain marked symptoms of our time make it as necessary as it may be painful to bring to the test of experience (Nietzsche, 1874: 305).

This quotation highlights how the past should not overshadow the present needs and the dangers of a history specifically compiled to serve narrow interests. A focus on ZANU PF's contextualisation of the land question highlight the inherent contradictions and tensions that arise from the quest to tame the history of liberation and own the political capital it is inherently associated with. Owning the narrative of be(com)ing Zimbabwe is thus tantamount to owning the nation, as the following quotation from *#Team ZANU PF* reveals:

> In view of the fact that the goals of the people outlined in this Manifesto are actually goals of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle, it should go without saying that Zanu PF's most enduring achievement is that it liberated this country.
>
> As such, Zanu PF brought the freedom and independence that all Zimbabweans and residents are enjoying today. Without this freedom and democracy, none of the goals of the people is achievable" (2013:55).

The hegemonic implication created in annexing Zimbabwe to ZANU PF in this quotation is that as long as Zimbabwe remains independent (in all likelihood a perpetual possibility), it owes its becoming and being to the party. This debt, as we have seen in the foregoing, can only be settled by the party's continued political custodianship of the nation it birthed.

Political texts such as *#Team ZANU PF 2013* and *Zim Asset* reflect how ZANU PF institutional, political and knowledge systems politically frame challenges, influence national politics, power dynamics and socio-economic processes. The texts are part of a systematic process of constructing and sustaining regimes of truths using specialised treatise that will be most effective in ensuring consent and sustaining power (Fairclough, 2000). The pervasive invocation of land in discourses of legitimising ZANU PF hegemony has made it a part of a political culture of nationalist values. One way in which power is sustained in ZANU PF is the political commodification of culture and values. These phenomena are politicised and wielded as compasses of patriotic behaviour and identity.

As a resource for culture, values are mediated through social structures that subjectively prefer some interests over others. The political values promoted by ZANU PF reflect hegemonic intentions – not only to perpetuate the status quo but also to de-legitimate rivals. As evident in ZANU PF's framing of the liberation history, national values are rigidly underpinned by neo-nationalist essentialisms and universalisms. Consequently, pervasive national values in ZANU PF political texts cherish the liberation struggle and by implication, ZANU PF. In *#Team ZANU PF,* the values include independence, unity, peace, equity, freedom and democracy, sovereignty, the liberation struggle among many others. These values are naturalised as part of what makes, grounds and sustains being ZANU PF. In this view, the values associated with independence, the liberation struggle, democracy etc., can be read as essentially metonymic; their observation by the citizens as compelled by the ruling party easily morphs into celebrating and cherishing ZANU PF.

ZANU PF's political systems are entwined with an institutionalised quest to establish and sustain consensual hegemony through carefully constructed and discoursed rationalities, what Foucault (1977) termed "governmentality." Governmentality refers to ways in which the state governs or shapes and controls bodies as a way of exercising control over its populace. This is done through policies, institutions and ideologies. This hodgepodge of mechanisms of establishing control is what Foucault (1977: 48) has called "technology of power". Leach et al (2010:78) expand that, a governmentality optic "enables recognition of political processes and power relations that become institutionalised, embodied in rules and practices that acquire predictability and staying power." This governance is associated with a single powerful overarching narrative that is exclusive and excluding. Discursive mechanisms of excluding in ZANU PF political texts reflect a pervasive self-alignment with historical orthodoxy and a

keenness to naturalise the constructed annexure of Zimbabwe to being ZANU PF. It is against this backdrop that ZANU PF claims that:

> Only Zanu PF can achieve these (people's) goals while working with the people because only Zanu PF has fought for all and not just some of the goals of the people. When Zanu PF wins at the polls, the people win their goals and benefit in terms of having sustainable livelihoods" *(#Team Zanu PF*, 108).

It is critical to see how effect is created in ZANU PF texts in relation to the development gambit. In the quotation above, the repetitive use of the word "only" not only reinforces ZANU PF's legitimacy but also serves to underline that there are no alternatives with regards to who is legitimised by history to govern the nation. This absence of alternatives is evoked as occurring not least because, apparently, being ZANU PF is being an embodiment of the people. Subjective forms of self-construction reflected in *#Team ZANU PF* and *Zim Asset* are typically discoursed in political rhetoric that is dressed as objectivity. However, pragmatically, partaking in the liberation movement does not in itself automatically translate into guaranteed capacity to ensuring the nation's sustainable development. Depicting the Zimbabwean crisis as an extension of the liberation movement that has derivations from the colonial period is therefore a deliberately exclusive political gimmick which legitimate ZANU PF and de-legitimate its rivals for power.

Cartographies of Development: Mapping geographies of knowledge and power

This section looks at policy texts as a genre and examines theoretical foundations that shape the premise, logic and discourse of *#Team ZANU PF* and *Zim Asset* as strategic political texts. According to Hanks (1987:670) genres can be defined "as the historically specific conventions and ideals according to which authors compose discourse and audiences receive it". In this view, "genres consist of orienting frameworks, interpretive procedures and sets of expectations that are … [part of] the ways actors relate to and use language" (Hanks, 1987:670). In this view, I conceptualise ZANU PF political texts as persuasive maps of development whose endeavour is to "provide the ways and means out of the quagmire" *(#Team ZANU PF,* 2013: 8). The motto "Taking Back the Economy" which underpins the "agenda for sustainable socio-economic transformation" foregrounds the economic map, *Zim Asset.* In this cartographic metaphor, indigenisation is portrayed as the highway to the nation's sustainable development which enables the people to "… fully own their county's God-given natural resources and the means of production to unlock value from those resources" *(#Team ZANU PF,* 2015: 7).

Like maps, policy texts are essentially instructive communicative tools used to control knowledge and power. They have their biases as evident in *#Team ZANU PF* and *Zim Asset* where, as ideological 'architects', ZANU PF sets the design of the political map, its agenda features, terrain, and perhaps more importantly, roads and directions. In this sense, the political map can be a site of knowledge, both of ZANU PF and its ways of constructing knowledge about the nation. On explaining how maps plot knowledge, Quaggiotto (2008:4) says that, just like any text:

> …[t]he map makes *selections* on reality, distorts events, classifies and clarifies the world in order to better tell a particular aspect of a territory, an event, a space. When used with malice, it can hide, conceal, falsify or diminish a reality through the construction of an ideological discourse, in which the communicative aims are hidden to the user.

Content in *#Team ZANU PF* and *Zim Asset* is anchored on ZANU PF maps (frames) of the post-2000 crisis. The design of the frames projects the crisis as a threatening space that needs negotiation. As ideological maps, ZANU PF policy texts derive their political effect from, among other things, their evocation as organic representations of reality. This can be seen from the recurrent use of the word "fact" in most of the texts' discourses. This repetition evokes a sense of consistence with the mapped 'ground' – a consistence designed to earn the party some credibility.

In scientific discourse, facts involve verifiability. Facts are thus mostly synonymous with truth, objectivity and believability. In its political discourse, ZANU PF imagines what Fairclough, in a general context, calls "possible social practices and networks of social practices, possible syntheses of activities, subjects, social relations, instruments, objects, spacetimes, values and forms of consciousness" (2001:3). Facts, or rather propaganda forming part of these mechanisms of creating consciousness strategically target, among other sites of political energy, the youth. We therefore find that a leitmotif 'fact' in *#Team ZANU PF* is the projection of ZANU PF as the natural home of the youths, hence the party's argument that: "Zanu PF has a track record of promoting and protecting the aspirations of the youth. In fact, Zanu PF is a natural home for the youth who are the frontline of the people's revolution" (2013:26). Strategically evading the fact that the party's (former) leader Mugabe remained in power for close to four decades besides his advanced age, *#Team ZANU PF* maps aspects of being ZANU PF that reveal the strategic importance it places on the youths' political mindscapes:

> The fact that the youths are Zimbabwe's lifeline for securing the county's future means that their wellbeing today is a critical goal of the

> people, it is for this reason that ZANU PF is committed to fostering a youth that is patriotic, has a proud sense of belonging and is prepared to defend the national heritage as expressed in the ethos and by the nationally cherished gains of the liberation struggle. As highlighted before the youths are marginalised and are peripherised in Zimbabwean mainstream politics (2013: 25).

Re-invoking the cartographic metaphor cited above, it is common knowledge that in their design to lead people to a desired destination, maps use familiar, unambiguous symbols and signals which provide adequate directions. Maps map power (see Harley 2002). They exist as signs of power signifying the agency of the person who, idiomatically-speaking, draws the lines. In this light, as products of the dynamics of a power system, policies foreground the adaptive value of discourse in reshaping perspectives. Thus, just like a map, a policy text has to be understood as "*communication device*: a mature representation artefact, aware of its own language and its own rhetoric, equipped with it its own tools, languages, techniques and supports" (Quaggiotto, 2008:4). The 'cartographic' slant captures how complex spatial knowledge is represented by ZANU PF, and how the party treats heterogeneous physical and social interconnecting networks in maps of development.

ZANU PF's (Dis)orders of Discourse

How rules, systems and procedures constitute and are constituted by the will to represent 'knowledge' and 'the truth' generates what are called orders of discourse. According to Foucault (1981:52).

> In every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality.

Taking into account ZANU PF discourses, one can perceive how as political agents, the party appropriates and mobilises discourse to solemnise its foundation, engross itself in convenient silences, impose ritualised forms around the history of its capacity, float within the context and ultimately, have power. ZANU PF discourse nourishes hierarchical structures and reinforces socio-economic networks. In political texts whether speeches, manifestos or economic blueprints such as *#Team ZANU PF* and *Zim Asset,* sustainability is captured in technical-economic terms, and power dynamics are couched. But in implementing policies and practices to drive real transformation those power schemas come into play.

As Foucault (1981) explains, procedures of exclusion abound within our societies. There are protocols of (re)presenting things and hierarchies of knowledge production. It is well established who can say what, to who and under what circumstances. Foucault (1981:52) explains these notions as "taboo on the object of speech and the ritual of the circumstances of speech and the privileged or exclusive right of the speaking subject". These exclusions advantage some formidable powers as evident in ZANU PF's case. In Foucault's words, "it does not matter that discourses appear to be of little account, because the prohibitions that surround it …soon reveal its link with desire and with power" (1981:52). Since discourse itself is site for struggle, it actually constitutes power. Thus, in order to address any forms of inequality and dominance, people have to understand these privileged knowledge reserves. Naturalised contingencies and what seem unquestionable truths always unfold within fields of power. Historical (re)contextualisation disrupts alternative discourses of nation. Derived from liberation history, ZANU PF discourse creates uneven ground as it renders other voices powerless and alien to the concept of nation. This fixes alternatives. That ZANU PF alone can champion the people's aspirations as the sole liberators has nothing to do with what is best for development. Rather, it is more about how they appropriate their liberation war credentials to consolidate their power. As a ruling party, agency to take action on behalf of the nation is a manifestation of power and a form of legitimacy that is exclusivist.

Despite the numerous commitments at the highest political level, and various development measures taken since independence, scholars such as Maphosa (2007), Masunungure and Chimanikire (2007); Kagoro (2008); and Sachikonye (2012) note that the implementation of development policy by the ZANU PF government falls short, especially in the post-2000 era. The way ZANU PF talks about the stagnancy of development constitutes the social construction of the reality of both power and the legitimacy to perform it. How sustainable development is constructed in the disclosures of ZANU PF discourses is linked to the networks of histories and their political uses it seeks to naturalise. A critical overview of the party's constructions "expose[s] the power and hegemony that have been exercised in the struggle for … 'ownership' and definition" (Springett, 2013) of the Zimbabwean nation. As an intricate assemblage of activities, development involves the creative process as well as collaborative social networks, and transformative reforms inspired by imagination and innovation. Foucault (1978) emphasises that discourse cannot be separated from power as it is both an instrument and an effect of power. In the discourses reflected in its policies, ZANU PF as the government considerably condenses the contradictions in the transformative agenda. It moulds and deploys

discourse conveniently so that it maps ZANU PF as the only viable political option available to Zimbabweans.

The establishment of binaries is a principle of exclusion that manifests in ZANU PF discourse and mediates interpretive schemata. ZANU PF conveniently portrays the nation in cast-in-stone Manichaean binaries that constructs the party as a force of good fighting bad forces intent on harming the nation. For example, *#Team ZANU PF* describes patriotism as, "the first line of attack against foreign domination and the last line of defence against treachery. Fighting against such evils as illegal sanctions and illegal regime change is a matter of patriotism (2013:20). Underlying ZANU PF's definition of patriotism, especially in its anti-colonial discourse, is the portrayal of anyone with divergent views as unpatriotic. In this way, ZANU PF exclusively becomes the embodiment of patriotism as can be inferred from the following quotation:

> Enemies of patriotism are sellouts…At its core, patriotism puts Zimbabwe and therefore the people first as overarching affirmation of the historic and permanent values and ideals of the country's heroic liberation struggle…It is in this connection that Zanu PF is Zimbabwe's Patriotic Front (*#Team ZANU PF*, 2013: 20-1).

This construction of political identities based on Manichean binaries does not give much room and attention to grey areas and negotiation. It is either one supports ZANU PF perceptions of the nation and its challenges to be a patriot or oppose them thus rendering oneself a sell-out and an enemy of the state. Rationality, irrationality, good and evil are thus premised - not on objective judgments of the nation but rather, on political affiliation. Ultimately, this determines what or who is supposed to be embraced or rejected as part of the solution to the nation's challenges.

Political discourse does not work through the imperative of 'truth' but through the social production and entrenchment (through language) of truths. In the post-2000 setting, ZANU PF's deeply embedded identity as the people's liberator is fundamentally at stake, with controversies over the crisis. The party's identity dynamics became complicated as they are profoundly entrenched in economic and administrative rhetoric that is not corroborated by the realities on the ground. The party's capability was jostled and threatened by the opposition MDC party which seriously challenged its power. So, in the controversy about national development, ZANU PF seeks to construct a coherent identity that counters competition and propel the exigency of its existence. Ford (2005:53) enunciates that, "all politics are identities; all identities political." ZANU PF's political identity shaped by its discourse in campaign texts

reflects a political subjectivity that can be described in Foucauldian terms as "organised around historical contingencies which are not only modifiable but in perpetual displacement; which are supported by a whole system of institutions which impose them and renew them; and which act in a constraining sometimes violent way" (Foucault, 1981:54). In *#Team ZANU PF* and *Zim Asset*, ZANU PF's political and economic relevance is attached to a liberator identity that is strategically constructed and projected to reflect the party's indispensability. This identity re-constructs ZANU PF as bound up with the nation and national identity. This essentialisation of national identity makes ZANU PF's "attractiveness, legitimacy and credibility" (Nye, 2004:31) seem normative. Thus normalised, the identity is integrated into a set of signifiers asserting what is cause and effect in Zimbabwean politics and economics. In all its articulations, ZANU PF accentuate how the party's political identity is anchored on the people's goals and aspirations that have roots in the nation's liberation history. Liberation becomes a leitmotif defining and identifying the nation in ways that define and identify its political debts to ZANU PF's liberating act. The following quotations are revealing of the political expediency possible in this obfuscation of the ZANU PF as bound up with the nation: "Zanu PF's ideology and policies embody the collective national aspirations and goals of the people of Zimbabwe as their own liberators and masters of their own destiny" *(#Team ZANU PF*, 2013:108) and "Zanu PF has given living proof to its ideological principle that Zimbabwe will never be a colony again" (2013:109). In these quotations, binding the nation to the party through the shared metaphor of liberation allows ZANU PF to gain trust, strengthen its political confidence and ultimately authority over the nation. Thus, as a political brand back-boned by the nation's liberation history, ZANU PF projects being ZANU PF as a political character and identity that reflects its national mission. The nation's liberation is portrayed as the single most important aspect of ZANU PF being a liberation movement. In this sense, the opposition, which is linked to foreign powers and their perceived neo-colonial intentions, is cast as the nation's enemy thus slyly projecting ZANU PF fight against opposition as patriotic acts of defending the nation. In this sense, portraying ZANU PF as the "living proof" to "its ideological principle that Zimbabwe will never be a colony again" (2013:109) is entrenching the view that not only is ZANU PF the nation's protector, but also that the party's opposition is the nation's enemy.

History functions in ZANU PF political discourse as a site of self-legitimisation and concretisation of the opposition's political illegitimacy. As a historical event, the liberation war historicises (read 'authenticates') ZANU PF's political status and agency to rule. In the campaign texts, the political use of this historical expediency is apparent in the party's

proclivity for projecting itself as an exclusively advantaged player whose legitimacy is unparalleled. Exclusive self-identification is evident, among other things, from the extensive use of the adjective 'only' in constructions of ZANU PF as the solution to the problems gripping the nation. We therefore read, for instance, that "[a]s the *only* liberation movement in Zimbabwe, ZANU PF ensured that the people were given an opportunity to freely express themselves" *(emphasis added, #Team ZANU PF*, 2013: 67). In this particular case "only" functions as an adjective reinforcing the exclusivity of ZANU PF as a liberation movement. Beyond this, however, the adjective is used in the context of the constitutional-making process that culminated in the adoption of a new constitution in 2013 since independence. Although the constitution-making process was done during the period of the Government of National Unity when ZANU PF governed the nation with the opposition, the party gives a liberation spin to the process in a way that effectively accentuates its contribution and dwarfs that of the opposition. This linking of the liberation movement and the constitution-making process and issues of free expression counter the discourse of democracy that is championed by the MDC. ZANU PF has mostly been accused by the opposition of being authoritarian, unconstitutional and predisposed to curtailing the people's freedoms.

Democracy was one of the major guiding principles of the liberation movement and as such ZANU PF could not afford to be seen as lacking in its delivery. Now synonymous with opposition politics as reflected, inter alia, in the name Movement for Democratic Change, democracy was/is a site of political contest in re-negotiations of the nation's political culture. In this sense, when used to identify ZANU PF as the agent enabling paraphernalia of democracy such as in the constitution-making process, the adjective "only" not only 'synonymises' ZANU PF's political beliefs with democratic principles symbolised by the constitution but also covertly fix any alternative dispensations without ZANU PF as fundamentally undemocratic. To cement this binary construction of a democratic liberation movement (ZANU PF) and undemocratic opposition, ZANU PF invokes its trademark anti-imperial rhetoric to reconstruct the constitution-making process as a teleological democratic process that is part of ZANU PF's decolonising history and identity. *#Team ZANU PF* explains how "the Party was vigilant throughout the constitution-making process to guard against treachery and to protect the process from being hijacked by foreign or regime change interests" *(#Team ZANU PF*, 2013: 67). Ironically, the diction of enabling democracy relating to "guarding" against neo-colonial influences in the constitution-making process presents a challenge to the notion of free speech.

Here, ZANU PF reveals its proclivity for dictating and monitoring which is contradictory to notions of democracy.

Hall of mirrors: The narrative turn

Fairclough (1989: vi) notes that the ways in which people communicate are constrained by the structures and forces of those social institutions within which they live and function. As the governing party, ZANU PF is synonymous with the state and authority. The party wields the power to make decisions on behalf of the nation and this means that it is incumbent on the party, given the crisis situation the nation is in, to either defend its policies or re-cast, through discourse, the failed policies in ways that shift blame to anything other than the party. The discourse of political defence or self-justification often takes the form of a narrative where the story of the nation is re-packaged and circulated to influence public opinion over past, existing and future national policies drawn by the party.

Political narratives are a concrete social dispositif that give historical moments and particular conjunctures form and meaning.[11] The inherent link between narratives, politics and institutions is that they are modes of knowledge and power. Agamben (2009:3) explains that apparatuses such as narratives always have a strategic function and "emerge at the intersection of power relations and relations of knowledge." Narratives are implicated in the (re)production, distribution and sustenance of power because they basically delimit social relationships, political and institutional power. They can be understood as inclined 'self-interested mechanisms for maintaining power'. Like mirrors, narratives give a reflection of organisational practices. However, they do more than reflecting the organisation. Modes of narrating the organisation actually *reflect on* the organisation, that is, they provide a subtle commentary on certain aspects of the organisation. Political texts are part of this self-narration and self-discoursing. They contain "relations of forces that support and are supported by certain knowledge" (Foucault, 1980: 87). Being the political party in power in Zimbabwe since independence, the story of ZANU PF is an attempt to own and relate the story of the nation over the years, culminating into the present economic and politic quagmire.

[11] Foucault (1980:194) defined the term dispositif as a "heterogeneous ensemble of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral, philanthropic propositions, the said as much as the unsaid". This entails narratives, vocabularies, underpinning ideologies, perceptions, theories, conceptual framework and many other inherent unified forms and structures of representation

Evidently, in ZANU PF texts, much is at stake when it comes to narrating the political trajectory leading to the crisis. Thus, for Nyambi (2013: 6), "official narrative[s] of the nation, [are] characterised by discernible politically-motivated exclusions, deletions and censorship of other narratives." In any situation, typically the post-2000 crisis period in Zimbabwe, questions about the meaning of the story, who owns it, how it is told and its purpose come to play. Exploring narratives and range of entitlement claims, "from the intimate to the political, can provide understanding of the ways that people claim or assign authority and the way they manage complexities for speaking for themselves, speaking for others and relying on representative speakers to speak for them" (Shuman, 2015:39). Part of speaking for the nation involves justifying the voice and perspective as qualified and authenticated to tell the story.

Of interest is how ZANU PF uses narration as a discursive mode of self-locution. This forms part of the party's defence mechanism where it attempts to disentangle itself from the inconveniences of the prevailing crisis. The party's grammars of self-justification betray an inclination to project a pro-active identity which is linked to the party's revolutionary identity. The following quotation illustrates how the narrative of the Zimbabwean economic crisis by ZANU PF not only mirrors ZANU PF's political identity but also slyly comments on the party's discursive approach to the relationship between it and the crisis. It is stated that:

> ZANU PF introduced the multicurrency system to protect the people from the runaway hyperinflation that had become uncontrollable and the effects of the collapse of the Zimdollar" (*#Team ZANU PF,* 2013:61).

Markedly, the party acknowledges that "the collapse of the Zimdollar was a shameful development not worthy of celebration" (*#Team ZANU PF,* 2013:61). However, as the context of the acknowledgement shows, it has nothing to do with the party taking responsibility for the crisis. Rather, the 'shame' evoked in the acknowledgment is strategically constructed in a way that places more blame for the subject and object of the cause of the crisis outside the party which was supposed to deal with it. The shame is therefore not for the ruling party which failed to deal with the crisis, but rather for the specific agents such as the opposition parties and hostile foreign powers which the party blames for the crisis. Shame is thus not a product of failure, for which it typically is, but rather, a feeling of guilt for causing suffering. ZANU PF is here entering a moral sphere where it politically operationalised what Muponde (2004: 123) has called a "cult of victimization" to claim a victim identity that places it on a high moral ground. For the party, the higher it morally pitched itself, the lower its rivals fared. Such claims to

superior moral aptitude are closely connected to sympathy and political alignment. It is expanded that following the inflation of the Zimbabwean dollar:

> The government replaced it with the United States dollar as the leading legal tender to serve Zimbabwe in a basket of multi-currencies is in effect poetic justice given that the same US dollar had been used to kill the Zimdollar by merchants of regime-change in their vain hope of killing Zimbabwe. (*#Team ZANU PF*, 2013: 61)

It is further explained that this move is ideologically satisfying and that it is a strategic vision that ZANU PF, "ideologically stomached the use of Uncle Sam's currency to protect the people from the vagaries of hyperinflation…" (2013:61). This pride in taking advantage of United States of America's currency may be read as ironic given the party's pride in the indigenisation of the economy. However, as the quotations above show, the use of American currency is tactically explained from the vantage point of a victim who is desperately led to take difficult choices by a victimiser. Yet this victim status does not entail a political passivity. In fact, despite claiming victimisation by the USA, ZANU PF accentuates its proactive and reactionary creativity in adopting the currency of the enemy to arrest a runaway inflation that the party claims was caused by the Americans and their allies, hence the "adoption of the multicurrency system" is portrayed as evidence that the party can "rise to any challenge in defence of the people's goals which are the goals of the liberation struggle" (2013:61). Interestingly, in view of this study's focus on the politics and politicisation of discourse, is how, though steeped in a victim identity and situations of claimed political victimisation, the "rise to any challenge" (2013:61) constructs a feisty, responsive government that defends the nation from foreign hostility. Markedly, the political convenience of this self-portrait is cemented by the strategic silence on the outcome of the 'rising to the challenge'. This silence constitutes an important layer of the narrative of the crisis which ZANU PF stifles as a method of propping up the narrative of claimed virtuous political scores.

Narrative constructions of the self as a governing party in *#Team ZANU PF* and *Zim Asset* are simple, monolithic and homogeneous. As Brown (2006) observes, no organisation starts its storytelling afresh each day. There is often considerable continuity in stories and story themes in an organisation. The story rarely changes unless if it threatens the organisation's own existence. ZANU PF's narrative is one continuous thread from 1980 which discursively argue a case for the party's continued stay in power. Its ideology and political argument reverberated throughout the years, adapting to prevailing political climates. The following quotation from the party's 1980 Election Manifesto *(1980 – The Year of the People's Power)* reveals how little

has changed in terms of the party's political self-identification, concept of nation and the party's relationship to it:

> Since its inception in 1963, ZANU (PF) has always been a REVOLUTIONARY PARTY championing the cause of the people of Zimbabwe not by mere words of appeal to the British Government or to the United Nations but by ACTION. ZANU (PF) has thus always been an ACTION PARTY for that is what any revolutionary party should be. Through its armed struggle ZANU (PF) alone has been responsible for the constitutional change that removed first, the racist settler regime, and, secondly, the previous regime. It was ZANU PF revolutionary programme and the sacrifices of its leadership, ZANLA forces, and the revolutionary broad masses that brought about the Lancaster House Conference. Without the blood of ZANU (PF) fighters and ZANU PF supporters, U.D.I. would have easily succeeded and oppressive settler rule continued. ZANU PF's Liberation War will be remembered by our future generations for hundreds, indeed, thousands of years to come. ZANU (PF) is history itself, for ZANU (PF) has created a revolutionary history for the people of Zimbabwe. (1980:5)

This excerpt sets the foundation of a ZANU PF narrativisation of the political self that is grounded in the discursive thread of the liberation politics. As is the case in post-2000 ZANU PF campaigns, the liberation struggle is evoked as a solid foundation on which political relevance is derived. In repeating the claimed interconnection between liberation and nationess, ZANU PF claims continuity and consistence in being a proactive party championing the people's struggles against all forms of disabling and exploitative forces. The party's histories of heroism in the anti-colonial war is re-invoked and used as evidence of capacity and ability to deal with national issues caused by the nation's erstwhile colonial nemesis. As Nyambi and Mangena (2015: 139) note, in ZANU PF political thought and practice, "the past is the present and future." In *# Team ZANU PF,* ZANU PF's heroism of the past is remembered and resuscitated and its political usability is facilitated by the convenient imagining of the present crisis as a product of the same colonial machinations that ZANU PF prides itself in overcoming, as the following quotation reveals:

> […]2013 harmonised elections come against the background of the enduring and unforgettable fact that it is ZANU PF, which liberated Zimbabwe after prosecuting a heroic armed struggle. It was this people's resort to the bullet that won Zimbabweans the right to vote that everyone enjoys today as a legacy of our liberation struggle. That legacy permanently connects past, present and future generations of this nation with one another. (2013: 7)

The tale of consistency, success and heroic escapades radiating in ZANU PF texts has its base around the party's ideological self-construction as a revolutionary project and makers of the nation. The narrative naturalises ZANU PF's agency as a form of teleological persistence of the history of an unfolding revolution. History is thus immortalised and emotionalised to identify ZANU PF as the political constant vis-à-vis the nation's political needs since independence.

In the section 'The ZANU PF of 1980' within that manifesto the narrative illuminates that:

> Because we have fought to achieve both military and political power, and because we have produced the Lancaster House Agreement we must not allow the others and the reactionaries to reap the ripe peaches we have tended. ZANU PF planted and tended the peach tree. ZANU PF is, therefore entitled to reap her peaches. And ZANU PF's hand is the people's hand! ZANU PF is thus fighting the elections so that it can achieve POLITICAL POWER for the people the same way it achieved military power for them (1980: 8)

This self-narration and historicisation explains ZANU PF's claim of sole legitimacy and custodianship of the nation. Underlying this narrative are connotations of power that reflect ZANU PF's entrenched sense of political privilege drawn from the party's historical liberating acts. The peach tree metaphor is interesting as it has underlying meanings that ZANU PF consciously invokes to justify its mapping of political power, then, now and in the future. In imagining the nation as a peach tree "tended" by ZANU PF and independence as peaches, the party claims absolute ownership rights to betray its self-interests in the liberation project. The connotations and undertones of food and eating emerging from this metaphor suggest the manipulative and exploitative tendencies of the relationship between ZANU PF, the liberation struggle and the independent nation. This metaphor constructs the independent nation as limited by its history of political 'parenting' and political 'tenders' to avail itself to alternative political owners and 'eaters' (in ZANU PF's logic of political governance). In this schema, the peach fruits (freedom) are not a product of a disinterested history of 'tendering'. Rather, ZANU PF's vehement claim to exclusive enjoyment of the fruits suggests that they were grown for a single purpose; that is, ZANU PF's consumption. This notion of liberating and liberation neither signifies a democratic dispensation nor projects the liberation struggle as a selfless commitment for the good of the nation. Rather, the fruit and eating metaphors coupled with the symbolic feeling of entitlement indicate the basis for authoritarianism.

Power in ZANU PF's political discourse is not always imagined as the 'fruits' of the liberation – it is also a product of the act of liberating and (in the party's peach tree metaphor) also a product of processes of 'tendering' the 'peach tree'. In other words, political legitimacy is not claimed by ZANU PF only on the basis of its being the liberator but also on the basis of the liberating act. This can be discerned in the quotation that:

> ZANU (PF), however, derives its inspiration and confidence from the experience it has had in armed struggle. If it has fought such a hard, bitter and bloody war and absolutely no reason why it must fail in governing the county in accordance with People's wishes *(#Team ZANU PF*, 2013:16).

Here, narrating as a way of identifying ZANU PF with the nation involves remembering the history of liberation as much as re-membering the acts of liberating the nation. Images of blood, arms and 'struggling' create a strong sense of commitment and sacrifice which reflect on the importance (to ZANU PF) of liberation. This sense of commitment and sacrifice are invoked by the party – not only to justify its political personalisation of liberation and the political legitimacy that such personalisation guarantees, but also to hinge claims about the party's abilities in the present on strong, verifiable evidence of ability in the past. This projection of the constancy of political ability as part of the party's revolutionary identity makes ZANU PF's relevance natural, common-sensical and normative. The past here functions as a political mnemonic device that not only archives the history of becoming Zimbabwe, but perhaps more importantly, conditions the archive to prioritise only those aspects of the past that reinforce the liberation identity of the nation which, of course, is bound up with ZANU PF political agency.

Re-citing Nyambi and Mangena's (2015: 139) argument that in ZANU PF's ideological and political thought and practice "the past is the present and future", one can argue that the past narrativised through symbols, images and metaphors of the liberating act is not past. Rather, this past is 'present', among other reasons because in ZANU PF politics, its meanings in relation to the nation's identity and political welfare indicates the required action plan in the present as well as the political identities of those capacitated by the past to carry out this plan. In this light, the past emboldens ZANU PF to circumscribe and limit the patriotic identity of the nation to only the past that legitimates the nation's caretaking by ZANU PF. To cement this self-interested identity and view of nation, the party constructs an image of the nation in crisis that accentuates dimensions of its challenges that echo – not only the colonised nation, but ZANU PF's political intervention.

Self-auditing the revolution: the discourse of indigenisation and loyalty

Adding to its story of "reputation of resilience, survival and real achievement against unprecedented odds" *(#Team ZANU PF,* 2013: 11), ZANU PF lauds itself for staying true to the liberation ideology especially in terms of the imperative of uplifting and empowering black people. For a party facing criticism for making Zimbabweans poorer than they were in colonial times, emphasising the party's indigenisation policy is a strategic move meant to re-align the party with the expectations of liberation. The policy of indigenisation occupies the core of ZANU PF's campaign ideology in the post-2000 period (Mlambo, 2015). The radical turn of the policy can be traced back to the party's spearheading of invasions and forceful acquisitions of white-owned farms around 2000. Since then, the policy of indigenisation has been expanded to the commercial and other sectors such as manufacturing where foreign-owned companies are required to offer at least fifty-one percent of their shares to black Zimbabweans under the Indigenisation and Empowerment Act signed into law by Mugabe in 2008. Much has been written about the negative economic ramifications of Zimbabwe's land reforms in particular and the Indigenisation and Empowerment Act in general (Moyo and Yeros, 2013). Against this politically damaging perception of the policy, ZANU PF was faced with a challenge to redefine and project it in positive light in the public sphere. In its campaign texts, indigenisation is metaphorised to signify the epitome of liberation. As would be expected, the policy's negative effects are either erased or linked to certain forms of foreign sabotage. This creates space for the policy to shine as the signature move by the ruling party to fulfil the promise of liberation through black empowerment. We therefore find that in the campaign texts, indigenisation is often connected to the essential markers of liberation, particularly the ownership of land, means of production and ultimately, livelihood. This re-construction of indigenisation as the signature policy of the decolonising project can be inferred from the quotation below:

> Under ZANU PF and President Mugabe's leadership, Zimbabwe has become one of the most indigenised and empowered countries in the developing world in terms of the untold livelihood opportunities that have been availed to the indigenous people. *(#Team ZANU PF*, 2013:11)

This excerpt exemplifies the discursive ways in which ZANU PF turns politically inconvenient realities on their head, re-packaging them to mean something positive and in line with the party's strategies of implementing liberation. When not totally ignored, the temporal hardships linked to indigenisation are depicted as a necessary passing phase which is part of the journey to black emancipation, thus for the party "Only Indigenisation and People's Empowerment

reform programme can meet the goals of the people. *There's no other alternative*" *(#Team ZANU PF*, 2013: 4).

As a metaphor of progress, the term "indigenisation" is collocated (in ZANU PF political texts) with positive words such "empowered" in a way that re-defines it as the essence of being liberated. Such collocates as "empowered" vividly capture and image a state of well-being that, though contrasting sharply with the state of the national economy, appeal to the people's notions of the good life as indicating fundamental needs and rights. This means that although Zimbabweans, in the moment, clearly lack most of the basic needs and rights, indigenisation has equipped them to attain them. This re-casts the present difficulties as passing and unimportant. To feel liberated, then, meant recognising that although inhabiting an undesirable present, ZANU PF has availed the fundamental tool in the form of indigenisation to unlock possibilities for a better life. In this light, it is no wonder that ZANU PF's indigenisation discourses project the policy as the master stroke that distinguishes the party from opposition parties which, because of their young histories and lack of liberation struggle experience, are depicted as fatally disconnected from the people's fundamental needs.

In addition to the above, the land reform, a key instalment in the government's indigenisation policy is heightened as the pinnacle of liberation. Dubbed the Third Chimurenga, an ongoing liberation struggle, a follow-up after the armed First and Second Chimurengas that were waged during the colonial period to overthrow the white colonial regime, the Third Chimurenga is evoked in ZANU PF political texts as the finale struggle involving the wrestling of Zimbabwe (of land) from 'foreign' hands. In this discourse, grammars of autochthony are summoned to present an unjustifiable case of prevailing land holding where despite their small number, white farmers owned much of Zimbabwe's arable land. This land distribution system is portrayed by ZANU PF as inimical to the goal of liberation; that is, to restore the dignity of black people. In this sense, ZANU PF characterises any further delays in remedial action as a form of "betrayal of the fallen heroes of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle and daylight robbery of the aspirations of Zimbabweans" *(#Team ZANU PF*, 2013: 47). Land functions in this discourse as a symbolic trophy that signifies the victory of black people and marks the end of colonialism. In this sense and as hinted above, the Third Chimurenga is conceived as the final struggle meant to re-connect the people to the object of their struggle – the land. Land ownership thus became the symbol of experiencing liberation, of being a citizen of Zimbabwe. Connected to the experience of owning land and being a liberated Zimbabwean is the sense of economic security. Clearly lacking in a post-2000 milieu characterised by a biting economic crisis, economic security is

portrayed in ZANU PF campaign texts as a future by-product of its indigenisation policies which the party depicted as geared towards involving black people in the economic sector. This view of liberation, indigenisation and black livelihood is expressed in the party's popular metaphoric slogan for the 2008 plebiscite "land is the economy and the economy is land." As observed in the previous chapter, this metaphorisation of the economy as a phenomenon signified by semantic correspondences of land re-constructs it as something that only ZANU PF can provide. In this politicised semantic schema, land (which is the economy) is a product of ZANU PF-led struggles and its availing to the people is equated to ensuring their economic freedom. In this way, the people's political freedom is re-imagined as their economic liberation.

As Chilton (2004: 4) notes, political language is a critical mechanism through which "authority, legitimacy (and) consensus" are mediated. Citing Aristotle's notion of political communication, Chilton argues that language in politics is informed by the human impulse to express "perceptions of good and evil" (Chilton, 2004: 4). For Chilton (2004: 4) "shared perceptions of values … define political associations." In ZANU PF's indigenisation discourse, "perceptions of values" which shape political association are steeped in the binary construction of liberation and its 'source' ZANU PF as 'good' and anything and anyone opposed to the party as evil and fundamentally averse to liberation. Unlike in Chilton's schema, "political association" in ZANU PF's indigenisation and liberation discourse is not a result of a mere convergence of "perceptions of values". Rather, political association with ZANU PF is solicited and sometimes forced by ZANU PF on the basis of an absence of alternatives. This absence is strategically created by ZANU PF through a liberation discourse that pins and fixes everything national to liberation and by extension and implication, the source of that liberation - ZANU PF. As Muponde (2004: 177) argues in another context, the mantra that "Zanu PF is the people, and the people are Zanu PF" effectively seals space for alternative imaginings of 'values' that can inform divergent forms of political association.

Worth a Thousand Words

Words describe given phenomena, while "images provide interpretations, ideologically colored angles … not explicitly, but by suggestion, by connotation, by appealing to barely conscious, half-forgotten knowledge" (Van Leeuwen, 2008:136). True to the adage that a "picture is worth a thousand words", a scrutiny of visual effects in the ZANU PF texts *#Team ZANU PF 2013* and *Zim Asset* suggests their political discursivity. Images convey information more complexly than words. Glossy pictures punctuating the manifestos' messages, figures and graphs bring

into sharp focus the value that images have in capturing attention and expressing certain political messages in certain ways. This section considers how political messages can be deduced and evaluated on the basis of visual semiotics and critical analysis of visual images in ZANU PF texts in relation to their context of use. My interest is on how certain visual aspects create meaning and how visual texts that function as part of an elaborate political message are designed to influence perceptions. Unravelling the connotative meanings in visual images involves going beyond what one sees to an interpretation of contextual, metaphoric and abstractive levels of what and who is being represented. Images accumulate into clusters which reinforce frames of conceptions created by words. Pictures create mental images that impose a vision with semantic suggestiveness. Not much attention has been paid to the political aesthetics of images as systematically used in ZANU PF discourses although they can potentially illuminate intriguing political dynamics and nuances. The use of texts and images in furthering political ideologies has so far not received much attention.

In CDA and textual analysis, every attribute of a text distinguishes its communicative power. One thing I find intriguing about ZANU PF manifestos is their varying lengths. Throughout the years, the party's manifestoes have been getting longer and longer. For example, the 1980 election manifesto, "*1980- The Year of the People's Power"* had only 16 pages, the 1985 manifesto had 24 pages but *#Team ZANU PF 2013* has a whopping 108 pages. After three decades of independence one feels ZANU PF as the ruling government has a lot to appraise people on as they have since been entrusted with the onus of carrying the nation forward. Paradoxically what forms the base of the length is not about the achievements but more of explanations of ZANU PF's ideological position and what the party seeks to achieve as "the next government."

#Team ZANU PF 2013 is presented with a fascinating look and display. It is printed on a glossy paper that reflects and foregrounds quality. It spots the party's official colours which borders all of its pages. ZANU PF colours are similar to those of the national flag so a clear distinction between both the flags as well as party and nation is often hard to draw. Visually, then, the party flag is the national flag. This similarity carries much deeper connotations for explanations and justifications of sites of power and legitimacy. As shown in the foregoing paragraphs, ZANU PF self-constructs itself as bound up with the nation and consequently, the people, for in its logic, "Zanu PF is the people, and the people are Zanu PF" (Muponde, 2004: 177). Thus, an impression is created that the stylish feel and attractiveness of the paper is complementing the symbolic design involving the national flag. The image of the national flag bordering the

contents of the manifesto creates a vivid picture of the document whose meanings and political significance operate on a symbolic plane. The fusion of paper quality, colour and symbolism of the national flag politically embellishes the contents of the manifesto. This embellishment imbues the contents of the manifesto with a patriotic flair that forges a connection between the message and the nation. Though primarily a ZANU PF creation, the message is given a national appeal by its presentation as ornamented by the national colours which, as hinted above, though originating in ZANU PF's revolutionary flag, symbolise a nation that ZANU PF, in many ways, claims exclusive rights and identification.

The sleek paper used for the manifesto synchronises with the high-quality life that the content envisions as possible. This life is symbolically enacted in pictorial depictions of happy people and vibrant industries that are nowhere near the realities of crisis-laden Zimbabwe. The image captioned "Forever Free" provides an interesting case that reflects how visual images form a crucial part of modes of discourse in the struggle for expressive space to represent the crisis. The image is constituted by a coalescing medley of pictures of predominantly happy, smiling and laughing youths. Most of the youths are laughing into their modern electronic gadgets including smartphones, laptops and tablets. This picture and others in the manifesto make part of what de Mooij (2010: 277) has called the "brand image". For de Mooij, "brand image is the representation of the brand in the mind of the consumer…the image can be like a human being with unique characteristics… it can be quality and the representation of trust in a supplier – the product is part of a trusted family of products." As a form of political advertising discourse, *#Team ZANU PF 2013* uses pictures to create and entrench a political brand image. By their nature, political brands are almost always associated with national legacies; that is, the relationship between the party and the nation. This visual construction of the relationship between nation and party feeds into the party's self-identification as a viable political option. This viability is gauged and realised against two main factors, the nation's needs as well as rival (re)presentations of alternative viabilities and parties. Naturally, in a context of crisis attributable to the party's years in power, ZANU PF's visual (re)construction of itself as a viable party involves a subtle disentanglement of itself from causal factors. Part of this self-extraction from the causes of the crisis involves the party's self-projection as a viable solution to the challenges posed by the crisis. Though pictures in *#Team ZANU PF 2013* do not necessarily elide the crisis, they depict aspects of it that naturalise ZANU PF's political relevance.

In the image mentioned above, the caption "Forever Free" suggests the overarching theme of freedom. The caption creates the context which provides a guiding framework that compels a certain interpretation of the message of the image. As a discourse of relevance, the issue at the centre of the message concerns what the party has done, can, and will do for the well-being of the nation. In the image, what the party will do is pictorially captured as done. The image evokes a visual representation of what is (the stilled reality of happiness and a booming economy) in an enticing manner that creates impressions of the possibility of the replication of the nation in the image into reality. Unlike the case with literary imagery where readers map mental pictures according to their subjective interpretations of descriptions, pictorial images are dictatorial in the way in which they compel viewers to perceive their messages. In this specific case, viewed in the context of the caption "Forever Free", the picture can be interpreted as compelling a perception of freedom reflected (especially in the mood) in the picture. "Forever Freedom" thus suggests an experience of nation that connotes the continuity of happiness which is propped up by vibrant economic development symbolised by the industries.

The longevity of freedom and the happiness it is associated with in the picture is tied to semantic connotations of youth. Youth, youths and youthfulness are leitmotifs in ZANU PF's visual discourse that serve many political, aesthetic and discursive functions. In the picture, the impression created by the depiction of youths looking happy with their flashy electronic gadgets and surrounded by thriving industries is that the youths, what they have (gadgets, smiles and laughter) and what surround them (industries), have the capacity for growth and permanency. Thus, besides portraying a state of nation that unsettles the prevailing reality of crisis, the picture foregrounds ZANU PF's potential to lead Zimbabwe to prosperity. Here, what ZANU PF hopes for is that seeing leads to believing. By its nature, believing involves trust, hope and expectation. The visual mapping of a prosperous nation facilitated by the picture presents the future as (and in) the present in a way that reflect what is needed to turn around the nation as what is already available. In this sense and as hinted above, the image is both 'contemporary' (because it occupies the present) and futuristic (because it signals how the imaged prosperous present will become the new norm in future).

In an era marked by modern liberal economies and globalising variants of democracy, ZANU PF's long history as an anti-colonial and anti-West movement has made it look like a pariah establishment that is out of touch with the prevailing generational sensibilities. This is a considerable weakness especially when considering the fact that its rivals, particularly the Movement for Democratic Change, prides itself for being driven by youthful zest and a natural

predilection for modernising the nation. To counter this threat of perception, ZANU PF in *#Team ZANU PF 2013* re-package itself as a youth-oriented organisation that is in touch, both literally (technologically) and generally as a party that is aware of what it takes to build a modern nation. Nyambi (2018) has noted Mugabe and ZANU PF's spirited efforts respond to the fear of being perceived as old and out of touch. He expresses that:

> Fronted by a nonagenarian, the ZANU PF party certainly had a more difficult task to connect with the young voters. Perhaps, one of Mugabe's most notable attempts to associate with the so-called "Born-Free" generation was his featuring in an urban grooves song aptly titled "Get connected," which was performed by the appropriately named Born Free Crew in 2010. In the song, Mugabe can be heard rapping using the Shona urban lingo widely used by urban youths. He says, "*zvirisei sei Shingi*" ("what's up" or "how are you doing"). Although the youthful singers do not refer to Mugabe as Bob in this song, they do call him Mudhara ("old man"), an affectionate title mainly used by youths to refer to their fathers. In this way, Mugabe is not reinvented as a youth, but he can be said to be reconstructed as "connected" to the youths and as someone with whom they can identify (Nyambi, 2018: 17)

This attempt to endear the party and its President to the youth is reflected in, among other things, the title of the manifesto *#Team ZANU PF* 2013. Prefixed by the internet social media hashtag in the age of the 'viral', the title captures the imagination as heralding a message that is spreading without bounds. Beyond this, however, the 'modernised' title and (by implication) the party it identifies as legitimate refracts the inclined thrust on the present and future. The manifesto is thus given an appeal as a text that gazes into the future which it locates as bound up with the youth and modern, popular movements which resonate within the ways the world do business now. In addition to this, an intriguing feature in ZANU PF texts connected to ZANU PF's political imaging as a youth-oriented party is the political re-invention of President Mugabe through images. In the manifesto, Mugabe is portrayed as a vivacious, youthful man that is nowhere near the venerable, frail nonagenarian. The manifesto uses old pictures of Mugabe in which he looks young, energetic and capable. Muleya (2013) has commented that, "[t]here's been a spirited attempt to package him as a relatively young, energetic leader who still has vigour to sustain a rigorous election campaign around the country — who still has a vision of some sort." (CBC News, 2013, July 30). Thus, besides identifying Mugabe with youthful voters, Mugabe's images in the manifesto also tap from the habitual equating of youthfulness with energy – a capacity for action and longevity. Mugabe's image goes a long way in exposing schematism in ZANU PF politics. What can be defined as the reality is quite subjective but Mugabe's advanced age was glaring. The recreation of his image goes a long

way in exposing superficiality in some discourses as it raises questions on what other things are disguised and padded to refract glaring unsustainable realities.

This 'use' of youth in ZANU PF's campaign discourse can also be seen in the image "Safeguarding and Passing on the Liberation Struggle". The picture features historical personalities with undisputable national associations. The personalities are connected together through baton sticks which are exchanged from one generation to the next. Iconic figures of the First Chimurenga/Umvukela such as Mbuya Nehanda and Lobengula are pictured as passing the baton to heroes of the Second liberation struggle Tongogara, Nkomo, Chitepo and Muzenda with Mugabe at the centre of them all. Their faces are relaxed, their eyes are purposeful and focused and they are passing on the baton stick to a handful of youths who are crammed on the far corner. The human 'chain' in this picture is politically symbolic. The symbolism of the baton stick creates an impression of the naturality of the process of sacrificing for the next generation. The human 'chain' and the politically iconic nature of the members comprising the connected generations indicate the duty and responsibility inherent in being part of a generation of Zimbabweans. This is the duty and responsibility that ZANU PF, by virtue of its liberation struggle history, claims, personalise and deploy as a form of fetish 'kingmaker'. The pictures thus re-imagine the future as inhabited by generations for whom history has favoured and tasked ZANU PF to prepare the nation. The baton stick symbolises the nation that moves from one generation of Zimbabweans to the next. That Mugabe occupies the penultimate position before the future generation to whom he hands over the 'stick' is politically strategic. Viewed from the context of the political semantics of the baton stick metaphor, Mugabe's positionality adorns on him and the moment he occupies, an obligation to prepare the nation for the generation he passes the stick to. As the descriptive narrative explaining the picture makes clear, the preparation, capacity and capability for preparing the next generation of Zimbabweans is depicted as derived only from one's liberation struggle history.

It is therefore stated that given the historical moment in which colonial forms of economic and land injustices prevail, preparing the next generation of independent Zimbabweans involves passing "the heroic baton of the legacy of the liberation struggle through the new policy of Indigenisation and People's Empowerment" (*#Team ZANU PF*, 2013: 19). Reflecting on Zimbabwe's history l find this so ironic because when today's nationalists joined the liberation struggle and decided to fight colonial oppression they were in their youth. The picture cited above does not give the youths the kind of agency to define their national path in the same

manner that ZANU PF youths charted their revolutionary identity for the nation they wanted in the 1960s. As Mengistu (2016:1) explains:

> At the global level, there seems to be an understanding that youth are significant dividends of the global population, such that they need to be included in every decision-making process. They are also recognized as key agents of socio-economic and political movers of the society. Despite this fact, on the ground, youth are marginalized and excluded from the political and important decision making processes.

The inclusion of the youths strategically and conveniently resonates with ZANU PF's accentuated focus on the youths recently, both in terms of their emphasising their needs and engagement in the political arena. This is a relatively timely priority, particularly in light of recent events and democratic transitions, in Zimbabwe especially in the post-2000 context. Theme of "Unlocking the value in the youth[12]" torches the importance of youth participation in decision-making. Youths in Zimbabwe are some of the most hard-hit by poverty, limited employment prospects and opportunities as industries shut down. This wretched condition of youths makes them some of the most disillusioned citizens who are least expected to vote for a party in power during the years of their impoverishment. The youth's political predilection for opposition politics (Mate 2012) drives ZANU PF to create a campaign discourse that though not indicating a readiness to relinquish power to youthful leadership, lauds the political sustainability of the old 'guard' repeating the nationalist tradition of paving the way for the youth; that is passing the baton.

As Van Leeuwen (2002) explains, visual images are representative, functional and compositional. Images legitimise as given facts as 'people can actually see it', and as the adage goes, 'seeing is believing'. Images in ZANU PF political texts also re-discourse, as a way of re-defining the nation, national history. We have already seen how history is closely related to the nationalist identity of the nation and how ZANU PF self-constructs itself as bound up with Zimbabwean nationalism and nationess. Dominating the cover pages of both *#Team ZANU PF 2013* and *Zim Asset* is the Great Zimbabwe monument, reemphasising history as the sustaining nerve of both the party and nation. The way history is captured in ZANU PF texts attempts to foreclose debate on the politics of legitimacy. There is a tone of intolerance that one can actually pick from how the liberation struggle is privatised in ZANU PF's discourse. For example the image captioned, "Lest we forget" (where a black man is carrying a white man on his back, crossing the river) has the following description: "2013 comes against the

[12] This has been the running theme in 2017 ZANU PF youth functions.

background of the enduring and unforgettable fact that it is Zanu PF which liberated Zimbabwe… Zimbabweans are called upon to patriotically cherish and jealously guard the gains of our heroic liberation struggle" (*#Team ZANU PF*, 2013: 7). In *Conversing with Africa: Politics of Change*, the Kenyan author Mukoma wa Ngugi (2003: 24) notes that there is "need to be able to learn from history, not hide behind it, forever cleaning our wounds. To heal we need to use history to act on the present to change our future". Ngugi further explains that history has to be relevant, alive and should be an instrument in regulating change. Change itself is at the heart of development and that is why in *Zim Asset*, the agenda "for sustainable socio-economic" development is qualified with words like transformation, growth, reposition, progress etc. However, as the picture of the colonial era inserted by ZANU PF shows, in ZANU PF politics, the only change that can take the nation forward is the one that avoids destabilising the connection between ZANU PF and the nation. Although the reality of (and in) the picture is colonial, picture occupies a contemporary present on which its meaning and relevance (according to ZANU PF) 'must' be established and used as a moral campus for navigating the political future. Unlike the description of the picture which 'warns' the nation of neo-colonialism, the picture vividly captures a situation of colonial exploitation which not only reminds Zimbabweans of the pain of colonial injustice, but more importantly, can potentially stir antipathetic feelings against any political party identified with perceived neo-colonial tendencies.

Conclusion

In his review of recent social theories and their significance to studies on the role of language in politics, Fairclough (2013: 10) notes that:

> Work on the theory of ideology, which on the one hand has pointed to the increasing relative importance of ideology as a mechanism of power in modern society, as against the exercise of power through coercive means, and on the other hand has come to see language as a major locus of ideology and so of major significance with respect to power.

Fairclough is here hinting at the close relationship between language, discourse and hegemonic sustenance. This chapter concerned itself with the political texts of a ruling party and this meant that focus had to be placed on how the political discourse they engender reflect and refract the dynamics of discourse in ZANU PF's hegemonic control. Focusing on the texts *#Team ZANU PF 2013* and *Zim Asset*, the chapter explored how, as a product of power and the powerful, ZANU PF political discourse forms part of the political "weapons of the powerful" – to invert Scott's (1990) popular phrase. Written and circulated at the height of an economic crisis that put a spotlight on

ZANU PF's capacity to craft and implement a development plan, the texts are conspicuous by their defensive tone and self-justification style. In the text, self-justification and self-defence occurs in covert ways. It involves the use of language and images to create a discourse that re-imagine the nation and its developmental path. ZANU PF's narratives are dependent on interconnecting the party's identity with the nation's identity and the liberation history. The history that ZANU PF relies on to legitimate its rule and nativist policies is not entirely false. Rather, it is reductive and contrived through selective memory to focus only on aspects of the past that connect the party to the well-being of the nation. Prevailing economic problems are depicted as part of neo-colonial machinations to derail the revolution and just another reason for 'patriotic' Zimbabweans to trust the revolutionary policies of the nationalist party. Perhaps a more important point to take from this chapter concerns how post-colonial challenges in the present are discursively repackaged through invocations of liberation history that portrays ZANU PF as a political victim in an era when much of the country's electoral blights are often traced to the party's proclivity for victimising opponents.

CHAPTER 4: ALTERNATIVE DEMOCRACY: CRISIS, DISCOURSE AND THE POLITICS OF OPPOSITION

We must remember that democracy is a struggle that is never won. Not with elections, not with revolutions (Jesse Chan).

Introduction

This chapter primarily focuses on MDC-T's discursive framing of the Zimbabwean situation in the party's 2013 manifesto cum policy document entitled "Jobs, Upliftment, Investment Capital and Environment" (*JUICE)*.[13] The chapter also closely refers , to the MDC-N's (MDC-T splinter group) manifesto *Devolution is the New Revolution* (2013) to clearly demonstrate the fluidity of democracy as a concept. Focusing mainly on how the discourse of democracy is packaged and instrumentalised to foreground politically convenient identities, the chapter explores how language is functionally deployed to frame certain notions of democracy as politically and economically viable, particularly in opposition to the ruling ZANU PF's more conservative, nationalist strands of democracy. This analysis is made in the context of crisis and the resultant competition for curving the expressive turf to advance the political self, sometimes through promoting the self but also through attacking the rival other. Of interest in this chapter is how the MDC (used interchangeably with MDC-T) uses language and discourse to construct democracy (and by implication, the MDC) as the panacea to the country's incessant problems. Analyses of the democracy movement(s) provides insight into the politics of democracy as a political strategy that at once contests power but also gestures to a political alternative and a development plan.

The entrance and constitution of democracy in the development agenda in Zimbabwe is political and often politicised especially by political contestants. As already noted earlier, in its desire to self-represent as an indispensable political player in Zimbabwe, ZANU PF frames democracy as a concept and experience that is bound up with its liberation war history and identity. The challenge, then, for the MDCs is to debunk this political personalisation of democracy and inserting the party in the narrative of the concept's modern manifestations, conceptions and practices. In this light, the chapter begins by delineating the context, which

[13] The party called MDC-T was led by Morgan Tsvangirai from its formation in 1999 as the united MDC party until his death in 2018. The letter T (for Tsvangirai) was added to the name MDC as a way of distinguishing the party from a splinter group which became popularly known as the MDC-M where the letter 'M' represented its leader Arthur Mutambara.

determines the democracy discourse that arises, "not only in stating the kind of problems to be dealt with, but also in constituting the arenas in which actors can compete, dominate or co-operate" (Feindts and Oels, 2005: 168). The post-2000 context reveals a multiplicity of complex political, social and economic challenges linked to the Zimbabwean crisis. These challenges reflect equally multiple challenges to democracy (variously conceptualised). As a self-styled social democratic movement, the MDC advances a neoliberal strand of democracy[14] that contests the radicalised versions of the concept propounded and practiced by the ruling party. Pursuant to this, the MDC sought (and seeks) to reinvigorate civic participation hence its self-anchoring in and alliance with labour, student and civic organisations such as the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (COSATU), Zimbabwe National Students Union (ZINASU) and (in the party's formative years) the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA).

Considering that the CDA of political argumentation should focus on the "generic features of whole texts rather than isolated features of the text" (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012: 1), I analyse the politics of democracy discourse and its relationship to oppositional politics in the context of a broader oppositional narrative of the Zimbabwean crisis. However, an important revelation I make in my analysis is that while the MDC engenders renewed insights and perspectives of democracy, it reiterates certain linear and binary modes of conceptualising democracy. This aspect of method tends to suggest that notions of democracy in *JUICE* are essentially political – that they partake in a discourse of self-legitimation that claims legitimacy through, among other methods, de-legitimising the ruling party. This makes democracy and indeed 'democracy'-oriented opposition contested and contestable political terrains.

Given the ruling party's stranglehold on the political capital of democracy, the MDC perceive strong incentives to engage in what Feindts and Oels (2005: 168 in another context), call the politics of "scaling" to influence Zimbabweans to suspect the genuineness of a 'democracy' that caused so much suffering during the crisis years. Scaling involves the dynamics of how the crisis and development issues are strategically connected to efforts of different actors whose objective is to reorganise, reconfigure and reinforce their political relevance. It entails different levels of analysis and representation of causes and effects, ensuring that what is circulated as democracy in the crisis context is invested with the 'right' scale of political interests. Scales at which socio-economic activities and political authorities are constituted within time and space

[14] MDC depicts Zimbabwean politics and economics as characterised more by patronage than effective civic participation. MDC neoliberalism projects "macro-economic stabilisation, an accountable state with state actors that […] see themselves as enablers of business and not gatekeepers that control and hamper it", and a strong role for the market and international financial involvement" (Raftopoulos, 2010).

are not fixed – rather, they are periodically and systematically constructed. As a product of interested perceptions of reality, ideological scales constituting perceptions of reality are socially constructed rather than ontologically pre-given. Hence, any party can adopt a concept like democracy and politically frame it contingent to its ideology, political designs and interests.

Democracy is a contested concept both in theory and practice. The MDC-T's policy strategy *JUICE* (Jobs, Upliftment, Investment Capital, Environment*)* is a construction formed in accordance with the exigencies of institutional identity and intention. The meanings assigned to democracy in this document are conventionalised to naturalise favoured meanings of democracy. The manner in which development is framed within democracy discourse is crucial to understanding democratisation politics in Zimbabwe. Within their framework of democracy, MDC-T captures the essence of sustainable development by asserting that, it is their "historic mission to meet the demands of the present generation, to fulfil the dreams of … cadres no longer with us and the aspirations of generations that will come after" (*JUICE,* 2013:1). The question, now, is, how does the 'scale' of a desired national future reflected in this concept of sustainable development reinforces the necessity of neoliberal democracy and subvert ZANU PF's rigidly conservative nationalist approach to both political legitimacy and democracy?

Speaking of crises in general, Fairclough and Fairclough assert that to "discern politically significant differences in political argumentation over responses to the crisis", there is need "to be sensitive to significant recurrent differences in how the crisis is represented" (2012: 83). Style is part of how political actors use language to compete as well as to establish the basis for political legitimacy. My analysis therefore looks at how the MDC incorporates narrative style into its strategies of self-identification steeped in a democratic discourse. Given that MDC's opposition discourse is largely framed around democratic value systems, it projects the worsening socio-economic and political crisis in Zimbabwe as the failure of democracy. Its point of departure and site of self-justification for introducing an alternative democracy is the claim that the current system of governance is undemocratic and that the economic malaise is a direct consequence of this absence of democracy.

As would be expected in language-mediated contestations of political representation, political discourses of democracy reflect narrow fixations of terms and meanings that are meant to fix identities of the self and the rival other. The political consequences of association with these fixed identities are both obvious and subtle. This political dimension to democracy is shaped

by the fact that democracy is one of the most central and durable ideas in politics that is subject to "verbal hijacking" (Arblaster, 2002:9). Democracy discourses have their ways of framing issues and legitimating specific policy interventions while deflecting paradoxes inherent within political players and thought. Democracy discourse as practiced by the MDCs has its own metaphors, images and analogues used to project various aspects of the concept as the missing link to the nation's myriad problems. Arblaster (2002: 3) argues that to discuss democracy objectively, we have to acknowledge that it is "a concept before it is a fact." It is contingently structured hence; it is naïve to think that one can keep politics out of its politics. Analysis of oppositional discourse and narratives illuminate the conventions, logics and dictates that are inherent and influenced by inevitable nuances and paradoxes of democracy discourse in the struggle for power in Zimbabwe's recent history. Such paradoxes, ironically, account for some contradictions within the democratic movement(s) exemplified by the splits that characterise the main opposition party – the MDC. It is ironic that before their eventual merger with the mainstream MDC just before the 2018 elections, splinter groups such as Movement for Democratic Change -Ncube (MDC-N) 'fought for democracy within the fight for democracy.' This paradox shows ambiguities in the rhetoric and practice of democracy that reveal its instability as a political philosophy, principle and practice. In this light, the reflexivity of democracy and modernisation discourse will be central in this chapter.

The ontological inconsistencies of democracy as a political philosophy inform the political identity crisis that cripples Zimbabwean opposition. Language facilitates and sometimes disrupts the political (in)conveniences of discourses constructing and contesting versions of democratic identities. Issues of meaning creation and representation imply the creation of agency. As Foucault (1980) observes, discourse is always implicated in processes of (ab)using power to re-present reality – to influence perceptions. This means that democratic discourses should be perceived first and perhaps foremost, as reflexive. That is, in presenting a situation of the state of the nation from the subject point of neo-liberal democratic movement, such discourses reflect the major belief systems of the opposition and how they imagine a working political and economic system. We can therefore infer from democracy discourses, political strands of self-legitimation and legitimacy created and maintained through 'oppositional' semiotic economies. As highlighted in Chapter 3, what comes to be valid knowledge of the Zimbabwean crisis depends on the political interests of the source of the knowledge, its discursive setting and the nature of political frames used to perceive and (re)construct the unravelling reality.

From context to concreteness

Widdowson (2000: 126) characterises context as "those aspects of the circumstance of actual language use, which are taken as relevant to meaning". He expands that, "context is a schematic construct [... and] the achievement of pragmatic meaning is a matter of matching up the linguistic elements of the code with the schematic elements of the context" (Widdowson, 2000: 126). This implies that meaning inhabits the context of language deployment, and that meanings of words cum concepts such as democracy incorporate layers of signification institutionalised in organisational thought patterns. Context enables or constraints frames and meanings that can be generated within democracy discourse and this accounts for how what is entailed by democracy takes on different meanings depending on the political identities and interests of those using the term/concept.

It is critical to note that issues of national development, political thought and knowledge are all interlinked through discourse in unique ways. In post-2000 Zimbabwe, questions around the politics of transformation and governance, the nature of democracy and political power influences what makes knowledge and versions of democracy that can work. Language is heavily implicated in processes of negotiating these strands of democracy – in valuing some alternatives and devaluing others. As Ilyenkov (1982:177) states:

> To comprehend a phenomenon means to establish its place and role in the concrete system of interacting phenomena in which it is necessarily realized, and to find out precisely those traits, which make it possible for the phenomenon to play this role […]. To comprehend a phenomenon means to discover the mode of its origin, the rule according to which the phenomenon emerges with necessity rooted in the concrete totality of conditions …

Given the history of ambiguity with political terms/concepts such as democracy, analyses of such terms/concepts prompt definitions and explanations. Due to democracy's conceptual and semantic fluidity and malleability, there is need to understand the borderlines of how this term is applied by the opposition, MDC, in relation to the Zimbabwean context. One of the oldest and most known concepts of democracy was proffered by the American President Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) who defined democracy as "the government of the people, by the people and for the people." A related and useful notion of the term/concept was made by De Dora (2010) who characterises democracy as "a form of political governance that secures basic natural rights of citizens within a society and allows them to collectively and openly work toward their goals both socially and through government." Noting the critical influence of

space and time in defining context which makes certain conceptions of democracy make sense than others, I argue in this chapter that versions of democracy constructed and incorporated in MDC discourses reflect the influences of the political and economic time – that is, the time of crisis. The MDC never gives this term/concept any solid definition. They imply its meaning in their designation of what they stand for and promise to accomplish as a movement. As captured in their manifesto:

> The MDC was founded in 1999 to transform the culture of governance and management of the economy from a system of repression and corruption, to one that is based on social justice, accountability, transparency, openness, honesty and efficiency…Under Robert Mugabe and ZANU PF, the political system became openly dictatorial with every arm of the state under the direct control of the presidency…The desire for an open and democratic society, accountability, respect for fundamental human rights and the need for a new constitution began to grow as the Mugabe regime continued to rule with brutality and oppression" (*JUICE*, 2013:3).

The MDC's delineation of party history and articulation of values in this quotation reveals a preoccupation with creating new streams of democracy that oppose ZANU PF's nominal democracy based on the claim about the liberation war as a struggle for democracy. This conception, one might argue, is based on the "emancipatory theory of modernisation" (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005: 299). This is because the underlying theme in this self-identification is "the growth of human choice, giving rise to a new type of humanistic society that has never existed before" (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005: 299). The stress on a fundamental break from the past is unambiguous; hence the MDC's vision in *JUICE* is to establish "[a] modern, healthy, happy, fair and functional, integrated, democratic and prosperous society that takes pride in leaving no-one behind" (*JUICE*, 2013: 7). In light of this assertion, ZANU PF and its nationalistic notions of democracy become part of a past that must, of necessity, be cut off the future. In other words, the MDC's vision which spells its concept of a working democracy, projects Zimbabwean society as retrogressing, and its decline as entangled with ZANU PF's philosophy and practice of democracy, which, to all intents and purposes, appeals to the MDC as partisan, ancient, undemocratic and autocratic. ZANU PF and its notions of democracy are depicted in MDC discourses as (in) the past. The past – a site of ZANU PF's self-legitimation is identified in MDC circles as a critical part and source of the problems with the nation. In this discourse, as ZANU PF's notions of democracy have become synonymous with the past, it (the past) takes on negative sentiment as something that must be shunned. This pastness of ZANU PF's democracy informs the MDC's binary conception of itself and ZANU PF as belonging to opposite temporal spaces (future and past, respectively) with symbolic

implications for how Zimbabweans must make their choices. Tainted by how it relates to the present state of crisis, the pastness of ZANU PF democracy embroiled in the party's political blights is identified in MDC political discourse as diametrically opposed to the MDC's claimed modernity and the efficiencies it is primed to guarantee. The rush for timing notions of democracy and in particular, the MDC's claim to the new and modern is part of the struggle for convenient political identities. As Blühdorn (2009: 24) notes, modernity:

> [G]ives rise to a widening gap between the need for political legitimation on the one side, and the capabilities to produce this legitimacy on the other. As it makes established traditions negotiable and opens up ever new options and opportunities, the progress of modernisation renders both private and social life eminently political. Choices and decisions have to be made at the exclusion of alternative options. Particularly if they impact on the social sphere, such choices need to be publicly justified and politically legitimated.

Modernity in MDC discourse is therefore fundamentally conceptualised as first and foremost 'not the past' – for the past has been relegated to categories of democracy that have brought the nation into crisis. The MDC is thus evoked as the future which, unlike the past, guarantees freedom from oppression, poverty and uncertainty. Good governance, constitutionalism and respect for the rule of law are facets of the new marking MDC democracy.

As we have seen in Chapter 3, ZANU PF draws its authority from the war of liberation, which legitimises the party as the champions of democracy – a party "… with a revolutionary record which is characterised by a liberation armed struggle that overthrew colonial settler domination and ushered in independence, freedom and democracy" (*ZANU PF Election Manifesto*, 2005:2). The MDC has, as part of its democratic agenda, pushed for a new constitution in Zimbabwe that the party believes would demand performances of national duty anchored on delivery alone and especially not considerations of political entitlements connected to the liberation struggle past. *JUICE* (2013: 8) illuminates that, "[t]he MDC believes peace and stability are the absolute cornerstones of the construction of a viable state. We will create this environment for our society by upholding the rule of law and defending the principles of freedom and democracy". The crisis ridden Zimbabwean context presents justification for this self-identification through comparison to ZANU PF. This ensured that as the crisis escalated, the MDC was poised to gain relevance as a political alternative.

The deliberate entanglement of MDC with newness, modernity and efficiency and the consequent synonymisation of ZANU PF with a failed past in MDC political discourse finds justification in historical intra-party squabbles in ZANU PF where members clashed about the

need for reforms and transformation in the party's practice of democracy. In the late 1980s, Edgar Tekere, the former Secretary General of ZANU PF, famously spoke against the party's appetite for establishing a one-party state and corruption in leadership. Tekere decried the dearth of democracy, equating it to a patient in the intensive care unit (Sachikonye, 2012). His stance led to his expulsion from the party and ultimately, he, like many other similar minded former ZANU PF stalwarts such as Simba Makoni, Dumiso Dabengwa, Joyce Mujuru etc., have, at different times in the history of ZANU PF, formed breakaway parties, citing the need to think about and implement alternative forms of democracy free from ZANU PF's entangling and fossilising version. Since the early wakes of independence in 1980, ZANU PF has been accused of violating fundamental human rights and freedoms which certain prominent ZANU PF members have lashed out against. For example, the Gukurahundi violence - a series of massacres of Ndebele civilians by a specially trained military wing called the 5th Brigade in the early 1980s – killed an estimated twenty thousand people (The Catholic Commission for Peace and Justice, 1997). It is against this background that the MDC frames and justifies its democracy discourse which it invests with nuances of newness, modernity, the future and implied connotations of efficiency and sustainable growth.

The fact that prominent ZANU PF members broke ranks with the party to pursue new forms of democracy naturalises the MDC's mandate and agenda. The political advantage that this reality gave to the MDC manifests in the party's grammars of self-identification. Thus, in its self-characterisation, the MDC frames its mandate as a form of a response justified by a proven crisis of democracy in ZANU PF. The MDC, proclaims that, it "… was formed in direct response to the needs and expectations of the people of Zimbabwe regarding better governance" *(JUICE*, 2013: 3). This sets the tone that one finds in MDC narratives of self-identification and definition whereby ZANU PF is evoked as the epitome of a phony democracy and the MDC-T being "the change agent" (*JUICE,* 2013: 3). This translates into the binary characterisation of the good, democratic MDC-T versus the bad and autocratic ZANU PF.

In MDC discourses, being agents of change involves conscious self-projection as representatives of the people for whom change is necessary. Justifying self-identification as the people's champion requires steeping oneself in the people's challenges. In *JUICE*, this is achieved through, among other ways, establishing an omnipresent narrative voice that naturalises otherwise sweeping generalisations as facts. This voice constructs the MDC as a social institution that naturally emerges out of situations of oppression and deprivation hence

the bold declaration that "everyone is tired and wants change" (*JUICE*, 2013:3) and that people want "a new Zimbabwe" (2013: 3). The term "everyone" is used here to entrench the party's construction of its democratisation agenda as a mandate derived from and anchored upon the national interest. "Everyone" does not only connote a popular view, but more importantly a popular mandate placed on agential institutions such as the MDC-T as a responsibility and duty they must feel bound to carry out. The phrase "everyone is tired" is not merely a statement characterising national mood. Rather, the phrase is an expression of self-justification and self-delegation as the means through which the nation's 'tiredness' can be 'cured'.

On the other hand, MDC-N[15], for its part, embeds its democratisation philosophy in the social chorus of marginalised societies crying for devolved administration, hence the party's rallying motto cum title of their 2013 manifesto "Devolution is the New Revolution!". As with the MDC-T above, the MDC – N 'infiltrates' and 'hijacks' a popular discourse and in the process, making it (the party) an organic part of both the discourse and the people owning it. The net-effect of this socio-political interaction is the emergence of the MDC-N as the face of the devolution agenda hence the party's incorporation of the political grammar of the devolution movement into its political speech epitomised by the motto "Devolution is the new Revolution". As devolution becomes the buzz word of transformation with a political face (MDC-N), it permeates all manner of grasping the Zimbabwean conundrum as the following quotation from the manifesto shows:

> This country needs to move away from centralization to devolution of power in which local communities determine their destiny. The sad past of this country can be blamed mainly on over concentration of power on one person in which policy and decision making excluded the generality of the citizenry" (2013: 2).

Language is used in this quotation to identify a problem in a subtle way that covertly establishes devolution and consequently its political face (the MDC-N) as the ultimate panacea. What is perhaps well-known in political circles as an administrative challenge of centralisation is discursively re-packaged so that it becomes a manifestation of a deeper political power centralisation that requires the MDC-N's political intervention. The "local communities" quest for devolved administration of the nation is evoked as a metaphor of the nation demanding an end to the "concentration of power on one person". Therefore, the metaphor DEVOLUTION=REVOLUTION can be read as indicating the MDC-N's attempt to construct

[15] MDC-N is MDC-T's splinter group led by Welshman Ncube

the national panacea (revolution) as a product of an administrative practice (devolution) which the party owns and represent.

The art and politics of opposition: Re-situating the notion of democracy

Bourdieu (1991) argues that when political organisations use discourse to contest (for) power, "ideologies become more and more autonomous, like a game with its own rules and conditions of entry" (Bourdieu, 1991: 27). Part of the MDC's rhetorical strategies of opposition involves portraying ZANU PF's sites of political legitimacy as democratically untenable. This strategically creates grounds for the MDC's self-identification as the natural replacement. The MDC's strategy of self-representation therefore involves in large part, reactions to the party's image constructed by its opposition, especially ZANU PF. In other words, the MDC deploys discourse to self-identify in opposition to popular images of the party created and circulated by ZANU PF. As noted in earlier chapters, a critical part of the MDC's contested image involves the ruling party's connection of the MDC to foreign neo-colonial interests in Zimbabwe. In *JUICE*, self-identification is closely linked to the party's discursive response to the political and moral risks associated with this political identity and image. The risk emanates mainly from the fact that the image practically jettisons the MDC from the people. Alienation from the people has negative consequences on the party's claim to represent the people. ZANU PF's images of the MDC associated the party with what ZANU PF portrays as the people's enemy – the West, particularly the former coloniser Britain. In ZANU PF's schema, the MDC appeared as part of an intricate foreign plan to perpetuate the people's harm through economic sabotage. In this perception, unlike ZANU PF democracy which is premised on the principle of freedom and a history of decolonisation, democracy as practiced by the MDC is evoked as tainted by its origins in hostile western plans to derail the Zimbabwean revolution.

In its attempt to counter the defiling image of itself painted by ZANU PF, the MDC invokes language to present an image of the party that discursively counters damaging images created by ZANU PF. This language does not only present the 'facts' of existence from the vantage point of the MDC. More importantly, the language used by the MDC presents the 'facts' in a self-redemptive fashion that – beyond explaining the necessity of the party's existence, stresses the morality of its political interventions. This can be inferred from the following description of the party's origins in *JUICE*: "the party was created to promote and protect citizens' rights; to promote a government based on constitutionalism and to manage the economy fairly and

efficiently, ensuring just and equitable distribution of resources (*JUICE*, 2013:3). As Bawarshi (2003: 9) argues, institutional political discourses "maintain rhetorical conditions that sustain certain forms of life—ways of discursively and materially organizing, knowing, experiencing, acting, and relating in the world." In the description above, in self-identifying, the MDC creates and entrenches diametrically opposed political identities with implied moral attachments to them. ZANU PF is fixed as synonymous with the economic crisis and as such, a circumstance that triggers reaction from morally worthy individuals who go on to form a group to tackle the national blight. Becoming an opposition party here entails a moral stance that ZANU PF cannot claim, by virtue of its direct connections to the Zimbabwean crisis. The crisis is therefore construed - not only through oppositional perspectives associated with the MDC as an opposition party - but also through discourses of morality that are discursively implied in the MDC's portrayal of ZANU PF's being and its (the MDC's) becoming. In reinforcing ZANU PF's sins of being, the MDC presents a discourse of political morality which it attaches to any movement reacting to ZANU PF. This form of morality is defined by a sense of social responsibility and duty to rescue the nation, hence the use of a diction that indicates selflessness and dedication to the human cause. This diction is exemplified by the use of words such "protect", "fair", "efficiency", "equity" and "constitutionalism" which construct the MDC as a people-oriented project designed to rescue them from ZANU PF.

The way that the MDC constructs and circulates its image and claims to a reformist agenda can be described, following on Anker's (2005) conceptualisation of American politics at the turn of the century, as the politics of melodrama. Anker depicts melodrama as not just a type of film or literary genre, but a genre linked to state politics - "a pervasive cultural mode that structures the presentation of political discourse and national identity" (2005: 22). According to Anker, "when arguments for the political necessity of state action are conveyed in melodramatic terms, they short-circuit the processes that legitimate power in democracies" (2005: 22). For Anker, political melodrama is "a discursive practice that makes truth and justice legible by demarcating a clear boundary between right and wrong" (2005:23). This view is supported by Aslam (2017:70) who argues that "melodramatic genres produce affective identification with unilateral and unaccountable state actions." As can be gleaned from the MDC's portrayal of its origins cited above, a sense of moral aptitude drives the party's quest for dislodging the political immorality that the party synonymises with ZANU PF. As such, the Zimbabwean post-2000 crisis is depicted in *JUICE* through a narrative trajectory of the MDC's victimisation, pathos, and moral responsibility.

Curving space to claim moral justice in opposing ZANU PF involves a careful construction of the Zimbabwean crisis as a crisis of, among other things, human rights. The MDCs' perception of the crisis in *JUICE* is that it is a violation of basic human rights collectively experienced as "political and economic turmoil, international isolation, and severe hardships" (*JUICE*, 2013:1). This narrative of violation feeds into the MDC's self-construction – not only as a redemptive force, but a mechanism of mitigating the political and economic risks associated with ZANU PF, hence we hear: "Government had become arrogant, corrupt and repressive against the citizens. It did not care enough for the people" (*JUICE,* 2013:3). The grammar of caring is deliberately intermingled with the notion of morality in ways that portray ZANU PF's political immorality as a site for justifying the MDC's claim to high political moral aptitude. The MDC's melodramatic narrative of political (im)morality constructs a hero narrative that projects the party's agenda in driving the constitution-making process and championing economic equity as evidence of the party's people-centred approach. The hyperbolic portrayal of the people as "yearning" for change reinforces the image of the MDC as the "change agent". In this way, the language heightens spectacles of suffering and democracy deficit in ways that make fighting their root cause (ZANU PF) heroic acts of moral duty. A spectacle is a media notion developed by Debord (1967: 14) in which reality is represented in its "most glaring superficial manifestations." In *JUICE*, the spectacle of crisis follows on the MDC's quest to self-project as the nation's heroic savers and also to present a sense of objectivity.

The discourse of strife attendant on the MDC's narrative of the crisis of democracy in Zimbabwe deploys the spectacle of the political and economic victim and victimisation to vouch for the moral ideals of freedom and democracy as promised by the MDC. Besides the metaphoric packaging of these spectacles through human cries and "yearnings" for change, the spectacles are also created through the descriptive portrayal of what the MDC believes is ZANU PF's entrenched predisposition to harm and ruin the nation. Fighting for the people is thus taken to imply being part of them. This is strategically contrasted with ZANU PF's distant relationship with the people which is evoked as causing the lack of empathy in the party for the nation's suffering. Thus, where the MDC imagines a 'democratic' government whose actions are inspired by the agency of the generality of the people, ZANU PF is evoked as keen on the "centralisation of power in the hands of the executive" (*JUICE,* 2013:3) – a political practice that the MDC finds "openly dictatorial" (*JUICE,*2013:3). This centralisation of power is depicted as creating a hierarchised society with clear demarcations of agency as the following shows: "[o]ver the last three decades the relationship between the government and the people

disintegrated into one of predator and victim" (*JUICE*, 2013:27). In order to add affect into the people's victimisation, ZANU PF's predatory nature is evoked as exacerbated by the fact that people expected protection from the party. In *JUICE*, the protector turns predator in a way that makes the victims objects of sympathy. This sympathy is claimed by the MDC which constructs itself as the heroic agents rescuing the people from their ill-fated hopes.

In *JUICE*, part of being the predator of the people involves betraying them. Betrayal is used in the MDC's manifesto to whip up emotions – not only to compel people to perceive the goodness of the MDC and the badness of ZANU PF but more importantly, to discursively illustrate the justification and moral dimensions of such perceptions. The MDC's linguistic rendering of ZANU PF's betrayal targets the people's expectations as driven by the liberation promise. The MDC re-visits and revises history which ZANU PF often exclusively invokes to legitimise its power, as shown in the following quotation: "[o]ver three decades ago, we engaged in a liberation struggle and were successful" (*JUICE*, 2013: 1). The pronoun "we" is deliberately inclusive and denotes Zimbabwe as a nation. This means that Zimbabweans (and especially not ZANU PF) waged the liberation struggle. The narrative connotes that after "Zimbabweans" won the liberation, ZANU PF, which was entrusted with ruling the country, started running it down. The imagery of a predator zooms in ZANU PF's betrayal in a way that inscribes pain and emotion to the relationship between the people and ZANU PF. In a predatory regime, nothing is done for public interests as the general masses become the prey. According to Galbraith (2006), "[i]n a predatory economy, the rules imagined by the law and economics crowd don't apply. There's no discipline." In visually defining the predator and its predation, the MDC induces a sense of pain of betrayal in an effort to not only compel the victims to shun ZANU PF but to align with the promise of salvation from ZANU PF offered by the MDC.

In defining every facet of the Zimbabwean crisis as a conflict of what ZANU PF has done wrongly and what MDC will do correctly, there is dramatic polarisation between good and bad. This polarisation moralises both, the challenges, especially those associated with their origins, as well as the solutions, the party (MDC) claims to be associated with them. The way the Zimbabwean crisis is moralised is an important facet of the MDC's political discourse. As Anker says, "in order to create and enhance the moral legibility so crucial to its discursive aim, the melodramatic narrative employs the plot devices of grandiose events, unprovoked actions, hyperbolic language, and spectacles of suffering" (2005: 24). In light of this, assertions such as, "[t]he MDC formed the Inclusive Government with other parties in 2009 because it cared for the people of Zimbabwe and had observed that the political, economic and condition of the

people was extremely desperate" (*JUICE*, 2013: 5) is one aspect of the ways that the MDC orders discourse for affective purposes in *JUICE*. The national extent of ZANU PF's ruin validates both the obligation and urgency for action hence the MDC's infusion of urgency in the party's motto: "A New Zimbabwe – The Time is Now!" *(JUICE*, 2013: 31).

Viewing the Zimbabwean situation through the melodramatic lens gives perspective on certain aspects of contemporary Zimbabwean politics, organisations and discourse that are historically and ideologically contingent. It also puts into perspective the necessity of affect in the MDC's politicisation of pain and emotions in its self-identification as the nation's saviour. On explaining its inclusion in the Government of National Unity in 2009, the MDC says:

> The MDC formed the Inclusive Government with other parties in 2009 because it cared for the people of Zimbabwe and had observed that the political, economic and social condition of the people was extremely desperate. The aim was to restore hope where despair ruled. The risk of being tainted was recognised but the party put the people first and formed the Inclusive Government with its erstwhile opponents (*JUICE*, 2013: 5).

This saviour image in MDC's GNU discourse is sanctioned by the party's politics of self-justification and preservation. The humanitarian concern highlights the perspective of politics born out of politicised moral necessities informed by humanitarian urgencies. This saviour image is central to the MDC's claim to a politically moral identity.

Of economic 'thirst' and political 'juices': The art of influencing opinion

The importance of style in political communication is well captured in Harriman's definition of political life as "a mixture of persuasive techniques, aesthetic norms, and political relationships working together in cohesive patterns of motivation activated through speech" (1995: 53). *JUICE* and *Devolution is the new Revolution*! reflect how the opposition's strategic institutional discourse sought to balance political interests and the need to maintain a modicum of moral appeal. Blommaert explains that the resources for creation of meaning:

> …lie(s) in the deep relation between language and a general economy of symbols and status in societies. One does not just 'have' or 'know' a language; there is a complex and highly sensitive political-economic dynamics of acquisition and differential distribution behind such seemingly innocuous phrases. Words, accents, intonation contours, styles all come with a history of use and abuse; they also come with a history of assessment and evaluation. This is where language leads us directly to the heart of social structure: an investigation into language becomes an investigation into the systems and patterns of allocation of power symbols and instruments, and thus an

> investigation into basic patterns of privilege and disenfranchisement in societies. (2001:3)

In the context of MDC discourse, semantic associations of words evoke meanings, connotations, arguments and explanations that synonymise democracy with the end of the national crisis. Words and phrases such as "democracy", "modern", "a New Zimbabwe," "transformation", "change", "people-driven" etc., are ideologically saturated and they aid in the emplotment and connection of themes, actions and ideas. *JUICE,* in particular reveals vocabularies and discursive structural patterns that reflect regularities, coherences and consistence in the production of an alternative democracy. The vocabulary anchors the party's reform ideology and the civic vision of politics as the pursuit of public interests founded on citizen participation and engagement. As Olsen explains, "while an interpretation cannot create the facts on which it is based, it does pick out facts which are artistically relevant and make clear a description of these facts" (1976: 343). As hinted above, the diction used in *JUICE* shows how the incumbent government is stereotyped and fixed as an institution that "did not care enough for the people" who are in turn characterised in hyperbolic terms as "tired", "yearning for change" and have the "desire" for an open and democratic society (*JUICE,* 2013: 3). These deterministic political images cement the identity of the MDC as a party that was formed out of necessity and not "politics".

The word "JUICE" forms part of an elaborate expressive strategy that targets the people's visual, sensory and intellectual capacities. The term is inherently metaphorical in that it constructs the opposition's political solution to the national crisis in physiological terms that magnify the effectiveness of the MDC's solutions. In using the term "JUICE", the MDC defines its manifesto as the solution to the economic challenges bedevilling the nation. Consequently, the metaphor frames Zimbabwe as a "house of hunger (thirst)" (to adapt Marechera, 1978), characterised by deficiencies in various aspects of their lives. Associations of deprivation pervade MDC narrations of the nation as a product of ZANU PF misrule. The metaphor of "JUICE" and thirst portrays the nation as drained through, among other ills, corruption, abuse of resources and political patronage. The MDC invokes the characteristic associations of juices as life vitalisers that nourishes a drained body to portray itself as the institution that would be able to quench the nation's economic thirst and revitalise its ailing economic 'body'.

Adjunct to the metaphor of juice, democracy itself is metaphorised in JUICE. The implied metaphor DEMOCRACY=JUICE thrives on the assumption that the MDC presents as a matter

of fact – that is, that democracy is the solution for the nation's challenges. This political function of the term democracy is reinforced by its characterisation through its prosodic association with symbolically loaded terms and concepts such as "freedom", "responsibility" "good governance", "devolution", "civic participation", "constitutionalism", "inclusivity" etc. The vocabularies are chosen for the layers of meaning they communicate and the cognitive effect they have. The diction is also instrumental in setting a tone that captures attitudes. This can be inferred from the way that the word "hope" is used in the MDC's encouragement of the people to vote "for Morgan Tsvangirai and the MDC to bring HOPE back to Zimbabwe" *(JUICE*, 2013: 31). According to Bourdieu (1991: 106):

> The word or *a fortiori* the dictum, the proverb and all the stereotyped or ritual forms of expression are programmes of perception and different, more or less ritualised strategies for the symbolic struggles of everyday life, just like the great collective rituals of naming or nomination ‑ or, more clearly still, the clashes between the visions and previsions of specifically political struggles ‑ imply a certain claim to symbolic authority as the socially recognised power to impose a certain vision of the social world, i.e. of the divisions of the social world. In the struggle to impose the legitimate vision, in which science itself is inevitably caught up, agents possess power in proportion to their symbolic capital, i.e. in proportion to the recognition they receive from a group.

In the MDC's text cited above, the word "hope" is capitalised – not only to emphasise the importance of hope in a crisis setting, but more importantly to define the hope as a force that can only originate from the MDC. Goatly (2007: 27) understands such as, "discourse produces the objects of knowledge and that nothing that is meaningful exists outside discourse". In this sense, hope is politicised and coloured with oppositional ideologues that redefine the concept as bound up with democracy and indeed with the MDC.

The 'glassy' effect: language and political locutions

Bourdieu (1991: 5) explains that:

> What circulates on the linguistic market is not `language' as such, but rather discourses that are stylistically marked both in their production, in so far as each speaker fashions an idiolect from the common language, and in their reception, in so far as each recipient helps to produce the message which he perceives and appreciates by bringing to it everything that makes up his singular and collective experience.

This approach to the method of language highlights how style in discourse can create political relations that establish certain subjectivities and match and fix them with certain political characteristics and identities. In this section, l conceptually invoke the glass imagery to analyse

the politics of oppositional rhetoric. I cull my analytical frame from the German architect Arthur Korn who defines glass as:

> …an altogether exceptional material, at once reality and illusion, substance and shadow; it is there yet it is not there.... glass is noticeable yet not quite visible. It is the great membrane, full of mystery, delicate yet tough. It can enclose and open up spaces in more than one direction. Its peculiar advantage is in the diversity of the impression it creates (1929: 12).

As hinted above, democracy in post-2000 Zimbabwe exists in many ideological and functional shades which make it a subjectively experienced phenomenon. In this sense, treating democracy as unidimensional and describing its manifestations as objective is tantamount to ignoring the hidden and ambiguous dimensions that are inherent in political texts and their rhetorical nature. As Fairclough and Fairclough (2012: 12) emphasise, "[a]ll arguments have logical, rhetorical and dialectical aspects, and need to be analysed in logical, rhetorical and dialectical terms." The imperative for sustainable transformation in Zimbabwe requires an exploration of the progression of discourses on politics and development and the politics of development in relation to the various notions of democracy. It requires understanding the extent to which organisations and agents frame interests and ideologies to intersect with development objectives. It is therefore of interest to see how the rhetoric of development is ornamented with symbolic motifs, metaphors, images and grammars that shape the change agenda being advocated by the MDC.

Kennedy (2007) has it that, rhetoric is an art of communication that can be used either for good or bad purposes. Quoting Aristotle's *On Rhetoric,* Kennedy argues that the art of persuasion depends on "the truth and logical validity of what is being argued, the speaker's success in conveying to the audience a perception that he or she can be trusted, and the emotions that a speaker is able to awaken in an audience to accept the views advanced and act in accordance with them" (2007: x). As an art and craft, the designs require artistic skills to establish an alluring and expressive outline. One of the purposes of stained-glass windows is to colour perception. In his short story 'The Stained-Glass Platform' Chaplain[16] writes that when a person looks through a purple stained glass, he or she sees a purple dog, and when he or she look through another, he's green; "but what his real colour is you can't tell, till you throw open the window" (Chaplain, 1900: 306). This is much akin to how discourse-mediated political

[16] Stewart Chaplin's short story "Stained Glass Political Platform" (published in 1900 in *The Century Magazine*).

rhetoric works. Just like stained glass, political parties deploy language to produce specific motifs with interested effects.

The structural and contextual premises used for drawing semantic conclusions are important in political rhetoric involving policies. Political rhetoricity involves the "burden of proof attached" (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012:93). This means that the fact of their being, narratives of both the political self and national crisis lies in their being far from being common knowledge that is neutral and uncontested. Fashioning narratives and metaphors in expressing the transformative agenda is inherently a subjective process. Thus, paying attention to the cultural context of what is said can shed light on how certain narratives or ideologies make certain political sense.

Analysing the narrativity of policy texts is closely related to what Foucault calls "seeing on what type of assumptions, of familiar notions, of established, unexamined ways of thinking the accepted practices are based" (1980: 456). The relationship between narratives and discourse shows that there are institutionalised threads of political identities that do not change even if circumstances of telling them or the narrators who tell them change. Fairclough (1995: 5) explains that, it is useful to note that, "any part of any text will be simultaneously representing, setting up identities and setting up relations." Narrative analysis of *JUICE* and *Devolution is the New Revolution!* enable a deep understanding of how the dominant accounts of the nation and the self as an opposition political party are implicated in the art of narrative performance that goes beyond the classical heroes and villains plot. *JUICE* and *Devolution is the New Revolution!* are the windows through which MDCs' political decisions, programmes, needs and identities are validated. The narratives in these texts draw on the discourse of democracy to re-construct aspects of the Zimbabwean crisis and how challenges can be effectively addressed. As communicative machineries, these policy texts are performative, materially situated and deliberately discursive. Narratives in *JUICE* and *Devolution is the New Revolution*! are marked by an important element of stories, that is, disclosure. In these texts, disclosure goes beyond a mere preoccupation with pointing out ZANU PF's failures and inconsistencies to reflect on how the MDC fundamentally differs in terms of organisational philosophy and plan of action. In disclosing the self, the impression has to be created that what is said is absolutely objective. Ideological biases and generalisations informed by subjective interpretations of reality have to be masked and rhetorically articulated in a matter-of-fact-way. This is particularly why, as Onslow (2011) notes, even at the height of the crisis Mugabe was held in great affection by elements of the Zimbabwean population because many revered his

oratory ability 'charismatic' narrative of the situation. *JUICE* and *Devolution is the New Revolution*! reflect a form of 'objective subjectivity' that Meszaros (2005: xii), in another context, calls "persuasive optimism". This optimism and how it is discursively constructed reveal a "naive mechanistic vision" which in contexts of crises, may evade detection. This is the point where illusion benefits from heightened expectation to become a form of reality. For Lara, in such situations, rhetoric "take(s) hold of the people's interest and becomes an undeniable part of their consciousness" (2007: 3). This, Lara argues, constitutes "the illocutionary impact of its (rhetoric's) disclosive potential" (2007:3).

In *JUICE*, disclosing the self as a viable political alternative is intricately connected to the disclosure of ZANU PF's inadequacies. *JUICE* and *Devolution is the New Revolution*! tell the story of a weakened, fragile, and tarnished democracy where, amidst the crisis, the MDCs' claims to be the agents of "a brighter and healthier future" (*JUICE*, 2013: 31) can makes sense. As Leach et al (2010: 45) explain, political narratives "often start with a particular framing of a system and its dynamics, and suggest particular ways in which these should develop or transform to bring about a particular set of outcomes". In Stone's words, the narrative becomes a mode of conceptualising problems where "each mode is like a language people use to express and defend their interpretations" (2012:14). In such narratives, alternatives to existing systems are shaped by declared and undeclared interests and power dynamics. Therefore, "[p]olitical conflicts over causal stories are more than empirical claims about sequences of events" but are "fights about the possibility of control and the assignment of responsibility" (Stone, 2012: 207). This is why oppositional narratives in *JUICE* are implicated in the struggle for power.

The MDC's narrative reframing of democracy raises questions about the tension attending the party's moral and political interests vis-à-vis its subjective choices about what aspects of the crisis should (in)form its narrative. In Gramsci's (1971) understanding, like politics, political narratives are always a part of mechanisms used in the struggle for creating and sustaining knowledge systems that prop up hegemony. As a party that seeks to legitimate its envisioned hegemony by delegitimising the seating government's hegemony, the MDC was aware of the material demands necessary to create and sustain its political being. While as seen in Chapter 3, ZANU PF had power, access to state funds, institutions and systems that enhanced its expressive capacities, the MDC had to maximise on the space offered by the crisis to produce maximum effect. Many scholars (Bond and Manyanya, 2003; Raftopoulos and Mlambo, *(eds)* 2009; Sachikonye, 2012; Kagoro, 2010) readily acknowledge the empirical signs of waning democracy that cluster around the crisis. These include the partisan celebration of the liberation

struggle, the cumulative expansion of ZANU PF's authoritative power and the erosion of restraint on opposition. Around this turmoil of course, political players tell different tales. As Stone (2012: 183) argues, "there are many possible measures of any phenomenon, and the choice among them depends on the purpose for measuring. The fundamental issues of any policy conflict are always contained in the question of how to count the problem". In *JUICE*, the question of "how to count the problem" is implied in the question of representation. To return to the stained-glass allegory, what colours perspectives in *JUICE* are layers of subjective experiences of the nation that are narrated in a matter-of-fact-way designed to magnify the MDC's moral interests and obfuscate the party's political inclinations. We see this in the MDC's narrative discoursing of its neo-liberal economics, particularly in connection with Zimbabwe's international relations.

The discourse of Zimbabwe's position(ing) in the family of nations features prominently in both ZANU PF and MDCs' manifestoes especially in a post-2000 period marked by ZANU PF's diplomatic wrangles with the USA and the European Union (fronted by Britain). These confrontations led to the USA and the European Union sanctioning Zimbabwean state-owned companies and ruling party executives, consequently straining the country's economic activities. Although this is only one of the factors leading to the Zimbabwean crisis, ZANU PF has over the past two decades appropriated the sanctions and used them as an alibi for the general crisis situation in the country. ZANU PF also invoked the hostile image of the West and attached it to the MDC which enjoyed a cordial relationship with the West albeit though mostly founded on shared notions of democracy. In this context, the onus was on the opposition to re-write its image in relation to its dealings with the West. By virtue of its strategic popularity during election times, the manifesto became the natural platform for the MDC to address allegations about its alleged sinister relationship with foreign countries. In *JUICE*, part of revising this negative image and identity involves a strategic reconfiguring of the understanding of foreign relations. Language plays an important role in the MDC's counter discourse – not only in rebuffing its alleged connections to the West but also in correcting perceptions about the economic implications of a neo-liberal approach to the question of borders.

In *JUICE*, re-discoursing through re-narrativising the MDC's as well as Zimbabwe's relationship with the international community utilises the language of persuasion to vouch for reasoned rather than impassioned conception of Zimbabwe's relationship with the West. As Larkoff (2009) argues, one of the greatest challenges facing political communicators is the

perception that if they "… just tell people the facts, since people are basically rational beings, they'll all reach the right conclusions." As noted earlier on in this chapter, the 'factness' of facts in *JUICE* as in all political texts, is abstractive and in doubt. In *JUICE*, facts about what it means to be part of an international community are embroiled in the party's grammars of self-sanitisation in which the party is simultaneously contesting damaging images of its relations with the West and correcting the damaged perception of Zimbabwe's relations with the bloc. In his introductory speech, Tsvangirai highlights the "political and economic turmoil, international isolation, and severe hardships for our families because of unemployment, unprecedented hyperinflation, high cost of living, lack of food and decline in health care and education services" (*JUICE*, 2013:1). Before analysing the discursive aspects of this statement, it is important to contextualise that analysis in the strategic identification of this account with Tsvangirai. The statement is attributed to Tsvangirai who was the face of the opposition in virtually every aspect of the opposition movement's identity and method of action. In ZANU PF circles, Tsvangirai was the local Trojan Horse and embodiment of foreign neo-colonial interests in the country. It is no wonder that in ZANU PF political discourse Tsvangirai was derogatively nicknamed "Tea Boy" (see Meldrum 2007: 47) – a label he earned on account of his former occupation as messenger in white-owned firms in white-ruled Rhodesia. In the post-2000 era in which Western associations became synonymous with a traitorous identity, the essence and meaning of the nickname Tea Boy was extended to implicate the departed former colonist in the West. In this sense, Tea Boy was used as a political metaphor that expressed, in pejorative fashion, Tsvangirai's perceived submissive fellowship of what ZANU PF held to be the West's neo-colonial designs. Through the metaphor TSVANGIRAI=TEA BOY, ZANU PF sought to transpose the correspondences of hostility in the source domain (TEA BOY – and its associations of Western hostility) to the target domain, TSVANGIRAI and indeed the MDC; meaning that Tsvangirai and the MDC would be understood in terms of the West, particularly its imagined neo-colonial interests in Zimbabwe.

In *JUICE*, re-situating the state, nature and significance of Zimbabwe's international relations in the context of the economic crisis involves a strategic deconstruction and exposure of the hegemonic interests in ZANU PF's concept of Tsvangirai reflected in the nickname Tea Boy. The party sought to achieve this through highlighting the insincerity attendant on ZANU PF's metaphorical association of the MDC and its leader with the West. Beyond this quest for self-sanitisation, the MDC sought to shift the tables and implicate ZANU PF in the economic implications of a hostile relationship between the West and Zimbabwe. To go back to the

statement attributed to Tsvangirai cited above, it is critical to note how, through language, particularly the conceptual metaphor, the MDC illuminated symbolic economic implications of relations with the West. We have already seen above how the conceptual metaphor associated with the nickname Tea Boy was used by ZANU PF in a fearmongering fashion to magnify the national risks associated with the MDC's Western connections (see also Nyambi, 2016; 2017, Nyambi and Mangena 2015). In *JUICE*, the MDC counters this 'risk' by highlighting the economic risks in ZANU PF's notions of the West and what the nation was poised to benefit through the MDC's desired foreign policy. The first metaphor in the MDC's counter response to ZANU PF can be inferred in the MDC's conception of Zimbabwe's foreign relations under ZANU PF's foreign policy as a form of "international isolation" (2013: 1). The implied conceptual metaphor compels us to comprehend Zimbabwe's foreign relations in terms of international isolation. As in the conceptual metaphor TSVANGIRAI=TEA BOY, risk and fear characterise the metaphorical mappings of nuances of the source domain (international isolation) onto the target domain (Zimbabwe's foreign relations). The result is a subtle inscription of the fear known to attend international isolation in globalisation and neo-liberal economic thought. The object of fear is not only the economic consequences of isolation which are implied in the collocative listing of "international isolation" with dreaded realities of "political and economic turmoil, international isolation, and severe hardships for our families because of unemployment, unprecedented hyperinflation, high cost of living, lack of food and decline in healthcare and education services" (*JUICE*, 2013: 1). Rather, the object of fear is also ZANU PF which is overtly and covertly implicated as the force behind the isolation.

The question now is, what makes isolation (the semantic correspondences defining the essence of Zimbabwe's international relations in the MDC's metaphor) such a condition that makes Zimbabwe's international relations under ZANU PF 'scary'? In other words, what aspects of the MDC's metaphor – not only reflect the risks in ZANU PF's foreign policy, but also illuminate the benefits of both abandoning ZANU PF and trusting the MDC with the nation's economy? As Landau notes, because of their cognitive aspects, metaphors are easily part of political grammar:

> Metaphor pervades symbolic systems besides language that humans have invented to represent the world…metaphor is involved in virtually all aspects of human behaviour… it informs representations of individual concepts like power, divinity, courage, patriotism…as a result, metaphor has the power to comfort, incite, mislead, titillate and justify past actions. Metaphors also define general domains such as emotions, social roles, moral values and social and political institutions (2016: 8).

In *JUICE*, the term "isolation" denotatively suggests removal from a group. However, this general sense of isolation does not capture the petrifying aspects of isolation that informs the fear that the MDC hoped would deter people from voting for ZANU PF and attract them to the MDC. In fact, the term picks nuances of dread when it is considered in the context of the MDC's neo-liberal approach to economics. As Arestis and Sawyer (2004: 78) note, neo-liberalism in economics dictates that "… economic policy should leave it to the market". Though certainly controlled by individuals and firms with huge capital, "the market" is conceived in the neoliberal fraternity as a global arena where nations, companies and individuals influence forces of supply and demand in commercial interactions. Spurred by the increasingly globalising market economy, the MDC's economic philosophy stresses the need for the country to remain and participate in the global market, among other things, as a way of enhancing interactions with investors and other financial institutions. In this context, the term "isolation" does not suggest a mere removal of the country's economy from the global market, but 'dreadfully' so, the exclusion of the national economy from its economic lifeblood. This is implied in the subsequent metaphorisation of the global economic fraternity as the "family of nations" (*JUICE*, 2013: 2). Here, the connotations of family, universally known as a site of warmth, safety, support and communion, are not only inscribed on the global market economy, but they are also evoked as critical to the 'life' of the national economy. In this sense, the negative economic effects of Zimbabwe's exclusion from the global market economy are heightened and the economic crisis is presented as epitomising the fatal manifestation of their impact on the national economy.

Reading images

In CDA, images and colours are critical resources for inscribing symbolic meaning, associations and emotions on certain phenomena. Liu explains that:

> Image and other visual modes have the capacity to form texts, complexes of signs which internally cohere with each other and externally with the context in and for which they were produced. Besides, image and other visual modes are able to represent a particular social relation between the producer, the viewer and the object represented. And all semiotic systems are social semiotic systems which allow us to negotiate social and power relationships. (2013: 1260)

The way that visuality is used in *JUICE* as a mechanism of political discourse reflects MDC's attempt to target the people's cognitive senses – to influence their ways of perceiving the reality of the ongoing crisis, processing it and making informed political decisions. As Chen et al

(2013: 881) consent, "the visual image is supreme in its capacity for arousal." The dominant images are not only accessories to the texts but a cognitively potent instrument in politically framing the national crisis.

Perhaps the best place to start exploring the visual aesthetics of MDC's *JUICE* is the party manifesto's cover page. The cover has a picture of multitudes of people waving open palms. The open palm is MDC's party symbol. The visual foregrounds and foreshadows the political message in *JUICE*. What follows in the text is aptly captured by this image – it reflects the MDC's belief in the effect of visual maps in influencing the psychology and, consequently, interests of the people. The multitudes with open palms are symbolic of opening up to the MDC and accepting the party. Not only is this suggestive of the MDC's claim to popular appeal in figures, but also a strategic attempt to pre-empt the people's reception of the party's policy as contained in the manifesto. This visual image creates the bandwagon effect, the psychological phenomenon of doing something primarily because everyone is portrayed as doing it. In politics, it entails voting for someone because they seem to have popular support though one may not actually believe in it. According to an article on body language, an open palm is "a universal way of seeking cooperation" (*Study-body-language*, 2016). The article expands that what makes this symbol unique and appealing is that, it is also a sign that one is coming in peace. An open palm is generally a sign of openness and transparency, which suggests that the person presenting it has nothing to hide. Waving or raising an open palm is therefore a symbolic act of demonstrating sincerity. In this particular image, the symbol belongs to both the MDC where it functions as an institutional paraphernalia of identity and also to the people who use it to confirm their openness to the MDC. Waving is usually a subconscious gesture, especially when one is elated. Thus, the outstretched open palms punctuated by beaming faces amidst the post-2000 draining challenges symbolise the convergence of trust, hope and expectation of a much brighter future between the MDC and the people. This cements the MDC's identity as a party that seeks to build an identity around the values of honesty and transparency – values that the party project as signifying a new politics geared for transformation, hence the claim that "[t]he MDC was founded in 1999 to transform the culture of governance and management of the economy from a system of repression and corruption, to one that is based on social justice, accountability, transparency, openness, honesty, and efficiency" *(JUICE*, 2013: 2).

Building on the limitations of the ruling party, which the MDC accuses of leading the country into its economic cataclysm, repression and selective application of laws, the MDC's choice of campaign images in *JUICE* challenges ZANU PF's legitimacy while simultaneously

cementing its appeal as a people-driven advocate of democracy. Most of the images in *JUICE* capture the experiences of ordinary people. The ordinary masses take centre stage in the manifesto as a symbolic visual effect that represent the MDC's sense of an idyllic relationship between the people and the government. Interestingly, a comparison of the 2013 MDC and ZANU PF's manifestoes shows that the ruling party's images and policies focus more on ZANU PF leadership. The leaders' images dominate *#Team ZANU PF (2013)*[17] and Mugabe's picture is emblazoned beneath every other picture in the text. These images map visual narratives of political identity with implications for how people interpret the parties' political culture, character and relationship with the people.

Environmental sustainability is a key aspect of national sustainability that the MDC promised to deliver if elected. The rush for environmentalism in *JUICE* is palpable, and before we look at the visual articulation of this political objective, it is imperative to see how its narrative articulation relates to the party's political goals as well as politics of self-identification. As the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific notes in the book *Integrating Economic and Environmental Policies: The Case of Pacific Island Countries* (2004), "integrating economic and environmental concerns" is fast becoming the norm with political regimes seeking to project a sense of social responsibility. In this context, care for the environment is stressed in order to neutralise the connotations of manipulation and extraction often associated with economic production. In this sense the environment is perceived as symbolically signifying national sustainability and therefore deserving protection. Caring for the environment therefore translates into a sense of social justice and an awareness of the need for preserving the nation. The environment discourse is deliberately entangled with the economic discourse, as the following quotation clearly shows:

> The MDC economic plan *JUICE* is our strategy to create jobs and build a strong, modern economy that is financially and environmentally sustainable where growth is equally shared across the country and not by a privileged few." (2013: 10)

Here, environmental sustainability is not only strategically constructed as an imperative aspect of the method of economic production, but it is also linked to social justice hence the reference to "environmentally sustainable" economy that is "equally shared across the country" (2013:

[17] It is critical to note that the reference to 'team' in the title of ZANU PF's manifesto has more to do with celebrating the leadership team. The term can be connected to a popular song by the ZANU PF propaganda outfit Mbare Chimurenga Choir called "Team". The song celebrates a line-up of ZANU PF leadership going into the 2013 election.

10). As Metzner (1980:59) explains, human potential in history "has often been compared to the growth and flowering of a tree." In *JUICE*, visual images of nature, particularly plants indicate a proclivity for self-identification as a party that is conscious – not only of the environment but more importantly, what the environment signifies vis-à-vis the sustainability of the earth and indeed human life. This is powerfully evoked through the image of a woman who is holding a sprouting plant seedling on the first page of the manifesto. The symbolism of the tree cannot be lost as its meaning is revealed by the inscribed motto "A New Zimbabwe". The shooting seedling symbolises hope for a new life and a new start for the people of Zimbabwe under the leadership of MDC. Unlike in its reference in the acronym *JUICE* where it is represented by the letter 'E', the environment in *JUICE* is evoked as symbolised by objects of nature particularly plants and water. In the example cited above, what makes the visual representation more appealing as a political mechanism of self-expression is its illustrative dramatisation of the MDC's claimed political values of caring, justice, social responsibility and morality. These values are inscribed in the normative symbolism of the growing plant, particularly its connotations of growth, and critical use as the producer of oxygen to sustain human life. Caring for the plant, as reflected in the telling posture of the woman who is carefully embracing it with both hands, then, translates to caring for nature and human life and also an awareness of what enhances the good (human) life.

In its attempts to reinforce the binary identities of the reckless and uncaring ruling party and a responsible opposition, in *JUICE* MDC contrasts its vision of treatment of nature with ZANU PF's known uses of nature. While as mentioned above, the MDC portrays itself as an environmentally conscious party that will create an "environmentally sustainable" economy whose produce is "equally shared across the country" (2013: 10), the party depicts a picture of ZANU PF that connects the party to instances of environmental exploitation and economic oligarchy. In contrast to the MDC's assumed environmental justice and the wider enjoyment of economic benefits derived from nature, ZANU PF is evoked as leading a parasitic government that exploits nature with impunity for the benefit of the few. ZANU PF's disregard for nature is therefore depicted as not only resulting in the economic crisis but also in the party's incapacity for guaranteeing social justice and equitable distribution of wealth and perhaps more importantly, the sustainability of the environment which enhances human life. ZANU PF, we hear, has superintended over "corruption, mismanagement and political patronage [that] have diverted the vast majority of mining revenues away from the appropriate government authorities" (*JUICE*, 2013:13). In this light, the MDC decries that, "[m]ost notably we have

seen the nation's diamond revenues flow into the hands of a corrupt few" (*JUICE*, 2013:13). In this sense, ZANU PF's extractive actions not only become environmentally dangerous, but also signify the party's ignorance of the connection between nature and the good (human) life.

Colour 'matters'

Colour is another major visual apparatus of political discourse in *JUICE*. Generally, people have notions of what colours symbolise and mean, and these notions have long and complicated histories of change. Some colours have gained universal symbolisms and meanings such as red (for danger), and green (for life or nature) etc. In CDA colour is a visual "semiotic resource – a mode, which, like other modes, is multifunctional in its uses in the culturally located making of signs" (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2002: 343). This means that since colours relate to signs and symbols, they are also used to create, represent and contest meaning. Just like language and words, colours are not arbitrary and natural but are "motivated in their constitution by the interests of the makers of the signs" (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2002: 346). Therefore, the colours that dominate the MDC's *JUICE* have to be understood in their context as strategic and ideologically saturated mechanisms of attracting attention, persuade and convincing. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2002: 345) explain that though on "one hand the connection of meaning and colour seems obvious, natural nearly; on the other hand it seems idiosyncratic, unpredictable and anarchic". Thus, colour schemes adhere to socially established and maintained conventions. Just as language allows us to realise speech acts, so colour allows us to realise "colour acts" (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2002: 348). This means that colours, like utterances, are considered performative acts, that is, they connote social action with regard to intention, purpose and effect. Performativity also entails considering how colours as social acts do not only describe a given reality but influence and have an effect on the reality they are describing. The preoccupation of CDA in the context of this study is to understand different motivations, ideological reinforcements and interests reflected in MDC's use of colour and sign making in *JUICE*. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2002: 355) highlight that:

> Signifiers, and therefore also colours, carry a set of affordances from which sign-makers and interpreters select according to their communicative needs and interests in a given context. In some cases, their choice will be highly regulated by explicit or implicit rules, or by the authority of experts and role models.

Interestingly, colours like most visual communications consciously and unconsciously flag out messages, which illuminate some intended and unintended underlying messages that CDA unravels.

MDC's *JUICE* document is adorned in the party's official colours of black and white. These colours are historically associated with many kinds of meanings depending on place, cultures, history and even race. In Zimbabwe, red and black colours are known colours for revolution. The revolutionary association of especially the red colour is a global phenomenon. Finkel and Brudny (2014: 20) note that, in the case of Russia, "the red colour symbolizes the heroic past". In Zimbabwe, this symbolism is historically situated in the national flag where the red stripe is officially taken to signify the blood of liberation war fighters and civilian casualties of the war of liberation from British colonial rule. This symbolism is essentially Pan-African. It is influenced by the Ethiopian colours which became symbols of African determination for independence from European colonialism.[18]

Although, as noted especially in the previous chapter, the liberation war has functioned in Zimbabwe's past two decades as ZANU PF's exclusive site of political legitimation, it has also been claimed by the MDC which posits a view of the liberation struggle as a non-partisan collective effort. This can be inferred from the party's use of the possessive plural pronoun "we" in reference to the liberation war in the claim that "we engaged in a liberation struggle and were successful" (2013:1). In this sense, it can be argued that the meanings implied in the MDC's black and red colours synchronise with the symbolisms officially attached to the colours on the national flag. This would mean that black represents the black majority and red symbolises the people's revolution. However, as has recently become the norm in regional political and labour organisations in southern Africa, the red colour has become synonymous with a form of neo-liberation sentiment. As the mostly used colour in especially MDC apparel, the red colour vividly suggests a continuing revolution born out of the belief that majority rule has not delivered on the promises of liberation struggle ideals. Thus, while in ZANU PF discourse the red colour would symbolise an event and spirit of revolution in the past that can only be used for commemorative purposes in the post-independence present, the colour had political significance for the MDC's new 'revolution' which justifies its objectives on the basis of the failures of the 'old' revolution.

[18] Barring the brief occupation by Italy which was successfully overturned by the natives, Ethiopia was/is held in high esteem by colonized African countries as the shining star of independence. The flags adopted by many African liberation movements leading to independence adopted the colours of the Ethiopian flag as a way of signifying a common, Pan-African ideal that Africa be liberated.

As the colour of revolution, red connects ideals to action through the ambiance of mood that evokes the necessity of a new form of justice. Colour is critical in filling moods and depicting party identities and nuances. According to Chen et al (2013: 881):

> Colour and illustration have intimate and indiscrete influence to our experience. Understanding the associations, symbolic meanings and emotional impact of colour is important for creating successful illustration. To create a resonance illustration, in particular, colour plays an important role in emphasising the atmosphere and enabling the story to be coherent. More often, colour is used to enhance the expression of emotional feelings such as excitement, happiness and calmness. This enhancement can help the illustration elements to be more memorable or impressive and, hence, effectively increase the readers' engagements to the story.

In this logic, it can be argued that although not explicitly stated by the party, the red colour synonymous with the MDC is a site of justification and self-moralisation as a movement advocating for a new (economic) independence. The colour naturalises MDC's existence as something that was bound to happen since as in the colonial days, Zimbabweans (according to the MDC) are suffering from oppression by the government and exclusion from the economic benefits the country can offer. In this sense, the symbolism of red in the past is re-invoked in the present which the MDC evokes as similar to the (colonial) past, hence the party's quest to "unite and govern responsibly", to achieve sustainable development and "realise [our] vision for a better Zimbabwe" (*JUICE*, 2013:31).

Conclusion

In this chapter I examined how the MDC deployed the discourse of democracy in the post-2000 Zimbabwean context, both to contest and create power. Discussions of discourse-mediated constructions of democracy within the development agenda illuminate relativism and reflect the place of discourse in oppositional strategies of (un)making power. My analysis therefore drew attention to discursive practices deployed by the MDC in managing authority and agency over the narrative of the Zimbabwean crisis and politics. My analysis of MDC's *JUICE* situated discourse and development interventions within the context of contested notions of sustainable social, economic and political development. As Mcloughlin (2014:1) notes, in such kinds of enquiries, CDA helps to unveil "specifically, the incentives, relationships, and distribution and contestation of power between different groups and individuals.". In CDA, the relationship between discourse and style is critical. To understand meaning espoused in MDC texts, there is need to understand how democracy and oppositional discourses are constructed and how their constructedness establish ideological potential for

action. The chapter therefore explored how MDC texts reflect strategic discursive strategies steeped in the historical context, realities and needs of the present. Leveraging its argument and political identity on the urgency of reacting to the failures of ZANU PF's 'democracy', the MDC's democracy discourse re-imagines what it means to be democratic, laying especial premise on how the national crisis symbolises the trigger factor setting in motion counter-democratic imaginaries of democracy. From the physiological metaphor of economic and political 'thirst' to the political texture of visuality, the analysis of *JUICE* revealed how the oppositional discourse foregrounded the Zimbabwean crisis to re-imagine the nation as urgently in need of an alternative democracy.

CHAPTER 5: THE (UN)SUSTAINABILITY OF GENDERED POLITICAL IDENTITIES IN ZIMBABWE: POLITICS, LANGUAGE AND GENDER IN JOICE MUJURU-RELATED POLITICAL TEXTS

Not woman, not man, not the non-binary, no gender is able enough to sustain progress and harmony. To make sure that we grow and stand tall with dignity, all humans, no matter the gender, must rise together with humanity." ― Abhijit Naskar

Introduction

The above catch phrase by Naskar in his text *Beyond Feminism* (2019) spells out the tone and thrust of this chapter's analysis of Zimbabwe People First's and National People's Party's *Blueprint to Unlock Investment and Leverage for Development* (*BUILD*) (2015) and the People's Rainbow Coalition's (PRC) *Inclusive Development Agenda* (*IDEA*) (2018) respectively. The chapter focalises gender dynamics and gendered identities in the placement of women in the power/interest matrix in Zimbabwean politics. Part of what is at stake in this context are gendered political roles and the rhetoric of women participation. In policy texts women are mostly represented in political frameworks that are developed by men. Policy texts are grounded in objective reality that masks latent biases that allows policy elites and technocrats to present plans as neutral and objective when they are actually tied to prevailing relations of power (Schram, 1995). A gender approach gives insight into "formal and informal processes of mean-making, power and policies, that perpetuate unequal social arrangements and are sustained through discourse" (Lazar, 2007: 84). As Foucault (1969) notes, understanding power distribution demands understanding language, together with the agencies it facilitates. Gendered identities are strategically activated through (and materialised in) language. Discourse and gendered bodies become the sites of struggle, where forces of social (re)production and variations of power contestations are played out.

As Lazar (2007: 10) explains in *Gender, Power and Ideology*, "[r]elations of power and dominance, however, can be discursively resisted as well as counter-resisted in a dynamic struggle over securing and challenging the interests at stake," through discourse. In this context, CDA is critical in analysing rhetorically invested political texts such as *BUILD* and *IDEA.* It offers a "sophisticated theorization of the relationship between social practices and discourse structures" (Lazar, 2007: 4). In apparent contradistinction to previous chapters that looked at male-led political parties, this chapter discusses gender dynamics in Zimbabwean politics by

focusing on Joice Mujuru's[19] woman-led party(ies) and their policy pronunciations in *BUILD* and *IDEA*. The way different authors deal with policy problems is connected to knowledge practices and embedded power relations. *BUILD* and *IDEA* conceptualise policy from a woman's perspective. Mujuru, the founding leader of Zimbabwe People First (Zim PF) presented *BUILD* (2015) at the party's launch, as its policy blueprint. The party was formed mainly by former ZANU PF members who sympathised with Mujuru following her expulsion from ZANU PF at the instigation of Mugabe in 2014. No sooner had Zim PF's reformist agenda taken off, Mujuru broke ranks with the new opposition party's elders and formed another political outfit called the National People's Party (NPP). Mujuru and the new party continued to use *BUILD* as their political and economic manifesto. In 2018, Mujuru was nominated as the presidential election candidate for the People's Rainbow Coalition (PRC), an ensemble of smaller opposition parties opposed to what it viewed as political bullying by the largest opposition group in Zimbabwe, the MDC Alliance (MDC-A). The PRC branded its election manifesto, *IDEA.* Mujuru's political movement(s) and her brand of party politics, clearly central in this opposition political narrative prior to and during the 2018 elections, are critical for this study as a form of a gendered trope. Women are symbolic in politics, art and culture. They often evoke political images associated with womanhood and symbolise motherhood. The feminine constructions are paradoxical as they make women figures both powerful and powerless. Discourse in *BUILD* and *IDEA* reflect built-in asymmetries of power that influence contestations in Zimbabwean politics. As Mayer (2000:16) explains, "because national building projects are initially defined by men, they become mostly masculinist projects". Dominant discourses, inundated with concepts such as 'empowerment' and 'national interests' appear gender neutral and innocuous though the ideology that drives nation building project(s), nationalism, invests in symbols, and values that camouflage sex and gender as sites of dominance, misogyny and othering (Nagel, 1998).

The chapter gives an overview of how, in the context of the Zimbabwean crisis, gender is discursively (re)defined and politically operationalised by Mujuru and her parties. Zimbabwe's political and development discourses reveal an ambivalence on women's participation in national development. The patterns of participation, decision-making, influence and control are trapped in hegemonic forces that align with constructed images of phallogocentrism.

[19] Mujuru as a politician served in many ministerial posts since independence and also as Vice-President of Zimbabwe and ZANU PF from 2004 to 2014. In 2014 she was denounced on allegations of plotting Mugabe's ouster. Months after her expulsion, she formed Zim PF.

Consequently, my discussion here illuminates the significance of Mujuru as a political contender in Zimbabwean politics, whose political parties and policy texts must be understood within the historical and political context of hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinities have for long generated dominant narratives, landscapes of political history and policy theories with conceptual markers that have hitherto strategically situated and discriminated against women. Dominant political representations of development have depoliticising effects and implications that obscure inequalities concerning women's issues, roles and participation.

Mujuru's endeavour to BUILD and proffer IDEAS to turn around the economy can be considered as both provocative and innovative within this context. The significance of Mujuru as a politician lies outside the dominant history of ideas and nation-building as there are no serious traditions capable of recognising a woman builder, leader and president in Zimbabwe. Power relations are a struggle over interests, which are exercised, reflected, maintained and resisted through a variety of modalities, extents and degrees of explicitness (Lazar, 2007:9). The dominant images of development and power are responsible for the individuals' placement in social hierarchies especially in organisations. These gender(ed) relations give insight into the distribution of power within the classic social and political institutions.

As O'Brien (2012: 1022) explains, "party leaders are the main actors controlling campaign strategies, policy agendas, and government formation." Drawing on this observation, my discussion focuses on Mujuru, as the main author and the chief proponent influencing the parties and policy texts under scrutiny. Examining different domains of gender relations such as power, practices, knowledge systems, access to resources and rights as reflected in the policy texts allows one to understand the constrains and opportunities of gender signification and development that go beyond what Baudrillard calls an "abyss of linguistic seduction" (Baudrillard, 2001: 57). In the context of this research, gender has been theorised by placing emphasis on issues of policy formulation. Discourse in *BUILD* and *IDEA* is deployed and legitimacy negotiated within parameters of the political genre and socially sanctioned behaviour within the political arena. Notions of gendered domains are critical in this research as they enable the examination of the ways in which gender impacts policy formulation, language deployment and political participation at the level of the setting and context, something which goes beyond just Mujuru, her parties and her policy texts.

Signification of power takes place in the imaginary, as the being of women that is assumed in politics is inscribed within the body. Women inevitably reassert themselves in the act of

narration as they articulate their needs and counter the orderly course of history, the duplicitous masks of nationalism and women's prescribed spaces. Thus, Mujuru's parties develop their own range of needs and linguistic behaviours, which distinguish them from parties such as ZANU PF and MDC. Theories of power and control highlight that power is constantly under negotiation, and always open to challenge and resistance. As Foucault (1980) explains, notions of power distribution demand movement towards an analysis of language. Gendered identities are strategically activated and materialised in language. For purposes of this discussion, CDA appropriately raises "critical consciousness about the discursive dimensions of social problems involving discrimination, disadvantage, and dominance with the aim of contributing to broader emancipatory projects" (Lazar, 2018: 372).

Gender specificity and complexity in Zimbabwean politics

From a CDA perspective, "discourses are produced within specific contexts and cannot be understood apart from them" (Fairclough and Wodak 1997). It is this "connection between discourses and social contexts, processes, and situations that make discourse analysis a valuable and powerful tool for studying social phenomena" (Souto-Manning, 2012: 160). Gender is one stubborn salient construct that illuminates the conflicted needs of sustainable development, women participation and the rhetoric of nationalism. Constructs of gender underlie the social, political and linguistic assumptions that influence development policies and the distribution of power. These constructs are, at best, reflected in political contestations and policy texts like *BUILD* and *IDEA* which illuminate how policies are gendered in terms of representation and authority to define needs and what is best for the nation. To properly situate and shape meanings of sustainability and gender dynamics, an understanding of the cultural and historical contexts in which gender constructs are found helps. As Nordquist (2018) explains, looking at, for example, the context of language use and not just the words enable layers of meaning to be added by the social or institutional aspects. This language context illuminates things like gender, power imbalance, conflicts, cultural background and discrimination.

The post-2000 crisis has opened spaces for social movements and initiatives that articulate demands for more effective social practices and policies that seek to mitigate the national crisis and address inequalities. A critical analysis of *BUILD* and *IDEA* reveal gender dynamics which are elusive and downplayed in dominant policy discourses. The texts appeal for inclusivity, facilitation and regulation "to allow for a level playing field and provide equal opportunities

for all" (*BUILD*, 2015: 1), which is not given precedence in other policy texts such as *#Team ZANU PF* (2013*)* and *JUICE* (2013). As captured in the title, *Blueprint to Unlock Investment and Leverage Development,* unlocking investment and leveraging are presented as technical means to guarantee development in Zimbabwe. Unlocking expresses opening up closed spaces to enable access and opportunities to BUILD Zimbabwe. It entails freeing from restraints things that have curbed development. A closer analysis of Zimbabwean development policies and political issues shows how women's needs have been peripheralised. Their participation in key economic sectors have been deliberately limited, thus, the need to unlock the potential in them and to free them from the shackles imposed by previous approaches to development. It is within this context that Mujuru and her allies come up with IDEAS on how to promote "inclusive development, security, safety and welfare of all Zimbabweans" (*IDEA*, 2018: 4).

Mujuru's parties Zim PF, NPP and PRC are 'feminised' as they include and integrate women as main political actors and give women's concerns precedence. "Unlock" – perhaps the most politically-laden imagery in *BUILD* has connotations of value and potential, which aptly imply giving women, Mujuru specifically, a chance to *unlock* her own value and potential in '*BUILD*ing' Zimbabwe. In one of her other policy documents (IDEA), it is noted that:

> Despite all the effort on empowerment, the PRC notes that women remain more socially and economically vulnerable. Yet women are an important group whose participation in national politics, economic and business would transform the country for the better. If enhanced, their relevance, their numerical strength, and their multiplier effect in the attainment of educational (sic) and health would contribute to the economy in a massive way (*IDEA*, 2018: 39).

In *BUILD* and *IDEA, "*unlocking" the nation's value is tantamount to (and means) unlocking women's value. Intervention is framed around valuing inclusivity. ZANU PF is portrayed as having closed the metaphoric door of power Mujuru and her parties want unlocked and opened.

Unlocking value as captured in *BUILD* and *IDEA* denotes the aspiration to map out a path to value all Zimbabweans regardless of differences and chart new ways for development. The unlocked value seeks to address the challenges related to previous failures which can be realised when the value in women is realised. Every objective in *BUILD* and *IDEA* is articulated within the standard of respecting and valuing "all", captured as inclusivity. Mujuru and allies express that all the necessary requisites for sustainable development are there but they have been restrained by poor governance, which she ironically has been a part of. By extension, she is insinuating that her part in previous failures is subdued because the system

that she was part of was a male system; she was therefore a mere placeholder. ZANU PF, for whose survival Mujuru was instrumental and part of closed the metaphoric door that she now wants unlocked and opened. She held 'key positions' in government since independence though she does not have much legacy in the positions she held. It is ironic that Mujuru having been an integral part of that same system that had locked away and closed the doors, only seems aware of closed prospects now that she is outside the self-serving ZANU PF system.

The metaphors of unlocking and opening also implicate ZANU PF's isolationist politics epitomised by Mugabe's (in)famous declaration at the height of Zimbabwe's diplomatic fight with Britain over the land reform programme and human rights violations in Zimbabwe, "Blair keep your England and I will keep my Zimbabwe". Part of the Third Chimurenga ethic that justified political and economic policies such as the Indigenisation Policy, Mugabe's anti-West rhetoric is often cited for the dwindling investment in the country leading to a chronic shortage of foreign currency marking the economic crisis (see Magaisa 2015). In this sense, 'unlocking' is a powerful imagery of undoing Mugabe's policy hence the promise of "a wholesale review of the Indigenisation Act" that and "adoption of market-driven policies under a constitutional democracy" *(BUILD*, 2015: 1). In this light, Magaisa (2015) explains that:

> In line with her ideological reference to "market-driven policies", clear preference for protection of "private property" and allusion to "address historical compulsory acquisition, through fair and transparent compensation", Mujuru speaks to the notion of the "global citizen" influenced by market-friendly ideology. Mujuru leans towards privatisation of parastatals, reduction, if not removal of subsidies to parastatals, the "immediate establishment of value in land" and she talks about "guarantee of property rights, sanctity of contracts and other investor protection instruments".

In a patriarchal society such as Zimbabwe, the phallic is symbolically and naturally associated with power and control. The phallic image is associated with divisive competitiveness characterised by aggressiveness and machismo. *Manning the Nation* (Muchemwa and Muponde, 2007) provides a detailed analysis of how masculinities have been deployed in leadership and nation and how violence has been justified through nationalistic discourses. Machismo is typified with bold and authoritarian approach to government and willingness to employ violence to achieve ends. Muchemwa and Muponde (2007: xix) clarify that, "[w]ar and violence as markers of power directly emanate from body semiotics in which the athletic, strong and healthy male body demands the performance of sexual, social and political dominance". This translates to exaggerated and unchecked masculinities, perceived as

power, coupled with a minimal sense of responsibility and disregard of consequences. This violence that pervades the Zimbabwean political scene, mostly manifests in contestations within and between ZANU PF and MDC. Parpart (2007: 103) explains that, "[w]hile violence and conflict are shaped by economic, political or cultural contexts, it is also deeply gendered". Males are usually associated with perpetrating violence against women. Muchemwa and Muponde (2007: xix) attribute "current cultures of violence to the insidious ways in which superphallicism predicated on physical power has invaded Zimbabwe's socio-cultural space instilling in women, children and marginalised masculinities acquiescence, silence and fear." Violence becomes symbolic of power as it is a mode of domination and subjugation.

It should be noted that the pervasive nature of masculinities not only manifests in men. It also impacts on women's psyches. Masculinity goes beyond being male to represent an institutionalised system of exclusion and/or empowerment which has far reaching and diverse implications on social (inter)action. This is evident when women embrace this machismo and also play a role in meting out violence on other women as demonstrated by the role of Grace Mugabe in the fall of Mujuru. It is alleged that in this, Grace Mugabe was used as a ploy by men who were pushing their power ambition agendas. This itself is a phallocentric narrative as it was never clear who was G40[20]'s boss, which actually makes it possible that she was the one using the men to push for power. It is evident that to some extent Grace Mugabe[21] herself harboured ambitions for power as she almost became the second in command to her frail president husband. Violence has been fingered as a major reason that deters women form participating in Zimbabwean mainstream politics. This violence takes all forms, from verbal and physical assaults to psychological and emotional abuse. A good example is how Mujuru and Thokozani Khupe have been victims of physical attacks and verbal backlashes when they expressed their interests in competing their male counterparts from their affiliated parties.[22] ZANU PF's phallicism is evoked as obsession with power; it is associated with hierarchies, competition, and is inimical to dissention and challenge.

[20] Generation 40 (G40) was a ZANU PF faction comprised of younger members fronted by Grace Mugabe
[21] Grace Mugabe wife to former President Robert Mugabe was alleged to be part in a more subtle and complex political game in ZANU PF's succession battles. She attacked Joice Mujuru at public rallies and was instrumental in thwarting the possibility of Mujuru succeeding Mugabe, as she seemed to have been gaining popular support in some party structures.
[22] Story "Grace Mugabe declares war on Mujuru" available online at https://www.theindependent.co.zw/2014/10/18/grace-mugabe-declares-war-mujuru/
See the story "Violence mars Tsvangirai burial" in *The Herald* (21 February, 2018), available online at https://www.herald.co.zw/violence-mars-tsvangirai-burial/

In Mujuru's political texts, the depiction of gender goes beyond distinctions based on biological sex. Rather than seeing gender "as a possession or set of behaviours which is imposed upon the individual by society" as illuminated by essentialist theorists, gender is conceptualised "as something which is enacted or performed, and thus as a potential site of struggle over perceived restrictions in roles" (Butler, 1990). Gender notions invoke metaphoric interpretations. Masculinity denotes status, privilege and power, and femininity depicts positions of vulnerability and subordination. Therefore, disadvantage, marginalisation and vulnerability are mostly synonymous with women. Underlying Zimbabwean discourses of power is supreme valuation of characteristics culturally associated with masculinity and denigration of characteristics associated with femininity. This explains the rage and anger of male Members of Parliament when Margaret Dongo described all men in ZANU PF as Mugabe's wives.[23] She said this implying that the men in ZANU PF were not brave enough to challenge Mugabe in any way. In saying this, Dongo metaphorically implied having 'balls'. Dongo therefore subverted prescribed gender identities. This is in stark contrast with the culture of leadership reverence in ZANU PF.

In patriarchal societies, men are expected to provide for the women and children. However, in the imagery of building in Mujuru's texts reveals the "complicated ways in which linguistic practices and products are caught up in, and moulded by, the forms of power and inequality which are pervasive features of societies as they actually exist" (Bourdieu, 1991, 1-2). Comparing ZANU PF and Zim PF, NPP and PRC policy outlines, particularly their deployment of the word empowerment as a metaphor of economic affirmative philosophy and action, there are evident ideological tensions in the ways in which it is used to legitimate and delegitimise leadership authority. It makes us question the whole notion of empowerment and stirs questions of who empowers who and by what means. In the Zimbabwean context though, one understands the irony and complexity of Mujuru, a woman, being a 'builder'. It raises questions on whether she is capable of establishing herself "in the Zimbabwean political imaginary of power" (Christiansen, 2007: 88) in a position beyond running the household, which is associated with women. As Ziai (2013) explains, gender influences who has control and access to resources. Building is generally considered men's occupation. The image of a woman builder is therefore a transgression of the normative as Mujuru "imagine[s] possible social practices and networks of social practice, possible syntheses of activities, subjects, social

[23] Dongo was an outspoken former ZANU PF member who was dropped out of the part for not towing the party line as directed by Mugabe.

relations, instruments, objects, spacetimes, values, forms of consciousness" (Fairclough, 2001: 3). Belief in women asserting power is ironically a clear departure from Mujuru's earlier convictions about the role of women in nation building. In Lyons' *Guns and Guerrilla Girls: Women in the Zimbabwean Liberation Struggle* Mujuru is quoted as saying:

> Women have a great role to play in uniting the nation because they are household builders, mothers of the future generations and wives to the rulers. The more women cooperate, the more prosperous will be our nation (2004: 213).

It is ironic how Mujuru was encouraging women to be comfortable and subservient, limited to domestic roles; the very roles she later finds to epitomise the politics of exclusion. This transformation in her worldview demonstrates the fluidity of practices, communities, definitions and identities, and the politics of convenience that are mediated and negotiated through rhetoric.

Maphosa, Tshuma and Maviza (2015) assert that the participation of women in Zimbabwean politics and gender equity is a mirage; there is a discrepancy between perceived and actual realities. They explain that there is "systemic and calculated manoeuvre by politically dominant males to open up the political space" for women when it is necessary and convenient for them (Maphosa *et al*, 2015: 128). Within this context, Mujuru's ascendancy in political spaces has been highly attributed to being the wife of a strong powerful figure, General Solomon Mujuru and a nominal gesture to attract the female vote. Her Vice Presidency has also been accredited to Mugabe, who allegedly used her as a pawn in the power game. Maphosa *et al* (2015: 128) argue that the participation of women in politics has been "more of manipulation than a genuine attempt to promote gender equality and equity." In their words, it is "nothing but a ruse since in spite of signing the various legal instruments they have been simultaneously putting a glass ceiling on women's path towards greater political participation" (Maphosa *et al*, 2015: 28). This view is supported by Maphosa *et al* (2015) who quote former President Robert Mugabe, following Mujuru's expulsion from ZANU PF, saying that; "we are experiencing it for the first time in ZANU-PF and for that matter it's a woman who is saying, I want to take over that seat" (quoted in *Reuters*, 2014). The tone of disdain in the phrase "for that matter" betrays strong undertones of disdain against both the possibility of Mujuru replacing him and a woman replacing a man on the seat of power. Mugabe would later describe Mujuru as a witch who wanted to wrestle power from him through unorthodox means.

As pointed out above, political processes, specifically "fortunes and misfortunes of women in politics are intertwined to men's political interests" (Aviel, 1981:157). The inclusion of women agendas becomes "mere practice[s] of embellishment" (Aviel, 1981:157). In this light, the manifesto *BUILD* contents that "the advancement of women…in all economic, social and political spheres…has largely been accorded lip service *BUILD* (2015: 2)." Mujuru's fate and transformation vis-à-vis her thinking of the politics of gender reveal the importance of understanding the intersectionality of female political identities. Intersectionality, also referred to as intersectional feminism, attempts to identify how interlocking systems of power affect the marginalised in society. Intersectionality is formulated as a praxis of how social justice initiatives can bring about socio-economic change. This involves an awareness of how all "aspects of identity and social categorizations such as race, class, disability and gender overlap and create systems of discrimination or disadvantage" (YWBoston, 2017). *BUILD* and *IDEA* illuminate on this notion of intersectionality with the emphasis on inclusivity, depicted as the "roadmap to building an inclusive economy and inclusive society", and "transforming Zimbabwe into a modern democratic developmental state characterised by …equitable distribution of wealth" (*IDEA*, 2018: 2).

The subaltern can (now) speak[24]

CDA draws attention to "the determination of action by structures, social reproduction, and the ideological positioning of subjects" (Fairclough, 1995: 24). Agency, which is central to CDA, is constructed by assuming a position in relation to dominant discourses or master narratives. It manifests in how the subject's position is shaped by the social, historical and/or biological forces which influence the subject's being and determines its action potential. It also symbolises how human subjects position themselves based on conscious will, to create identities. Models of agency as evident in *BUILD* and *IDEA* enable subjects to situate themselves in positions of responsibilities. According to Guha (2000: 3), the subaltern can be defined as "the general attribute of subordination… whether it is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way." This makes being a subaltern situational and whatever the condition, it is a pathetic one. This condition is evoked in IDEA as resulting from

[24] Borrowing from Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" The essay interrogates the historical and ideological factors that obstruct the possibility of the marginalised from being heard. It highlights issues of political subjectivity, access to the state, and the burden of difference in a system that promises equality yet find ways to withhold it.

"the tyranny of poverty; the scourge of corruption; misery of disease and hunger; abuse of power; economic depression; and other social and economic ills" (*IDEA*, 2018:5).

As a woman situated in the context of Zimbabwe's recent history characterised by blatant masculinisation of power, Mujuru fits into the frame of a political subaltern. The political erasure of her liberation credentials following her expulsion for allegedly seeking to contest "Mugabe's power" is telling of the politics of female silencing. As Nyambi and Matsika (2016: 7382) observe:

> Since, for obvious reasons, the liberation war and its memory are inseparable from power and hegemonic control in the postcolony, the narrative of the war in Zimbabwe has long been a preserve of powerful and often male political leaders. This means that female narratives of the war are subordinated and with them, women's roles in the war and post-independence power politics.

Though Mujuru was a very powerful figure in ZANU, becoming even the party and national Vice President, she is mostly overshadowed by men. As Spivak explains "the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow" (1987: 28). Her political history prevaricates, as her credentials and history are written and rewritten by men, mostly to suit male political agendas. Nyambi and Matsika (2016: 7382) detail that:

> Previously, Joice Mujuru was celebrated in ZANU PF circles as a "father of the nation" (Christiansen, 2007: 88) before she was unceremoniously haunted out of the party and national deputy presidency in 2014 on allegations that she had ambitions to unseat Mugabe. Part of the ZANU PF revised narrative that vilified Mujuru in the process of (and after) her ouster tactically retracted much of the liberation credentials and war heroics previously attributed to her. Among other deletions of and modifications to Mujuru's hitherto recognised masculine war heroics, the story of the helicopter shooting is conspicuous.

Subalternity is a metaphor of positioning. It entails how people are placed in relation to power and privileges and how they subsequently place themselves within the defined space. Positioning theorises issues of location, identity, self and subjectivity. Positioning involves picking up a position amongst available alternatives, as evident when Mujuru reconstructs herself as a leader who can 'give birth' to a new nation. *BUILD* AND *IDEA* are counter-narratives to ZANU PF. The imposing figure of Mujuru on the cover pages of *BUILD* and *IDEA* reflects a powerful image of womanhood. It presents a 'dutiful' cadre who is ready to tackle the nation's challenges head-on. Being dutiful as a woman is usually associated with being the stereotypic 'good wife' who finds self-fulfilment in domestic duties. So Mujuru's intrusion into national politics a potential leader is striking, particularly given her history of

gendered political marginalisation. *BUILD* and *IDEA* are competing narratives in which (particularly) powerless female political subjects position themselves in relation to the masculine identities of ZANU PF and MDC parties led by men. In Mujuru's political rhetoric, collective capacity emphasises how all men and women are "created equal under God" (*BUILD*, 2015: 1) and as such must be given equal opportunities. This creation metaphor evokes the sense of sharing; of co-owning the world. The motif of inclusivity is further reinforced by the promise to enforce equality: "[the] law should therefore be applied equally to all citizens and offices in the land" (*BUILD*, 2015: 1).

Given the complex interplay of power, knowledge and agency in post-2000 Zimbabwe, it is critical to explore the narrative strategies and tactics that Mujuru deploys in her struggle to insert femininity in the power matrix in Zimbabwe. As Brock, Cornwall and Gaventa (2001: iii) assert, "policy process involves a complex configuration of interests between a range of differently positioned actors, whose agency matters, but whose interactions are shaped by power relations". Making sense of *BUILD* and *IDEA* as "roadmap(s) to building an inclusive economy and inclusive society" (*IDEA*, 2018: 2) requires a close exploration of the dynamics within and beyond the arenas in which these policies are shaped. The acronym IDEA, aptly condenses the issues captured in the *Inclusive Development Agenda* manifesto. Ideas and alliances are intimately connected. Agents use ideas to garner and mobilise political support. Politics and political mileage/support is supposed to be driven by how people interpret information, so political actors strive to control these interpretations. Ideas are key forms of power in imagining development and in policymaking. Ideas can change the world and are responsible for progression of beings and society. They envisage specific needs and what must be done for those needs to be realised. *BUILD* and *IDEA* have been formulated through conscious feministic lens. They propel the image and visibility of women. Their policy framework displays gender specific commitments, clearly illuminating on issues of women's access, participation, influence, decision making and even physical presence. For example, the image of the cover page of the manifesto, *IDEA*, is a discursive site for inserting female agency. The picture reflects a multitude of people, mainly women. Women are occupying the front seats, highly visible, looking happy and authoritative. There are one or two men seated amongst the women in the front rows but most men are in the terraces where they are indistinct. However, this overemphasis of women has its challenges, as it risks creating a gap with men whilst correcting one against women. It creates agency for women in a way that seems to marginalise men.

Closely related to the metaphor of building is the leitmotif of inclusivity which is reinforced by the evocative notion cum implementation strategy of "**RAMP** (Remove all Measurable Pitfalls)" (bold in original text, *BUILD*, 2015: 1). Like *IDEA* and *BUILD*, the acronym RAMP metaphorises the inclination for action, projecting Mujuru and her party as ready and enabled to implement inclusive policies. RAMP both denotes and connotes action as well as destabilisation of something that was not working at full capacity. As Foucault (1980: 49) clarifies, "'to make visible the unseen can also mean a change of level, addressing oneself to a layer of material which had hitherto had no pertinence for history and which had not been recognised as having any moral, aesthetic or historical value." As Spivak (1987: 25) argues, given the opportunity and the appropriate forums, the most marginalised populations "can speak and know their conditions".

Mujuru's party narratives are intriguing in the ways they re-vision sites of agency and envision a world in which the marginalised can realise their human and social potential. The texts re-imagine feminine qualities as equally potent alternative catalysts of progress. In re-inventing the feminine as politically capable, Mujuru invokes the home imagery but unlike ZANU PF and her earlier self, she re-constructs home-based identities and beliefs to suit the transformation of a woman into a capable leader. Mujuru's texts modify the connection between family and politics. The woman is mostly a symbol of love and care in a home but in *BUILD* and *IDEA* these qualities are re-considered to define and inform her political capacity. Closely related to this otherwise stereotype of being a woman/wife are associations of caring evoked in the party's stress on inclusivity, hence the claim to "seek political power for the sole purpose of promoting inclusive development, security, safety and welfare of all Zimbabweans" (I*DEA*, 2018: 4). This statement engenders a sense of concern and caring of people's welfare – stereotypically feminine qualities often thrust in contrast with the self-interest and opportunism synonymous with male power contestations, especially between MDC and ZANU PF. Martin (1990: 474) notes that women can create entry points into gender exclusive matrices of power by summoning their unique "attachment to children and community." *IDEA* explicates that, "[i]n this Zimbabwe: youths, women, informal traders, vendors, business, workers, civil servants, pensioners, civil society, farmers, artisanal miners, masses, students, teachers, parents, ex-freedom fighters, Gukurahundi survivors, Murambatsvina survivors, diasporans, artists and voters are angry" (*IDEA*, 2018: 10). This specificity with which the marginalised are remembered evokes a sense of awareness of their plight and interest to help them. This concern for the suffering and willingness to help reinforces the motherhood

metaphor and the motherly politician who knows the circumstances of her children and how they can be changed. *BUILD* and *IDEA* overtly and covertly portray a maternal figure who has a maternal bond with the people. The texts highlight ZANU PF's detached approach to development. In motherly tones, Mujuru's texts reiterate the passionate "desire and determination to see our Nation grow and create equal opportunities for all" (*BUILD,* 2015: 2). With the nation re-imagined as a home, the mother thus becomes a political metaphor that strategically re-visions the good politician in terms of feminine qualities that exclude male-led parties and heighten Mujuru's electability.

As Ranchod-Nilsson (2006: 51) argues, periods of transition can mean updates in "patterns of inequality or power relations to fit new circumstances and gender becomes one means for articulating these patterns". Mujuru's policy texts illuminate the spaces that women try to create within the nationalist movement and within the nationalist discourse in times of crisis. As Martin (1990) notes, women always have recourse to positive aspects of their femininity to deal with certain crisis situations. The emphasis on a broader transformative agenda in Mujuru's vouching for re-gendering power in the country can be connected to the Marxist-Feminist argument that women cannot be free until all forms of oppression are defeated. This idea of freedom and tact, which is based on the power of solidarity, views women's liberation as bound up with that of the entire society and advocates for a simultaneous struggle against all forms of oppression. As Rai (2008) observes, women use both the discourses of nationalism and development to re-mobilise agency and extent boundaries of power. In Mujuru's political texts, solidarity with the oppressed populace is synonymised with women's struggle, making the fight for inclusivity a fight for women's political equality.

According to Friedman (1989: 28), when the subaltern, especially women speak, "there is an approach to issues that is neither purely individualistic nor purely collective". Crucially, for Spivak (1987), subalternity is a position without identity. As hinted above, coming from a background of gendered political exclusion, the female leader in *BUILD* and *IDEA* epitomises the social inclusion that Mujuru's parties seeks to engender. Besides this symbolising of Mujuru as the embodiment of inclusivity, the texts also invoke egalitarianism to reinforce the party's politics of inclusivity. The discourse, policy options, developmental programmes and identities in *BUILD* and *IDEA* accentuate hybridised initiatives to underscore the necessity of inclusivity. Hybridity, in this instance, entails borrowing from positive aspects of existing policies, especially from the rival parties the MDC and ZANU PF. This can be seen in the way that the party uses language to image its political identity. In *BUILD,* the party self-identifies

as “national democrats, guided by the values of the liberation struggle, of self-determination, self-dignity, self-pride, expressed through adoption of market driven policies under a constitutional democracy” (*BUILD*, 2015: 1). A closer look at the diction defining, describing and characterising the party’s ideology reveals the hybridisation of existing albeit rival political orientations. Being “national democrats, guided by the values of the liberation struggle” clearly borrows from ZANU PF’s strong nationalist ideology. This statement re-inserts Mujuru into the pantheon of national liberators and consequently destabilises ZANU PF’s well-guarded site of exclusive political legitimacy. “National democrats” on the other hand reveals heavy associations with the liberal democratic stance of the MDC. This political hybridism reconstructs Mujuru’s party as the embodiment of the good found in the more popular rival parties. Thus, unlike the convention in ZANU PF to fix definite political identities, Mujuru treads the middle path. ZANU PF is unambiguous about what political identities and ideologies legitimate one for national office: “[e]nemies of patriotism are sellouts”; and given the party’s claim that “Zanu PF is Zimbabwe’s only Patriotic Front” *(#Team ZANU PF*, 2013; 20-21), no one else outside ZANU PF would, in this schema, qualify for leadership . In this respect, Mujuru imagines an alternative inclusive discourse that is accommodating.

Mothers in the revolution: Gender repertoires

In projecting Mujuru as a nationalist with the requisite liberation history that has long served as the revered site of political legitimacy in Zimbabwe, her parties risk masculinising her, for, as seen above, the liberation act is a phallic territory. This risk was previously observed albeit as a strength in Mujuru’s ascendancy to ZANU PF vice presidency on the back of her celebration as an achiever of masculine liberation war feats. Christiansen’s (2007) chapter titled ‘Mai Mujuru: Father of the Nation?” reveals how Mujuru, at the time, seemed to be a ‘female patriarch’ of the party. In *IDEA*, Mujuru is presented in her parties’ political discourse almost in the same ways that Mugabe used to dominate all manner of political thought in ZANU PF. She is portrayed as an imposing female figure who is the symbol and centre of power in her new parties. Reading *BUILD* and *IDEA*, one can see, feel and hear Mujuru’s political weight and voice.

Mediation between policy narration and context conditions how narrators and the audience activate narrative conventions for certain political effects. Policy narratives such as *BUILD* and *IDEA* are shaped by the quest to negotiate identities and political legitimacy. As Fairclough

puts it, “discourse figures in representations. Social actors within any practice produce representations of other practices, as well as reflexive representations of their own practice, in the course of their activity within the practice” (2013: 264). Mujuru and allies’ representation of the socio-economic transformation agenda and incorporation of feminist counter discourse is enhanced by how they are positioned within the context and the frames they seek to counter. Imagery in *BUILD* and I*DEA* highlight conceptions of women’s revolutionary and productive power. Womanhood and motherhood are symbolic images informing the framing of political identity, policy and action in *BUILD* and *IDEA*. Power is mainly contested through sentimentalisation of motherhood and maternal imagery.

Images in *BUILD* and *IDEA* are vehicles of a discourse that vividly and aesthetically capture both the resistance to female exclusion and self-reassertion in mainstream political competition. Martin (1990: 470) points out that women frequently appear in “advertising and works of art but their voices are often "muted," so limiting their ability to shape categories of thought.” Mostly, the subordination of women is facilitated by social and cultural assumptions that create specific spaces for women and men. The platforms accorded women limit their visibility and presence in positions of influence. *BUILD* and *IDEA* deploy women's images that restore women’s political presence. Maternal ideals are espoused and valorised as sources of sober political orientation. This re-imagining of maternal and feminine qualities as sites of political legitimacy can be sensed in *BUILD* and *IDEA* where Mujuru’s feminine qualities are re-invented as sites of political strength.

Mujuru poses in the images as a strong, powerful mother figure whose vision is to “create a just and equitable society, in which all people are treated equally in line with the founding principles of the liberation struggle” and “determination to see our Nation grow and create equal opportunities for all” (*BUILD*, 2015: 2). Creation entails bringing something into existence, which makes it synonymous with giving birth, building, developing and ensuring growth. In *IDEA*, it is cited that the PRC Government endeavours to “develop bold and new approaches towards addressing the economic depression currently facing our beautiful country” (2018: 6). The caption “The mothers of our souls, the mothers of our nation” (*IDEA*, 2018; 20) on a picture depicting pregnant mothers expresses how the nation is linked to a mother figure in a way that essentially makes her its guardian. The imagery of the ‘nation mother’ evokes women’s power to produce nations biologically, culturally, and symbolically. The imagery foregrounds the feminine qualities of (re)production and nurturing to appeal to the electorate to appreciate women’s importance, agency and capacity as natural guardians of

the people. As Miller (2012: 1) notes in another context, "[t]he women's divine role of nurturing nations need to be restored". This conflation of reproductive and nurturing powers with cultural, socio-economic and political agendas undermine essentialised notions of the traditional woman's femininity that is commonly ill-fated to begin and end in the home.

Sustainable development models in *BUILD* and *IDEA* are couched in evidently feministic discourse. Women's political muscle and astuteness to transform the nation socially, economically and politically are linked to symbols of matriarchy. The roles of women in childbirth and mothering, which have been hitherto used as a means of subordinating and domesticating women, provide "a model for their entrance into the political arena" (Martin, 1990: 471). Stereotypical maternal instincts and feminine qualities such as caring, gentleness and dedication are flagged as values that can impact on development. The presentation of programmes and ideas in the policy texts capitalise on qualities and notions of motherhood that are demonstrated daily in homes. Typically, in a family setup up where a mother's concern and life can never be separated from her children's being, in *BUILD* and *IDEA*, women's rights and issues are teamed with the children's needs, especially the youths. This explains why it is highlighted that women and youths are particularly at the centre of the texts and its inclusivity drive. Poverty is depicted as more than just lack of resources for survival; rather, it involves the gendered loss of opportunities for meaningful participation in society. Thus, the texts demonstrate that it has a clear vision to make sustainable development a reality by nurturing capacity for all.

The tone pervading Mujuru's construction as a potential female leader in *BUILD* and *IDEA* is that of a caring mother who sincerely wants to make the 'home' habitable and flourishing. Symbolic qualities of love, responsibility, selflessness and positivity amongst a plethora of tenderly qualities and dispositions pervade persuasive frames of re-encountering the Zimbabwean crisis. As Martin (1990: 471) points out in context of women's culture in Mexican community, in expressing the connection of women power to economic and political crisis, "the image of the self-sacrificing mother offer(ed) a promise of redemption to a people burdened by mistrust and economic hardship. Women believed that they had been "called" to enter the political arena to save the community from corruption and abuse of power." As highlighted in *BUILD* the "PRC's struggle is ranged against unemployment; the tyranny of poverty; the scourge of corruption; misery of disease and hunger, abuse of power; economic depression; and other social and economic ills" (2018: 5). Mothers are generally viewed as essential building blocks of social relationships and identities. They are custodians of values

that anchor families and keep relations intact. Mujuru's reconfiguration of motherhood into the site of political iconography that she presents in BUILD is founded on the inherent properties of agential performances of 'nurturing', protecting and loving.

The image of home in *BUILD* is ironic and ideologically saturated. According to Rai (2008: 24), "[n]othing is more imagined than this community of people subscribing to a singular idea of the home". Rai (2008: 24) further explains that, by "familializing the nation, the home becomes critical in the discourse of nationalism". In *BUILD*, notions of sustainable development and nation building are imbued with idealist images of the home and women's central role in its (un)making. This follows on the popular Shona concept of the role of women in a family set-up reflected in the popular idiom "musha mukadzi" (trans. "the home is made by a woman"). In this schema, women (un)make homes, and in *BUILD*, the impression created is that women can 'build' the national 'home'. *BUILD* (2015: 1) explains that "Zimbabwe belongs to all that call it home, regardless of colour, creed, disability, gender, race or religious background". The home in this sense goes beyond a physical structure that houses people. Besides evoking a sense of where one belongs, home is a place where one has to be comfortable and secure. It connotes a personal and emotional attachment to where one resides. It can thus be argued, as hinted above, that Mujuru extends the home imagery beyond the domestic space and scope to symbolise the nation and strategically 'deflates' the nation to a 'home' in order to leverage her competence as shaped by femininity and its links to the domestic space. The building imagery becomes an aesthetic leitmotif that evokes images of the need to upgrade and give a better representation of taking care of what has been neglected and nurturing what has degenerated under ZANU PF's administration. That is why in *BUILD*, there is a recurrence of building images as can be inferred from promises to: "*build* the most business-friendly and inclusive economy, which will create jobs and shared prosperity for all" (p.9); "re*build* a sound monetary policy that is supportive to maintaining the foreign reserves and the balance of payments at levels that promote the socio-economic development of Zimbabwe and advance the objectives of macro-economic stability" (p.11); "[r]e*build* a favourable environment for development and expansion of the existing industries and the promotion of the development of new ones" (p.13); "rebuild agriculture" (p.15), "re*build* and develop new health systems" (p.20) and many other things.

Mujuru has hinted that contesting for national leadership is symbolic of the action required to transgress the gendered inferiorisation of women. We can infer from the language of *BUILD* and *IDEA*, metaphors of political competitiveness derived from otherwise stereotypical

'feminine' qualities of humility, tenderness, acknowledgement of amicable human relations and tolerance of alternative ideas. These qualities are portrayed as indispensable to nation building. Entering opposition politics already dominated by the MDC, Mujuru's parties invoke her maternal instincts of caring to portray themselves and her as not inclined to destabilise the opposition, but to nurture and strengthen it, as the following quotation shows:

> I salute the leaders and members of all opposition political parties, civil society activists, academics, and democracy campaigners who have dedicated their lives to the well-being of the oppressed people, peasants and workers; to the interests of the unemployed and the poor; to the cause of women, youth and children; and to those with special needs and the marginalised. These brave men and women have kept the agenda for our 'inclusive society' alive despite a barrage of attacks by ZANU PF elites and publicists. History shall forever remember them in its immortal pages (*IDEA*, 2018: 2).

Compared to other manifestos, the discourse in *BUILD* and *IDEA* is more embracing, tolerant and accommodating. Notions of power in these policy texts are more in sync with Miller's (1982) feminised notions of power in which she talks of power based on the "capacity to produce change", which includes "nurturing" and "empowering others" (1982: 1-2). She explains that "to be powerful in ways that simultaneously enhance, rather than diminish, the power of others…is a radical turn – a very different motivation than the concept of power upon which this world has operated" (Miller, 1982:5). This construction of desirable political relations in terms of 'traditional' notions of 'motherliness' (signified by the motif of nurturing) contradicts masculine discourses and "action[s] of men" (Baxter, 2016) that prioritise contestation. It can thus be argued that Mujuru's strategic approach resonates with that of the South African politician, Ngobese-Nxumalo who campaigned on the sole basis of engendering the need to realise female leadership that is different from male leadership.[25] Ngobese-Nxumalo believes that "women are naturally more caring, more inclusive and work more in a cooperative environment than men do. I'm not saying they're not competitive, just that they are less competitive [than men] and work for the greater good of the group" (FRO genderlinks.org.za). There are clear generalisations about supposed male and female dispositions here but as in Mujuru's case, such generalisations bordering on stereotypes are in fact political strategies designed to include (women) by excluding (men) from essential leadership qualities that are supposedly unique to women.

[25] Ngobese-Nxumalo was Women Forward political party presidential candidate in South African 2018 elections

Fairclough (1992: 67) notes that "discourse as an ideological practice constitutes, naturalises, sustains and changes significations of the world from diverse positions in power relations". The feministic discourse in *BUILD* and *IDEA* challenges dominant sites of political legitimacy by reconfiguring in order to politically instrumentalise womanhood, motherhood and femininity. Values, qualities, norms and beliefs associated with women are thus aestheticised to reveal the benefits of a female political leader and unveiling the injustice of patriarchal politics that undermine her potential on the sole basis of her sex.

Bodies, discourse and power

Connected to the leitmotif of female potential is the symbolic deployment of the female body in expressing her political worth. The body tends to be generally viewed as a politically insignificant entity or a neutral individual possession which lies outside the mechanics of power. However, the body embodies the person and partly informs her or his identity. It becomes clear, then, that the body has much more value and is central both to the individual actor and in my case in this study, the political enterprise. It is therefore critical to discuss how the body is mobilised and instrumentalised in political and development discourse. Bodies, identities, social opportunities and expectations of behaviour are "shaped by the classification and treatment …of bodies as belonging to a particular 'race', sex, class or nationality" (Shilling, 1993: 20). Signification of the body presents critical insights into representations, individuals/entities, identities, ideologies, perspectives, embodiments, feelings, histories and power networks within social and historical movements. The relationships between knowledge and power as theorised by Foucault (1985), and by feminist theorists such as Butler (1993), Batliwala (1994) and Rai (2008) serve as foundation of the debate and tension in the constitution of policies and gender theories. As Fairclough (1992) explains, "the discursive constitution of the social can be analysed broadly in terms of representations, relationships, and identities." This takes us to the question of how agency is derived as bodies exist, endure, live within the constraints of particular regulatory schemes such as gender and nationalist ideologies. I analyse Mujuru's political rhetoric in this section noting how her identity and history play a critical role in the framing of both the political organisations and the policies reflected in *BUILD* and *IDEA*. Her identity and history, and her embodiment as leader of an opposition body give insight into intertwining operations of gender, ideology and politics.

Discourses are dialectically created "not only in styles, ways of using language, they are also materialised in bodies, postures, gestures, ways of moving, and so forth" (Fairclough, 2003:

208). This involves a practical recognition of the significance of bodies; both as personal resources and as social symbols which give off messages about a person's self-identity and organise experiences (Shilling, 1993). Thus, Mujuru's individual body and collective bodies are shaped and enhanced by their owners to represent their interests, and to signify power and the ideologies they represent in line with national development agendas. On the portrait images in *BUILD* and *IDEA*, Mujuru poses as a strikingly powerful, dignified and strong woman. In both images she poses as the party President in the manifestos. The way she is seated restfully on an executive chair in what is designed in the fashion of a state office, presents her as comfortable in that leadership position. She is seated looking straight to the audience/readers, with her hands neatly placed on the table in front of her, with one on top of the other hand. This posture and all accompanying non-verbal forms exude confidence, uprightness and elements of boldness. These qualities are then naturalised as part of her political abilities. In the texts as well as in the parties she represents, she is embodied and credited with value and meaning. The body and its position are the prime means of asserting authority. Her body becomes "the ultimate site of political and ideological control, surveillance and regulation" (Foucault cited in Wilson, 2002: 80). Mujuru constructs her identity through representations derived from the contextualised language and other forms of semiosis such as images, layout, and tone of speech, gestures and actions in the texts.

The visual presentation of *BUILD* reflects a conscious attempt to utilise images as discursive sites of engendering electability. The manifesto's text is bordered by colours of Zimbabwe's national colours and there is, within the frame, another frame with Mujuru's portrait. The 'frame within the frame' metaphorically and visually represent how the feministic agenda is contained within the national development frame. In the background of Mujuru's picture, both inside and out of the frame, there are images of flying national flags. The colours attract attention and give an aura of brightness to the textual presentation and the content. The text is all written in black font but the title *BUILD* is printed in big, red letters. This and the text's brevity create an impression of urgency as it is so focused and straight to the point of BUILDing. This presentation of the text complements Mujuru's image and gives insight into the person as well as the message. It (presentation) images, as a way of imagining, the connection between Mujuru and the nation.

Social structures, prejudices and discrimination, relationships, access to resources and services, effects of interlocking local and global processes, belonging in the spheres of economics and politics, are all exercised on the body and felt by the body. Body oppression, exploitation,

exclusion and deprivation are at the very core of policies and prompts the need for sustainable development. These notions provide a basis for theorising policies as reflected in *BUILD* and *IDEA*. The body economy also symbolises how Mujuru and her allies frame constitutive identities by theorising how, as an organisation and political body, they endeavour to satisfy the needs and wants of the Zimbabwean body. The embodied organisation(s) take up the Zimbabwean crisis with the intention of driving the socio-economic and political agendas and working to *BUILD* the emaciated body of the nation. The articulated needs and desires and to some extent, embodied fears, become critical definers of the parties' identities. Just as ZANU PF can be said to be an embodiment of the liberation struggle as well as indigenisation and empowerment policies and the MDC as a 'body' of 'democrats', the embodied ideas of inclusivity in *BUILD* and *IDEA* connect subsistence needs, gender issues and adopted relationships to power networks. Their ideology of inclusivity embraces diverse bodies across social and human categories of race, class, culture, gender, ethnicity and sexuality. Green, Palmquist and Schickler (2002: 2) explain that:

> Race, sex, ethnicity, religion, region, and social class come immediately to mind as core social identities… The core identities suffuse nearly all of our day-to-day interactions with others; it is difficult to imagine a social gathering in which people fail to take notice of accents, skin color, or secondary sexual characteristics.

In *BUILD* and *IDEA,* the placement of Mujuru and framing of subaltern and marginalised bodies at the centre of the policies is ideologically strategic and convenient. It fits well with the reiterated ideology of inclusivity. Mujuru's role as the woman leader together with her authoritative visuality reflect the politics surrounding women's bodies and their constitution in politics and development. As Shilling (1993: 82-3) puts it, "the body mediates the relationship between self-identity and social identity: consequently, the social meanings attached to bodily display and expression are an extremely important factor in an individual's sense of self, and his or her feelings of inner worth".

In politics there are "bodies that matter" (Butler, 1993) and "they matter enough to form the hidden base" (Shilling, 1993: 19) of social and political developments. This brings to attention the materiality of Mujuru and her parties as bodies that can be attributed with the (dis)ability to drive the political and development agendas. From the inception of her parties, Mujuru was never credited with any form of agency in the public media. In the ZANU PF-controlled state

newspaper, The *Herald*, Mujuru was headlined as a "Reluctant, Incapable BUILD-er"[26] – a sarcastic commentary on her what the paper reflected as a disconnect between her self-styling as a 'builder' and 'history' in ZANU PF and government where she is alleged to have done things unbefitting of a national leader. The paper highlights that ever since she was booted out of ZANU PF:

> Mujuru has never spoken much…She has not been speaking on her own volition, more than a couple sentences to the media…In light of the shyness of Mujuru, two gentlemen – Rugare Gumbo and Didymus Mutasa – and lately a third, Kudakwashe Bhasikiti – have been more than willing to talk on her behalf. They are the ones (plus Temba Mliswa) that came up with the idea of "People First" and all that jazz…They are probably the ones (plus one Ibbo Mandaza, perhaps) that have come up with the Blueprint to Unlock Investment and Leverage for Development (BUILD) manifesto, upon which they hope to launch a political party… Mujuru is an unwilling leader. The aforementioned gentlemen and others have apparently been pushing her, most probably for their own egos and political fortunes — the reason why Mliswa was so bitter at her coyness... She is an unwilling and incapable builder! One shudders at the prospect of another hand held leader of the opposition (the hand holders being Gumbo and Mutasa (Zindoga, 2015).

In this quotation, Mujuru is portrayed in state media as being "push[ed]" by political men "for their own egos and political fortunes." The metaphor of the usable female body in this attack of Mujuru's competencies reflects the odds she had to surmount to re-situate her femininity as a positive political attribute. In her manifestos, Mujuru's political self-presentation has far-reaching implications. Since gender and politics thrive on constructed differences, it is critical to understand how insistence on difference becomes a political strategy. Politics of bodies give rise to the politics of domination.

Mujuru's portrayal in *BUILD* and *IDEA* gives insights into gender beliefs, paradoxes and stigmas associated with the body. In these texts, the body and attendant political symbolisms attached to its identity are connected to the metaphor of building the nation. The synchronisation of body attributes with 'building' capabilities destabilise dominant notions of the male political 'builder'. As Synott (1993) explains, the body is:

> [T]he prime constituent of personal and social identity; yet also the deepest prejudices and discriminations, for and against, accrue to the body." Bodies are highly polarised in terms of male/female; black/white; normal/abnormal; abled and disabled and in political bodies we also have

[26] See 'Mujuru: Reluctant, Incapable Builder', *The Herald* (09, September, 2015), https://www.herald.co.zw/mujuru-reluctant-incapable-build-er/

> dominant discourses of polarisation such as patriots/sell-outs, heroes/villains; good and bad, old and young, and many others with valences depending upon personal and cultural value (1993: 3).

Gender (as an interpretive category) enables people to make sense of Mujuru's political capacities as a woman leader "[b]ased on the specific, asymmetric meanings of male and female, and the consequences assigned to one or the other within concrete social practices" (Lazar, 2007: 145). These notions of inequality and disparity in all its forms are contested and form the foundation of policies in *BUILD* and *IDEA*'s highlighted ideals of equality and non-sexism.

However, as Foucault (1967: 34) understands, "resistance is possible only within the same discursive circuits through which power operates." The body is caught up in a network of power and becomes "a critical resource in the struggle to rearticulate the very terms of symbolic legitimacy and intelligibility" (Butler, 1993: 4). Discourse affords Mujuru and her parties possibilities to influence change by circumscribing social meanings, symbols and stigmas attached to their bodies. Her emergence as an opposition leader is a statement of defiance having been a prominent casualty of Zimbabwe's masculinised, polarised and militarised politics. She confronts the Zimbabwean crisis from a highly personalised position, which is strategically projected as a point of clear vision for, like many Zimbabweans, she is a clear victim of unjustified exclusion. Mujuru's agency is anchored on her being a woman, an identity that is primarily defined by, among other things, her body. As Shilling (1993: 9) clarifies, "[i]t is our bodies which allow us to act, to intervene in and to alter the flow of daily life. Indeed, it is impossible to have an adequate theory of human agency without taking into account the body." Mujuru's challenging of Zimbabwean politics "manned by male bodies" as elucidated in *Manning the Nation: Father Figures in Zimbabwean Literature and Society* (Muponde and Muchemwa, 2007: xvii), becomes symbolic of her deligitimisation of the hyper- masculine body "associated with violence, domination, and biological siring that does not have moral and social legitimacy" (Muponde and Muchemwa, 2007: xvii). So once considered a site of male pleasure and domination, the female body as epitomised by Mujuru has morphed into a site of resistance.

Rahbari, Longman and Coene (2018: 2) assert that bodies are "used within discourses of nation building and nationalism to draw cultural, moral and political frameworks". Mujuru's identity as a woman comes with socio-cultural pressures that she addresses through body discourse. A major expectation of character for a 'respectable' woman concerns her morality. Mujuru's

images in *BUILD* and *IDEA* project the typical humble, ethically dressed and kind gestured woman. She appeals as a stable, aware, and trustworthy character. A dress is long known to be a symbol of moral disposition across the world. Mujuru is pictured in a formal dress, seating in front of a Zimbabwean flag in a 'presidential' posture (hands folded) similar to Mugabe's national portraits that were displayed in public and government buildings. Mujuru is thus dressed and posing to be poised for the position she is vying for. This 'presidential' look is further enhanced by the symbolic projection of her eminent marriage ring on her finger, long after her husband's death and having lived estranged from him for several decades. This visual of bodily 'dress' has connotations of loyalty and trustworthy. The image creates the impression that by the same loyalty with which Mujuru values and upholds her chastity, she will remain morally upright and steadfast in national politics as she did in 'marriage'; that is, she will not break her political vows. The fact that she is also still putting on her ring and contesting for leadership long after her husband's death symbolically defies insinuations that her political career and power were enabled by her late military General husband, Solomon Mujuru.

Rahbhari et al (2018: 3) generally notes "how women are perceived as 'border guards', being linked to particular cultural codes of appearance and behaviour, and to more elaborate bodies of customs, artistic expressions, and language". Conceptions of political morality derived from marriage parallelism and visualised through the prominent ring on Mujuru's body, provides an interesting dimension of what Derichs, Fleschenberg and Hustebeck (2006) refer to as the political capital of morality. According to Derichs et al, moral capital is:

> … a specific political value of virtue that inclines others, in particular the political public and followers, to bestow (ethical) prestige, respect, loyalty, and authority on a political actor or the representative of an institution that the actor herself/himself can use as a resource to mobilize for political goals, activities, or support. (2006: 245)

Derichs, et al explain that it is, "one of the core assets of women politicians on their way to power" (, 2006: 245). This political strategy is an act of public imaging, and a campaign tool that is used to construct politically interested individual and group identity. Morality cements Mujuru and her team's claim to ethical leadership as they link it to political effectiveness and efficiency which is instrumental to sustainable development. Thus in her message as party president, Mujuru foregrounds morality as the cornerstone of her leadership, as she says: "I am confident that with the moral leadership I pledge to provide… the PRC government will be able to 'honour the past generations', 'provide for the present generation' and 'secure for the present generations" (*IDEA*, 2018: 2).

Waylen et al (2013: 1) argue that "bodies are at the core of the political order as markers of status and power". The body's dispositions, status and history become the central organising metaphor for political and social expediency. Discourses shape and inform material social practices, which in turn produce particular subjectivities and forms of embodiment. As we have seen in previous chapters, in the Zimbabwean context, liberation war credentials have been fixed in ZANU PF nationalist discourses as the qualification for political office. Mujuru's nationalist history as a liberation fighter reinforces her identity as a legitimate, committed leader. The liberation credentials certainly give Mujuru leverage, as her body is invested with power by virtue of having demonstrated prowess in the liberation struggle. The super-endowed woman symbolism becomes a reference point of qualifying as a leader in line with nationalistic notions of heroism. However, when she was expelled from the nationalistic party, her war-time heroics were retracted in dominant narratives and there "emerge[ed] revelations that she facilitated the sexual abuse of women fighters in the liberation struggle" (Nyambi and Matsika, 2016: 7386). As further explained, this narration "not only dwarfs Mujuru's contribution to the struggle but perhaps more importantly, invokes Mujuru's femininity to marginalise and subordinate her" (Nyambi and Matsika, 2016). This at best illustrates how bodies are ascribed with power in the political imaginary. It can thus be argued that Mujuru's nationalistic identity in *BUILD* and *IDEA* is an attempt to recover a ferocious liberation hero body that symbolises the nationalist disposition that is fixed as indispensable in political contestations for the guardianship of the nation. Mujuru therefore becomes, once again, Teurairopa (her middle name cum nom de guerre, meaning "spill blood") and in the process, is metaphorically reunited with a liberator identity.

Narrations of political qualification in *BUILD* and *IDEA* intertwine the personal, the collective history and myth to establish advantage. Mujuru's role in the politics of identity, especially in the coalition group, demonstrates this. Her body is 'appropriated' as a historical site for anchoring her new parties' nationalist roots. Mole (2007: 31) explains that, "there is always a connection between individuals and others that reveals selfhood and in turn forces an adjustment in the construction of identity" (Mole, 2007: 31). Mole (2007: 9) further explains,

> Given the importance of group membership for self-definition, humans categorise themselves as much as they do others and internalise their own categorisation. As the individual becomes part of the group, the group becomes part of the individual, with the result that the achievements of the group also become the achievements of the individual.

This can be used to interpret why Mujuru's constitutive liberation struggle credentials find resonance with members of the alliance group. The PRC's claim that it "prides itself with liberation struggle credentials" (*IDEA*, 2018: 6), though most of its members are not war veterans, can be connected to Mujuru's presence as the face of the coalition. I have already noted how the liberation struggle is a metaphor of political legitimation in Zimbabwe's nationalist politics. Its discourse recreates fighting for people's socio-economic, political liberation and empowerment as highlighted in *BUILD* and *IDEA*. Mujuru's body therefore, is invested with values and meanings that are culturally, socially and historically mediated and appropriated by and through discourse.

However, the functional ideas presented in the policies highlight much controversy and ambiguity on issues affecting the body and its vicissitudes. The foundational elements constituting identity formation raise questions on the framing of the ideal political body. Bodies are invested with meanings dependent or underpinned by certain individual interests that are reflected as the objective reality. This is evident in how ZANU PF appropriates women's bodies through its nationalist ideologies. Women's bodies "mediate men's political projects and commune with the politics of power, as envisioned by men" (Mtekwa and Ngoshi, 2013: 241). If one is to look at the celebrated women in Zimbabwe's politics and history such as Nehanda, Queen Lozikeyi[27] and Mujuru, one may see a trend on how they are conveniently reified in nationalist narratives. The female body is symbolically summoned and sanctioned into public and political spaces to legitimise masculinist nationalist projects. Such ideologies and theoretical justifications are within the agents' world and their choices, made for their own agendas are paradoxically framed as universal benefits. In deploying ability, it is ironic that the conventions of identity and meanings assigned emanate from or are dependent on dominant predispositions and ideologies. Fairclough refers to this as "discursive hegemony" (2003: 218). Hegemonic ideologies such as gender and nationalism gain cementing from the subaltern as the marginalised unwittingly identify with the values articulated by the status quo and the power of its discourses. As evident in ambiguities within the highlighted gender repertoires of maternity, some of the ways in which feminism is reconstituted within the power contestations reveal ideological inconsistencies, as at times it seems to be cementing gender stereotypes. As Bourdieu (1991) explains, power lodged in institutions is not available to everyone. The

[27] Nehanda, the spirit medium who is said to have inspired the armed liberation struggle.
Queen Lozikeyi , wife to Ndebele King, Lobengula was at the forefront of the 1896 Ndebele Uprising against settler domination.

liberation struggle ideology, just like gender ideologies, consolidates power in ways that are exclusionary as it privileges certain players ahead of others.

Physical bodies are constituted, embodied and embedded within discourse. Gender and power are not fixed attributes but are influenced by linguistic performance of choice and intentionality Like any other form of identity, whether gender or political, being and existence are "mediated through dominant and subversive/alternative discourse and how one constructs her body as a resource for power" (Littoseliti and Sunderland, 2002: 87). For example, Mujuru presents herself as a mother figure, dedicated, selfless revolutionary cadre who puts her nation at the centre. The masculine orders create their own versions of mother figures via phallogocentric ideologies characterised by centralising logic and power to men, with women subordinated and mainly taking orders from men. As Butler (1990) argues, "gender, like sexuality, is not an essential truth derived from the body's materiality but rather a regulatory fiction." It is "the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being" (Butler, 1990: 33). So, bodies have to be understood as highly fluid and contingent. The messages they communicate, symbolise or contest have to be understood in the bodies' terms as context-dependant. As we see in *BUILD* and *IDEA*, bodies, performances and gendered identities are activated and used strategically to contest gendered disqualification from power. What is evident is that all forms of political exclusion and inclusion, take place within the "orders of discourse" (Fairclough, 2001) that is; "the way in which diverse genres and discourses and styles are networked together … [for] particular social ordering of relationships amongst different ways of making meaning" (Fairclough, 2001: 2). Bodies of knowledge, in texts such as *BUILD* and *IDEA*, and, agents, Mujuru and allies, are all constructed through a series of ideological strategies that bespeaks discursive strategies for power. The physical features of the body, the material practices associated with it, particularly the liberation struggle, and the stories mediating its existing signs and significations, all take place within a history contested political capital of bodies.

The freedom train: Heterotopias

Development and political discourse in Zimbabwe have a way of conveniently (mis)directing experiences. Thinking of political dialectics in terms of power contestations and processes of sustainable socio-economic transformation gives rise to questions about ways in which

rhetoric, ideologies and practices contribute to political action. As Fairclough and Fairclough (2012: 81) clarify, CDA:

> …offer(s) a principled way of criticizing powerful arguments that are not easily challenged, arguments that draw on dominant discourses and ideologies at the expense of an impartial consideration of other interests, as being unreasonable, or as being grounded in unreasonable and rationally indefensible values and goals.

The train imagery, used in PRC texts presents a perspective from which to understand the discursive ways in which Mujuru and her allies framed their understanding of the Zimbabwean crisis and possible solutions to it. Foucault (1967), theorised trains as symbols of what he terms heterotopia. Heterotopias, as explained by Johnson (2016) are "discursive spaces that are complex and presents some layers of meaning or relationships than what meets the eye." As Borges (1975) explains, heterotopias undermine language, as "they desiccate speech, stop words in their tracks, and contest the very possibility of grammar at its source; they dissolve our myths and sterilise the lyricism of our sentences" (xvii). In line with this, the incorporated agendas, identities and ideologies in *BUILD* and *IDEA* mirror the ideal of what the nation needs to "foster accelerated national development" (*IDEA*, 2018: 4), and to "move [Zimbabwe] forward, economically, socially and politically" *(BUILD,* 2015: 2). However, as illuminated before, political texts present a challenge "in and of themselves" as they tend towards tidy generalities of issues and downplay discontinuities, controversies, compromises, omissions and commissions.

The PRC's institutional symbol is a train and their related slogan is "*Isitimela Senkululeko Sifikile/ Chitima Cherusununguko Chasvika*/The Freedom Train has Arrived" (*IDEA*, cover page). A train usually symbolises a journey, that brings about transformation. It also symbolises an unstoppable force or idea. According to Perone (2012):

> Rich sources of imagery and humanity are associated with trains such as scenes of slow, heavy departures; loved ones fading into the distance, picaresque scenery, dark tunnels; freight yards littered with hobos and vagabonds; thick, black billows of coal smoke and steam; the haunting sound of train whistle blasts; the immediate sense of being transported somewhere else and not being able to stop until you arrive at your destination, a feeling of escape; and the sensation of being conveyed from one place to another that is new and alive with possibilities…Trains provide an escape route for transients, who can simply ride the rails to the next fright yard or town when life becomes too unbearably settled or filled with ruin.

So, the train is symbolic of the promised socio-economic and politico-transformation. It is in context of this image that Mujuru and alliances promise to transport the nation to a New Era. The train is a powerful, mass transit machine that transports a large number of people. They usually bring along people from all walks of life together. It is also a convenient mode of transport used for both long and short journeys, and varies in terms of speed with some slower and some so fast. This imagery of transportation to a desired destination informs the PRC's self-construction as the *vehicle* to move Zimbabweans out of their socio-political and economic mire. PRC is encouraging supporters to join their wagon as missing the train symbolises a missed opportunity.

Deriving from their colonial pasts, concepts and uses, trains and railway tracks are synonymous with expeditions, discovery and daring to go through expanse thickets of 'unexplored' opportunities. As much as men have been key nation drivers, PRC architects feel that it is now time to take a different route to achieve sustainable development. The common understanding of the explorative dimension to train journeys is summarised by Marie in her article, "Riding the Train of Life – Symbolism to Navigate the Tracks of Your Journey" (2013: 5) who says that trains could mean, "simultaneously to do something new, or to do what you've longed and dreamed of, to enact visionary ideas into manifestation, even if it is NOT, and BECAUSE it is NOT, the "common" way. It is time to …. create new experiences and systems that are more expansive." The train metaphor in *BUILD* and *IDEA* anchors the notion of newness and reliability by reinforcing their symbolic significance as trusted 'vehicles' of getting to a desired place.

Mujuru's metaphorisation as the train driver inscribes, onto her political attributes, connotations of dependability which puts her in a good position to endear herself with a populace that is desperate to move out of the entangling crisis space. The impression created by this locomotive metaphor is that Mujuru, having participated in the Second Chimurenga war against white oppressive rule and so put in motion the "freedom train" wants to take over the 'driving seat' to put the liberation train back in its tracks after the ZANU PF derailment. This highly skilled, technical image is evoked in the presentation of Mujuru and her allies. They promise to engineer socio-economic transformation as the "PRC Government pledges to take positive steps to transform Zimbabwe into a modern democratic developmental state characterised by employment creation, equitable distribution of wealth, and state of the art infrastructure across the country" (*IDEA*, 2018: 2). Since only specialised technicians can

operate it, it becomes natural that people have to trust the operators as they symbolise a powerful force guiding people through their journey.

Conclusion

This chapter explored the link between gender, specific socio-economic tensions (within the Zimbabwean context) and how these manifest simultaneously within the rhetoric of policy and political contestations. Analysis of discourse in focal texts was framed by the awareness that, as highly gendered institutions, political parties are structured by and constitutive of gendered performances of agency and relations. Policy texts *BUILD* and *IDEA* were seen to constitute an important, albeit not sole, site for reading multiple layers of the gender of power in contemporary Zimbabwe. In their political semiotics, gender is both a political pitfall and a panacea. Mujuru's femininity is depicted as marginalised and its marginalisation is connected to the unravelling crisis in discursive ways that make her inclusion into the political fold a natural and sensible remedy. The chapter's gender approach illuminates the complex processes inhabiting mean-making, power and how socio-political arrangements are sustained and challenged through discourse. How the body is mobilised and instrumentalised in political and development discourse gives critical insights into representations, individuals/entities, identities, ideologies, perspectives, embodiments, feelings, histories and power networks within social and historical movements.

CHAPTER 6: THE 'NEW' DISPENSATION AND THE 'SECOND' REPUBLIC: DISCOURSING TRANSITION IN THE POST-MUGABE ERA

The critique of the inanities and injustices of present society, however obvious they may be, is disqualified by a simple reminder that remaking society by design may only make it worse than it was. Alternative ends are invalidated on the strength of the proved ineffectuality of means (Bauman, 1991: 269).

Introduction

CDA prompts the re-assessment of innovation and processes of structural change based on certain presumptions about power relations. An analysis of the Zimbabwean crisis, the ZANU PF regime and associated discourses of time-space offer insight into how processes of social and political transformation are grounded in discursive representations and imaginaries. Discourse as "representations of how things are and have been," and imaginaries as "representations of how things might or could or should be, inculcate new ways of being and new identities" (Fairclough, 2001: 3). Within the Zimbabwean context of political transition, discourse emerges as a critical site for negotiating reality and its contested meanings. What remains to be seen is whether the discourse of the 'new' in post-Mugabe Zimbabwe is accompanied by relevant transitions in terms of political identities and political actions. In this light, the chapter analyses an emerging discursive framework on transition whose allure rests in its attempts to frame change through shifting perspectives in discourse. ZANU PF's 2018 election manifesto, *The People's Manifesto* is the focal text in this discussion. It reflects how structures and events leading up to Mugabe's ouster in November 2017 are reframed and reimagined to metaphorically ideologise change. The focus is on how aspects of language such as anecdotes of 'Restoring Legacy', the imagery and motifs of a 'New Dispensation' are deployed in the regime's attempt to configure a new national order following Mugabe's demise. Critical analysis of the discourse unveils the ambivalences characterising the 'New Dispensation' and how its meaning and order are contingent and sustained by language.

The post-Mugabe era in Zimbabwean politics provides insight into how discourse and other forms of semiosis are operationalised to re-invent organisations, ideologies and identities. Whether the re-invention is real or mere rhetoric will be unveiled in the analysis of language use in discursive mappings of the post-Mugabe era in Zimbabwe. Figured worlds of a 'New Dispensation' and images of a 'Second Republic' model possibilities and imaginary worlds

that influence perception. As Karlberg (2005: 1) explains, such kinds of language use "…can be interpreted as a project of discourse intervention – an effort to change our social reality by altering the discourses that help constitute it". 'Operation Restore Legacy[28]' creates space where interruption and/or disruption of the 'old' political regime is symbolised and assigned meaning. The disruption provides a schema for a metaphor of the "New Dispensation" which is represented as a form of "restor[ing] the legacy of our liberation struggle" (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018:1). Yet, it is in the discourse of "restoring legacy" that one encounters a paradox that I shall pursue later in this chapter. Processes of cultural and discursive intervention, what Fairclough refers to as political correctness, are evident in ZANU PF texts, as "attempts to change discourses on the assumption that changing discourses will, or may, lead to changes in other elements of social practices" (Fairclough, 2003: 21).

In ZANU PF's post-Mugabe grand narrative, Zimbabwe is evoked as having transitioned into a new era:

> …where the focus and preoccupation of the new administration is **opening up the country for business, fighting corruption, creating jobs, modernising the public sector and promoting investment, economic empowerment and re-aligning to an investor friendly trajectory that leads to economic growth and job creation**. (*The People's Manifesto, 2018*: 1, *bold in original text*).

This chapter discusses how discourse allows for power 'play-offs' and meaning to be re-enacted into policy processes. It looks at the 'New Dispensation' as ZANU PF's new strategic narrative and how the discourse of newness reveals an attempt to re-configure the world and influence perceptions about the post-Mugabe era. The chapter explores the language of narrativising the 'New Dispensation' and how the 'Second Republic' is enacted through strategic deployment of language. This will draw attention to how communicative facets and aspects of style especially metaphors are used to represent a politically-interested version of transition. As Fairclough (1992) argues, changes in language use are linked to social and cultural processes. For Fairclough (1992: 56), "changing discursive practices [is] an important element in social change". This is why it is critical to use language analysis as a method for studying social change. Shifts in ZANU PF discourse constitute a rich site to understand complexities of change and the operationalisation of newness to re-invent the organisation.

[28] This is explained by Mudau and Mangani (2018) as a constructed narrative of a coup that was code named 'Operation Restore Legacy' to absolve the military from direct involvement in national politics. This narrative is centred on the storyline of safeguarding the gains of the liberation struggle.

As Singh, Thomas and Harris (2013: 466) put it, "policy cannot be understood as a text or a document alone, but rather as a process that is a complex, shifting meld of values, contingency and context". This prompts critical discourse analysis. Policy texts such as *The People's Manifesto* (2018) construct discourses that "organise their own specific rationalities, making particular sets of ideas obvious, common sense and true" (Ball, 2008: 5) through processes of narration. Policy texts are products of compromises at various stages that are "mandated, interpreted, translated, adjusted and worked differently by policy actors in the process of enactment, in specific contexts" (Singh *et al*, 2013). In Ball's (1993: 11) words, in policy texts, "there is ad hocery, negotiation and serendipity within the state, (and) within the policy formation process." This gives insight into the tension between nation and narration, action and processes, rhetoric and reality. It necessitates the application of CDA – an analytical method that deconstructs the socio-political and historical context in which the discursive practices such as the Zimbabwe's 'New Dispensation' are embedded. The discourse/politics connection allows us to go beyond linguistic exchanges, to analyse structures within which such exchanges occur.

On the new vision common-sense

The overarching narrative on which the 'New Dispensation' is premised in ZANU PF post-coup discourse is that:

> Following the successful execution of "**Operation Restore Legacy"** and the subsequent inauguration of Cde. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa as the State President on 24 November 2017, a new political dispensation was ushered in, which seeks to reposition Zimbabwe in her rightful place in the international community.
>
> In this era of hope, the People's aspirations will be paramount and fulfilled in a new environment where Zimbabwe is open for business in order to maximise the benefits from the emerging international goodwill and confidence (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 11).

There is a paradox here: "Operation Restore Legacy" is being touted as the mechanism that brought about the 'New Dispensation.' The paradox concerns how the dispensation can be viewed as new when there is a restoration of legacy? This leads us to the question: whose legacy is being restored? Operation Restore Legacy was officialised when General Sibusiso Moyo[29] spoke on national television on the 15th of November, 2017. The initial claim was that the legacy of Robert Mugabe was under threat from criminals around him, so that the legacy

[29] See full statement [online] https://www.enca.com/africa/full-statement-by-zim-army-on-state-broadcaster

needed to be protected by dealing with "criminals around the president". Yet the idea of a 'New Dispensation' was premised on a post-Mugabe era, that is, Mnangagwa's government was going to be a disarticulation of all the evil that Mugabe stood for, evils like "closing Zimbabwe [against] business," hence the "Zimbabwe is open for business" mantra that became Mnangagwa's economic rallying cry. What is important to note is that what was called "Operation Restore Legacy" was in actual fact a coup "that was not a coup[30]", and this alone represents the ambivalences that afflict the discourse of the 'New Dispensation.' This ambivalence manifests in how words do not really go on to mean what they represent, especially at the level of action.

As Gee (2014) highlights, many times "we are colonised by a good many figured worlds that have come to us without much reflection on our part about how well they fit our interests and serve us in the world." The 'New Dispensation' narrative sets the agenda concerning the ways people have to think and talk about ZANU PF's influences and the ways they can act in relation to transformation and development.[31] Mugabe's ouster presents an opportunity for ZANU PF to re-invent its identity in relation to its contested legitimacy as capable to lead Zimbabwe out of the economic crisis. As a political spectacle[32], the 'New Dispensation' discourse "constructs and reconstructs problems, crises, enemies, and leaders and so creates a succession of threats and reassurances" (Edelman, 1988: 1). ZANU PF manipulates the language of the 'new' to recreate its role in the development and economic emancipation of the people. The commitment is depicted as being revived by a new leadership in a 'New Dispensation'. Manipulation here is understood as defined by Ciulla (1998: 37) notion of "interpretation of facts in ways that purposely present idealism as reality in one light than another." The discourse of newness creates opportunities for revising ZANU PF's role in the crisis state of the nation. Discourse allows the party to re-construct reality through politicking; that is, in the sense of Muntigl's notion of the term as involving the "negotiation of contingency rather than perpetuation of contingency following a politicization (2002: 49)".

[30] Though the Operation had all the elements of a coup the official narrative is that it was not coup, which makes it discursive. This has led it to be known as 'A coup that was not a coup' (al Amir, 2017; Asuelime, 2018; Beardsworth, Cheeseman and Tinhu, 2019; Pigou, 2017).

[31] The Agenda Setting Theory was developed by Max McCombs and Donald Shaw during the 1968 American presidential elections and demonstrates how reality is not reflected by the media but instead is filtered and shaped by it. Thus, "Operation Restore Legacy" was largely shaped by the media since the day that General Sibusiso Moyo took over the Zimbabwe Broadcasting airwaves to introduce the "new" discourse.

[32] Explains how the meaning of what is real is defined and constructed by politicians

The 'New Dispensation' narrative is hegemonic, among other reasons, because it naturalises state knowledge as common-sense. As explained by Goatly (2007: 1), "hegemony manages the mind in covert ways to construct a consensus about the social order which benefits those in power". A few examples may suffice in explaining the linguistic-mediated hegemony of the discourse of newness. The party's "People Manifesto" claims that, "[f]ollowing the successful execution of "Operation Restore Legacy", ZANU PF under the stewardship of Cde E.D. Mnangagwa embarked on a robust economic turnaround programme where huge milestones have been achieved" (*The People's Manifesto,* 2018: 55). Such sanctioned knowledge or "legitimised as true through discourse and through the language one speaks usually acquires the appearance of objective common sense" (Goatly, 2007: 27). Operation Restore Legacy, the 'New Dispensation', its policies and successes are best understood as common-sensical constructions as their meaning and essence are sanctioned by ZANU PF's dominant discourses. The "milestones" are ZANU PF's alone to see and pronounce. They do not reflect what people see and experience on the ground. Murisa (2018: 13) captures that:

> [T]he socio-economic conditions have worsened for most of Zimbabweans since the 2018 elections. The optimism that characterized the Zimbabwean story soon after the November 2017 coup seems to have faded into the sunset and in its place, we have a renewed sense of despair, disappointment and confusion. Since August 2018, the country has been characterized by soaring inflation, high food prices, rising unemployment, shortage of fuel and power cuts that last up to 18 hours.

The emphasised "robust economic turnaround programme where huge milestones" were achieved refers to some of the hyperbolised turnabouts that are captured in the 100 days programme[33] that Mnangagwa launched soon after assuming office in November, 2017. The idea was to influence the electorate into thinking that if the president can give himself only one hundred days to achieve "milestones", how about if we give him five years? As Muntigl (2002) illuminates, politics is not verifiable in terms of correct concepts that mirror reality but at best it is how political terms are used and what changes in political vocabulary over time. So, the question is: how is narrative in the service of power deployed to discourse justifications for political longevity?

[33] Mnangagwa presented a 100-day plan of action "to stimulate the economy, attract foreign investment, curb corruption and promote human rights" (Marime, 2018). This received mixed reviews, with ZANU PF applauding itself for achieving milestones but many were sceptical as they did not see significant changes. For example cash shortages persisted.

ZANU PF's Operation Restore Legacy discourse represents what Van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999) refer to as a script. Scripts are strategic representations of knowledge, social practices, and ideas about how and why things are the way they are. The "restore legacy" narrative revolves around a discourse of renewal founded on political reasons for Mugabe's ouster. It presents opportunities for the party to self-reconstruct within a broader strategic framework for asserting power and development. As van Noort (2019: 4) argues, strategic narratives are not exact representations of events in the real world but "are a version of reality whose acceptability is governed by convention and 'narrative necessity' rather than by empirical verification and logical requiredness." Operation Restore Legacy characterises the climax of internal ZANU PF power struggles that became so open and intense from 2014[34]. Mugabe was later forced to resign and the internal strife was accorded national significance as it was framed as a revolutionary and democratic act driven by the vision to develop and emancipate the people, more succinctly expressed in the wording of the title of the 2018 campaign manifesto, *The People's Manifesto*. By connecting personal power struggles to the development (read "people's") agenda, ZANU PF legitimates its action, sanitises its purpose and reactions. Thus, the "restore legacy" "influences […] agenda-setting, legitimize policies and produce a positive perception of the group" (Miskimmon, O'Loughlin and Roselle, 2013: 8). This is captured in the mantras characterising the 'New Dispensation' such as "Zimbabwe is open for business." This maxim, which reflects the new leadership's foreign policy change, shifts the focus from Mugabe's well-known anti-West rhetoric, claiming that it is "mindful of the need for new alliances, new investment partners and the need to be reintegrated into global society" (Ndimande and Moyo, 2018: 1).

Read in the context of Bhabha's (1990: 5) understanding of the nation and how it is constructed through narration, the maxims "restore legacy", "open for business" and "second republic" are more of "foundational fictions" of national traditions that "turn out to be as much acts of affiliation and establishment as they are moments of disavowal, displacement, exclusion, and cultural contestation". The discourse of newness reiterates ideological trappings that assign value on the continuity of ethos rather than individuals.

The challenge faced by ZANU PF in restoring its image as the vanguard party post-Mugabe concerns the part's previous installation and celebration of him as the undisputed iconic father

[34] Succession politics raged and became open in ZANU PF especially from 2014, which led to the purging of Vice President Mujuru and other members who supported her. There also emerged two factions, the so-called Team Lacoste allegedly led by Mnangagwa and the G40 allegedly led by Grace Mugabe.

of the nation. Language and discourse had to be summoned to re-invent the Mugabe/nation nexus. In this light, we can see that ZANU PF's rhetoric of exclusive legitimacy is further cemented by the "successful Operation Restore Legacy" that 'managed' to remove Mugabe ostensibly as part of a conscious effort to keep Zimbabwe on a development trajectory. Discourse re-invents the party as a self-contained entity that is independent of individual influence.

The 'New Dispensation' narrative at best demonstrates how rhetoric works in politics as a mechanism of self-defence and hegemonic sustenance. According to Furley (2015), rhetoric is the art of discovering the available means of persuasion in a given case. As Yarbrough (1999) notes, rhetoric is designed for problems that have clearly definable parameters. Mnangagwa and his ZANU PF adopt new discourses of growth which emphasise change from Mugabe's ways of doing business. Principles occupy the party's discursive strategies as the party defends itself from the damaging associations of dictatorship, economic plunder and isolationist policies of Mugabe's leadership. Principles are invoked both to justify Operation Restore Legacy and to chart a new ethic of leadership that aims "to serve the people as informed by the tenets of good governance and constitutionalism" (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 1). The past and its associations with a nation in crisis are re-constructed as a Mugabe era, an 'old dispensation' that is removed from the new. This kind of narrative becomes a source of hope in the midst of crisis. The crisis is thus interjected by a discourse of commitment to newness, a new era, new leadership, new administration and new ways of doing business.

The strength of ZANU PF's narrative is its use of "soft power" (Nye, 2004) as a resource for influence. The party uses affective language that persuades people by targeting their emotions and a discourse that mystifies rationality. Roselle, Miskimmon and O'loughlin (2014: 72) describe the power of such political discourse as a "representational force" involving "the exercise of power by using language to rhetorically trap others." Foreclosing debate on the question of ZANU PF's capacity for self-renewal, the party attempts to evade scrutiny by saturating the public sphere with discourses of newness, the new dispensation, new era, new dawn, new leadership and second republic.

ZANU PF's strategic discourse persuades and manipulates - not by coherent, logical arguments but by affect – the power to influence emotion-driven perceptions of reality. In this light, the violence that 'mechanised' Operation Restore Legacy was downplayed and the operation depoliticised. It is re-imagined in altruistic terms as driven by the people. The people are

centred and foregrounded as the nerve centre of the operation. As the following quotation reveals, the party:

> …believes in putting people at the centre of governance for inclusive value adding decision making as was amply demonstrated during the historic and successful "**Operation Restore Legacy**" where the driving force was the popularised motto "**Voxi Populi, Vox dei (The Voice of the People is the voice of God**) (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 2).

This minimisation of violence and veiling of power interests in the operation has the effect of moralising the event and its aftermaths. Operations in Zimbabwe have always been characterised by violence. Mpofu and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2019: 145) explain that, "A common vehicle for implementing Zimbabwe's public policy, often in a very authoritarian manner, is what the 'government' has called operations." For example, there has been Operation Murambatsvina (June, 2005), then Operation Chikorokoza Chapera (November, 2006), Operation Chimumumu (2008), Operation Mavhoterapapi (2008) and Operation Hakudzokwi (Nov 2008-January 2009).[35] In such operations the target is the enemy and at times seen as the criminal. ZANU PF as the combatants assert that they have to guard against enemies and attack when under threat. Part of the affective workings of ZANU PF's discourses of transition involves the careful depiction of Mugabe's removal as a means of rescuing the country from unscrupulous hangers-on leading Mugabe astray. This explains why during the coup it was announced that the army was not illegally removing Mugabe (he was "safe and sound and his security guaranteed") but "only targeting criminals around him who are committing crimes that are causing social and economic suffering in the country in order to bring them to justice" (*The Herald*, 15 November, 2017, *Speech by the Defence Forces spokesperson on television*).

Narratives become strategic when "organizational stakeholders create a discourse of direction (whether about becoming, being, or having been) to understand and influence one another's actions" (Roselle, Miskimmon and O'loughlin, 2014: 71). ZANU PF's turn to 'soft power' is a sophisticated resource to convince people that they had reformed.

[35] Operation Murambatsvina (Operation Restore Order) was a government campaign to forcibly clear slum areas across the country. Operation Chikorokoza Chapera (No More Illegal Mining), violent crackdown on illegal miners. Operation Chimumumu (Be Quiet, Don't express views) was orchestrated by state agencies to silence views on the Constitution, (Sachikonye, 2011); Operation Mavhotera Papi (How Did you Vote), was retributive violence against those suspected of having voted for MDC in the 2008 elections and Operation Hakudzokwi (No Return), violent removal of illegal miners from Chiadzwa diamond fields.

Re-membering and remembering Operation Restore Legacy

CDA is concerned with how reality is linguistically structured to produce certain meanings with political consequences. What is remembered and how what is remembered is narrated influences the meaning of the events, individuals and groups involved. This makes discourse a critical instrument in the construction of identities. As Wodak (2018: 413) explains, "history and the *topos of history* are often mobilised in order to create mythologies and ad hoc official narratives which in turn serve to legitimate and reproduce national cultures and identities". This historical approach to CDA, as Flowerdew (2012: 17) explains, "[reveals] the hidden assumptions in received and naturalised historical accounts, with a particular emphasis on the language used in their elaboration". Examining discourses characterising the 'New Dispensation' "opens up a space to explore the dynamic nature of meaning-making practices" (Achugar, 2018: 298). As Achugar further explains, "[e]xploring the construction of the meanings of the past involves focusing on representations and receptions of discourses." In its convenient recollection of the Operation Restore Legacy, ZANU PF does not provide a history of the event but rather a master fiction that entrenches the party's exclusive legitimacy.

Re-membering calls attention to what Myerhoff (1982: 111) describes as "the reaggregation of members, the figures who belong to one's life story." This reaggregation reconfigures heroes, victims and villains linked to the Zimbabwean crisis. Mnangagwa becomes the celebrated hero of the 'New Dispensation' and the people are depicted as victims of villains accused of state capture "that has paralysed the Government machinery and hampered the implementation of policies thereby depriving the people of much-needed development" (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 69). Markedly, in all this remembering, Mnangagwa's part in ZANU PF's increasing authoritarianism is conveniently elided. This is what Fabian (2003: 489) calls "forgetful remembering". In fact, what is remembered of Mnangagwa is his persecution at the hands of Mugabe, his role in the liberation struggle and his role in Operation Restore Legacy. His role in past atrocities such as the *Gukurahundi* massacres is forgotten, especially when Mnangagwa himself calls the people to "let bygones be bygones." This generalisation is manipulative - it is conveniently selective in its dictation of what has to be forgotten and remembered. The question is why this call applies only to what Mnangagwa did in the past and not to Mugabe's allies who continue to be regarded as 'criminals' even in the 'New Dispensation' where bygones should be bygones. This is ironic given the fact that loyalty to Mugabe was hitherto the epitome of patriotism. In this light, Mnangagwa, who has been Mugabe's henchman is

christened a "Messenger of Hope – Ushering in the New Dawn" in the 'New Dispensation' (*The People's Manifesto,* 2018: 4). He becomes a symbolic figure as he is presented in the texts as a messianic figure, expected to fulfil the promises and the expectations of the people. A messiah literary means a saviour or liberator. He is presented as ZANU PF's 'anointed' candidate, whilst on the other hand Mugabe is rejected by 'God' as it is professed that the people spoke during Operation Restore Legacy and "**the Voice of the People is the voice of God**" *(The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 2).

The memory and history of becoming Zimbabwe are at the state's mercy in its preoccupation with re-defining 'restoration' and 'legacy', particularly given the party's hitherto synonymisation of legacy with Mugabe or what Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009) has called Mugabeism. Strategically, national memory is re-edited. Mugabe's previous stranglehold on its history and use are redacted and values (instead of personalities) accentuated. Liberation ethos became the resource for legitimating renewal, as can be inferred from the following excerpt:

> To restore the legacy of our liberation struggle, the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union - Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) party, hereby presents the People's Manifesto… at this defining opportune moment…The revolutionary and democratic ZANU PF Party continues to seek broad based development and economic emancipation for the people…It is a liberation movement which thrives on and cherishes National Unity as the foundation for the conducive conditions for peace, security and development (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 1).

A critical use of discourse in this quotation concerns the strategic use of language that evades the impression that Operation Restore Legacy was in fact an act of rescuing the nation from itself (ZANU PF). Terms such as "preservation" and the quest to "leave footprints" constructs a political 'species' of value that has been endangered and is in need of saving. Ironically, ZANU PF awards itself the heroic task of saving the nation from its rule. The rule, however, is re-imagined as a misnomer – a contradiction to values of the party that are being "restored" through the military operation. Previously a revered trinity, the party, party values and Mugabe are re-cast as distinct entities whose relationships can be amended when need arises. Operation Restore Legacy is evoked as a party intervention to restore the supremacy of values over personalities responsible for upholding liberation ideals. The text highlights that voting for ZANU PF is voting "for the preservation of our legacy" and "ensuring that our legacy leaves some marked footprints for posterity" (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 2). Restoration is implied in the diction as correction of Zimbabwe's socio-economic ills reinforced by phrases

such as “restoring legacy”, “re-opening the country for business”, “re-invigorating covenant with the people”, “re-building local, regional and international partnerships”, “re-building confidence” and “re-industrialisation”.

In effect, the grammars of restoration create the impression that ZANU PF is being re-introduced to the people. Action now and going forward is steeped in a new ethic of revisionism – of a renewed way of running the country. Party renewal is synonymised with action and policy renewal; thus, the party’s goals and themes are re-constructed and centred around the people hence the maxim “(**Voxi Populi, Vox Dei (The Voice of the People, is the Voice of God**) (*The People’s Manifesto*, 2018: 2, bold in original text). There is a reassessment, review and re-adjustment of ideas and policy to make them appear well-suited to meet contemporary demands of rescuing the nation.

It is however, critical to note that “the notion of a new Zimbabwe adopted by the post-Mugabe regime is not new in Zimbabwean politics” (Makombe, *Unpublished*). As Makombe clarifies:

> Following the attainment of independence in 1980, many Zimbabweans saw the government of Robert Mugabe as a new order and his dispensation as a new Zimbabwe. Similarly, when the main opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) was formed in 1999, it framed its political agenda around the idea of a new Zimbabwe (*Unpublished*: 1).

I explained in Chapter 3 of this thesis how ZANU PF makes extensive use of the notions of newness in its (2013-2018) economic blueprint, *Zim Asset* (2013). The blueprint titled “sustainable socio-economic transformation” reinforced that, “the next ZANU PF Government will put in place robust measures to ensure an even more transparent, accountable, tangible, and measurable implementation matrix in the national interest” (*#Team Zanu PF*, 2013: 8). This reveals that official discourses of a “new Zimbabwe” are transtemporal phenomena consciously created to shape and modulate perceptions and processes of change. The notions of “new dawn”, “new dispensation”, “Second Republic” and “restore legacy” stem from these political intentions and use of discourse. This approach is aimed at foreclosing debate about ZANU PF’s capability for renewal hence rendering oppositional politics and parties irrelevant. The discourse reconstructs ZANU PF as a self-reflexive party that constantly self-introspects and self-corrects.

ZANU PF’s discourse of newness reveals tensions in the strategic use of the past in light of the present crisis situation that indicts the prevailing governance. The tension, which unveils the hegemonic use of discourse, can be seen in the irony in how ZANU PF seeks to gain power by

using the past to foreclose political competition whilst on the other hand distancing itself from the past by letting "bygones be bygones". We can see in this example that the past in ZANU PF discourse is not an unproblematic record of what happened, but rather, a carefully edited and arranged narrative of events that reinforce ZANU PF's political legitimacy.

In post-Mugabe ZANU PF discourse, history is not just edited but significantly redacted, revised and re-envisioned to settle the Mugabe factor. This is most visible in the projection of Mugabe as the major weak point in ZANU PF's failures in government. The symbolic value of restoring legacy is lost in the propaganda as the same president whose synonymity with ZANU PF legacy is deemed a problem. Ehrenfeld (2008) explains that it is critical to understand the difference between "reducing unsustainability" and change, and creating true sustainability. Reducing unsustainability "encompasses a host of mostly technological fixes that host the promise of somehow solving the profound problems we face without causing any major inconvenience to those of us who have created them" (Ehrenfeld, 2008: xv). It is further explained that to avoid falling into this trap, people have to reflect on the past, and see their situation and role in creating the situation. For Ehrenfeld (2008: xv) a genuine vision, "moves through us rather than from us [it is] that which answers a call from the future rather than preserves a security from the past." In *The People's Manifesto*, however, the future is secured by securing the past. This effectively makes the future belong to ZANU PF which owns the past.

A critical analysis of the linguistic construction of the 'New Dispensation' gives insight into the instability of newness as a discursive site for reinforcing hegemony. Closely related to the discourse of newness and renewal is the leitmotif of responsibility. The 'New Dispensation' is organised around idealised images of responsibility. Responsibility is laden with imageries of care for nation, efficiency, effectiveness, competence, commitment to the people and nation building. This largely manifests in how ZANU PF illuminates its capacity for self-correction, as can been seen in the statement that "The ZANU PF Government successfully implemented ZIM-ASSET under difficult conditions due to the MDC-engineered sanctions, El- Nino induced drought, liquidity constraints and capture by the G40 Cabal" (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 60). It is also alleged that, "ZANU PF promised to create 2,2 million jobs. Over the past five years, 4,5 million people have been gainfully employed in new jobs in both the informal and formal sectors, with agriculture, mining and manufacturing contributing over 80%" (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 54). These claims border on lies, as statistics continue to show heavy job losses and an unprecedented high rate of unemployment topping 80% (Nkala, 2019).

Political discourse does not thrive on evidence but rather rhetoric. What is politically important is not to provide facts based on realities on the ground, but rather to persuade the electorate that whatever is said is based on facts and reality on the ground. In the above statement, although it was clear for most people to realise that unemployment was high, the lack of accessible information to employment figures created an opportunity for ZANU PF to use rhetoric to create both figures and realities. The figures cited by ZANU PF offer an interesting reading and imagery of capability. The party mentions a promised figure (2,2 million) that is just over half of the figure claimed to have been delivered (4.5). The figures are thus made the basis for the claim that the party "successfully implement[ed] ZIMASSET". The figures are thus quoted to function as metonyms of the party's cultures of responsibility and fulfilling promises.

The deceitful figures above can also be read as rhetorical attempt to evade responsibility. They are deployed to explain and rationalise all forms of economic and political incursions that have stalled national development except those from within. ZANU PF places itself in control of the elusive and controversial triumphs yet in all its articulations any responsibility and blame for the crisis and the situation are averted and downplayed. The elusive successes are accentuated, exaggerated and qualified with ZANU PF agency but the failures are apportioned to 'threats' and 'enemies' and indeed the old dispensation. The depiction of threats such as the opposition MDC, and state capture by Mugabe's G40 Cabal creates a victim *topos* that re-constructs ZANU PF as an alert and proactive force that reacts to hostile forces destabilising the nation. Proactive solutions define Operation Restore Legacy; it characterises ZANU PF as a national safety-net – a sort of reaction-unit-like institution that keeps the nation safe, as the following reveals:

> A clique of corrupt and criminal counter-revolutionaries that had coalesced around the former First Lady (who) took advantage of an aged former President and illegally usurped executive power which they exercised without a Constitutional mandate from the electorate. This paralysed the Government machinery and hampered the implementation of policies thereby depriving the people of much-needed development (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 69).

In this quotation, the diction of criminality and indictment presents an untenable and risky situation facing the country. Corruption and criminality as well as Mugabe's old age are evoked as the weak points in the nation's security safety nets which needs reinforcement through the replacement of Mugabe through Operation Restore Legacy. Markedly, for a party that claims to be a democratic movement, responsibility is not defined in terms of protecting what the party has all along claimed to be a democratically elected leadership. Mugabe's removal is ironically

evoked as a democratic process by the sheer involvement of the people who marched for his removal. The people's voices are ironically accentuated over the guns and tanks that eventually forced Mugabe out of power in what clearly fits as a military coup.

Language analysis enhances our understanding of hegemonic interests in the discursive construction of the 'New Dispensation'. This is evident in how Mnangagwa's credentials are re-imagined in *The Peoples Manifesto* (2018). Language is deployed to transform Mnangagwa from the villain who, in the wording of the party, was "fired from Government on various charges including discharging his duties in a manner inconsistent with his official duties, disloyalty, disrespect, deceitfulness and unreliability and a lack of probity in the execution of his duties" (Machiwenyika, 2017). In his renewed identity, this history is cleansed and re-configured as mere persecution. Mnangagwa's notorious history of militarised violence in other 'operations' such as the Gukurahundi massacres is erased from his narrative as a national leader in order to accentuate his "distinctive track record that puts him in good standing for the highest position in the Party and Government of Zimbabwe" (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 4-8). This selective use of history in order to recreate Mnangagwa's identity to suit him for the Presidency reveals the inconstancy of political iconography in ZANU PF. History is not stable. Since it is (un)made by power, Mnangagwa's history is carefully narrowed to what makes his power. Trouillot (1995) clarifies the symbiotic relationship between power and the production of history. He asserts that history is told in relation to powerful forces (Trouillot, 1995). For Trouillot (1995), in historical narratives, actors are not created equal: some are privileged, some are aggressively promoted, and some are silenced, some fall by the wayside and others appear in unlikely combinations, but how they are used and recycled creates new histories of political power. This explains the framing and delimitation of ways in in which history, identities and politics are constructed. Wodak (2018) explains the relationship between history and identity politics which form a core of right-wing populist politics. She explains that:

> …founding myths become revitalised to legitimise the myth of a "pure people" who belong to a clearly defined nation-state…right-wing populist parties thus reimagine and rewrite their national histories to legitimise their present agenda and future visions. They draw on the past to relive allegedly successful victories and/or previously grand narratives (Wodak, 2018: 414).

Evident in ZANU PF's post-Mugabe discourse is a reconstruction of history inspired by two major political goals; first, to re-arrange Mnangagwa's legitimacy that was scuppered by his

dismissal from Mugabe's Presidium, and second, to project Mnangagwa's Presidency as a natural occurrence dictated by ZANU PF's internal ways and mechanisms of self-renewal.

Conceptual metaphors: Repackaging newness

Metaphors are critical aspects of political discourse that highlight how political language serves, makes and unmakes power. The 'new' dispensation discourse as reflected in the policy texts is figuratively constructed. Metaphors are used to create mind maps that powerfully challenge the reality on the ground and re-invents its facts and truths. Metaphors simplify complex phenomena and direct the mind to understand reality not on the basis of what is seen and experienced but how what is seen and experienced is presented to them by the ruling party. The link between thoughts and language show how metaphors are critical in framing the post-Mugabe era as a new world order that imposes values of renewal. Figured worlds such as the 'New Dispensation' or Mnangagwa's 'Second Republic' are signalled by and associated with metaphors. The metaphors frame the grand ideologies of internal renewal. Attention to dominant metaphors characterising the 'New Dispensation' illuminate connections between language, power and ideology. The construction of a 'New Dispensation', where the "revolutionary and democratic ZANU PF party continues to seek broad based development and economic emancipation of the people" utilises metaphors to redefine the present in terms of the past. The adjective 'new' is intended to mark a clean departure from the old. The subsequent conceptual metaphor ZIMBABWEAN POLITICAL SYSTEM NOW=NEW DISPENSATION implicates the old and its inefficiencies in a way that casts the 'new' as the panacea. Newness is evoked as not a mere departure from the old but a reformation of the system in ways that enhance its performance for delivery. Newness is synonymised with transition. As Krabbe and Van Laar, (2007: 27) note, dialectics of the 'new' have a way of presupposing "an old dialectic as much as a new rhetoric presupposes an old rhetoric". How the new is constructed out of the old illuminates the symbiotic relationship between discourse and power. As a conceptual domain, the 'New Dispensation' influences ways of seeing, thinking and talking about the state of the political system. Larkoff and Johnson explain conceptual metaphors as those concepts that structure how people perceive, get around the world, and how people relate. They play a critical role in defining realities. As they clarify, the metaphor is not in the word but in the concepts that form around them (Larkoff and Johnson, 2003).

Besides depicting Mnangagwa as different from Mugabe, ZANU PF's use of the metaphor of newness calls attention to the old in a way that calls to mind Cleary's (2008: 353) notion of "forgotten doubles" – the uncanny ways in which people understand given states of phenomena in terms of their other, often past lives. Newness does not exist in a vacuum; it occupies a temporal space with its own regimes of truths and marks of impacts by ZANU PF rule. These political footprints such as the systematic scapegoating of other actors (British neo-colonialism, opposition politicians, renegade members of ZANU PF, and natural phenomena such as climate change) for the failure of ZANU PF have a steady history in ZANU PF politicking. In this light, the attempt to create a disjuncture – a clean break with the past involves a strategic use of metaphors to hold back the past; to ceil its reach and limit its existence and influence in the present. It has to be noted though, that this past is selected, for convenient pasts are inscribed onto traditions of succession and upheld as mechanisms of self-renewal in the party.

The 'New Dispensation' is an imaginary world that is created to construct and assign meaning to the Mnangagwa regime's national agenda. "Zimbabwe is open for business", "the People's Voice is the Voice of God" and the espoused "Servant Leadership" ideology are all metaphors connected to the master narrative of the 'New Dispensation' that shape and organise how people will relate with the so-called 'Second Republic'. As Princen (2010: 61) explains:

> …metaphors are more than rhetorical or poetic flourishes. Because metaphors structure our conceptual system, how we conceptualize "the environment," what metaphors we use, does matter, especially when it comes to designing policies, educating the young (and old), and structuring people's lives with analogies and images and expectations. Indeed, metaphors are devices for establishing a society's norms and principles, from which we get rules and procedures, laws and regulations. They are, in short, institutions.

The metaphor of newness is a powerful mechanism of influencing perception and a communicative outlet that compellingly reveals possibilities in the new ways in which the post-2000 socio-economic woes could be overturned. It is connected to change and transformation which are central to the sustainability of corrective actions.

The 'New Dispensation' and the 'Second Republic' are metaphors of change – change that is not felt, seen or experienced but constructed and implied through political discourse. As Fairclough (2003: 23) notes, changes of discourse "are not merely re-labellings but shifts to different spheres of values." What is critical, though, is the workings of metaphor in creating impressions about the reality of the change of values in ZANU PF. The new is ideally supposed to be reflected in the regime's shift in consciousness and use of language that is used to give

meaning to incoherent signals. As a metaphorical domain, the 'New Dispensation' can be thought of as a "socially produced and culturally constructed realm of interpretation in which a particular set of characters and actors are recognized, significance is assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes are valued over others'" (Bartlett and Holland, 2002: 12)." The metaphor of newness is facilitated by the symbolism of transition. Besides the uncanny relation of the 'new' to the 'old', the symbolism newness in ZANU PF's post-Mugabe discourse occurs in the party's nomenclatures, emblems, banners, posters, acronyms, images, slogans, persons, events and actions. An analysis of political symbolism and symbolic action can reveal meanings which highlight the communicative roles that those symbols play in manipulated perceptions.

As a symbolic construction, the 'New Dispensation'/'Second Republic' provides a frame of reference through which ZANU PF reconfigures notions of transformation regardless of whether that transformation has taken place. As Edelman (1988: 119) asserts, "even our simplest ideas about the world are abstractions, and all abstractions are fictions". I have already indicated that though Mugabe's ouster had all the aspects of a coup, it reconstructed through discourse as "Operation Restore Legacy" to sanitise its ugly connotations of violence and forced removal of an elected leader. But the question that such a discourse calls is, whose legacy? Mugabe's? ZANU PF's? In the discourses of the so-called 'New Dispensation'/'Second Republic', ZANU PF portrays Mugabe's resignation as the passing of an era and the death of an untenable political system. Makombe (*Unpublished*) explains that, "[u]ntil his political demise, Robert Mugabe had ruled Zimbabwe with impunity, particularly in the post-2000 period. With the collapse of his regime, Zimbabweans expected a new lease of life both politically and economically." Mugabe had become a symbol of international isolation, patrimonialism, despotic rule, political intolerance and economic ruin (Hammar, Raftopoulos and Jensen, 2003; Sachikonye, 2012; Raftopoulos and Mlambo, 2009). These images are what President Mnangagwa's metaphor of newness relies on to foreground the desirability of a clean break from the ZANU PF of the old and to craft a notion of restoration that separates the party and its values from the regime and its inefficiencies. Although Mnangagwa was very much part of the regime over the years that has contributed to the Zimbabwean crisis, his prominent role in Mugabe's ouster is evoked as marking his self-cleansing and positioning to lead a new regime that values ZANU PF's governance ethics. Mnangagwa is projected as symbolic of a humble, tolerant, listening and inclusive leader who is ready to faithfully serve the people, engage with all the people and transform the nation.

'Operation Restore Legacy', the 'New Dispensation' and the 'Second Republic' frame and configure a world of possibilities which the electorate, trapped in a national crisis, would likely find appealing. As Leach and Stewart (1988: 148) observe, "part of what is involved in the struggle for power is a struggle over the naming of conflict, over whose symbolic definition of a situation will prevail." People make sense of things by how they are named. According to Alia (2007: 6) naming is "a symbolic act of imposition [that makes] the state the holder of the monopoly of legitimate symbolic violence". Naming symbolises power as it "shed[s] new light on the overt and covert uses of power, and the relationships between dominant and subordinate" (Alia, 2007: 9). So, the frames evoked by those nomenclatures illuminate the interface between 'politics of naming' and power. The naming or labelling of the Mnangagwa dispensation constructs and reconstructs challenges, crises, threats, enemies and leaders in ways that re-casts leadership transition in ZANU PF as translating to economic and political transition for the nation.

The name 'Operation Restore Legacy' is symbolic; it serves as a didactic site that 'teaches' 'appropriate' ways of experiencing and perceiving the transition from Mugabe to Mnangagwa's dispensation. It is also the basis upon which the real and the imaginary, stories and history, participant structures and identities are constructed and operationalised to influence the ways reality is interpreted. Dictated ways of seeing and interpreting Operation Restore Legacy find their locutionary force in their heightening of transition which is ironically framed as a restoration. Yet, the oxymoron and contradiction of "restoration" and "newness" is not lost to the purveyors of the discourse. This is because, as hinted above, the regime makes a careful effort to (re)define what is being restored; that is, ZANU PF values that Mugabe is accused of failing to defend from the G40 cabal. Thus, although Operation Restore Legacy is clearly a testimony of ZANU PF failure, it (the operation) is reframed as a symbolic outlet from Mugabe's ruinous system. The operation creates and justifies the new dispensation.

Of interest in discourses of transition is the coincidental way in which the two political iconic leaders who embodied the major political parties in Zimbabwe Mugabe and Morgan Tsvangirai left the political scene almost at the same time.[36] Mugabe and Tsvangirai exited and new presidential players in the form of Mnangagwa and Chamisa entered, representing the emergence of new political leaderships and contestations. Some scholars have referred to Mugabe and Tsvangirai's demise as the departure of the "peculiar conflicts and adversarial

[36] Mugabe resigned on the 21 November 2017 and Tsvangirai the founding President of MDC died on the 14 February 2018.

politics personified by Mugabe and opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai" (Mataire, 2018). While Chamisa and his 'new' opposition dispensation ride on the popularity of Tsvangirai by invoking the discourse of continuity, in ZANU PF, Mugabe's 'First Republic' is juxtaposed with Mnangagwa's 'Second Republic' with emphasis placed on the break in the dispensations. This, however, is not to imply that Mnangagwa, like Chamisa, has not sought to leverage his relationship with Mugabe to enhance his political clout and naturalise his succession. Indeed, Mnangagwa at his first inauguration speech metaphorically identified himself as Mugabe's son who was ordained by political heirship of the liberation movement to take over from him. However, in claiming heirship, Mnangagwa was also careful to decline the heirship of Mugabeism hence the accentuation of 'restoration' of ZANU PF values – a move that effectively condemned Mugabe as responsible for their (values') erosion.

There is also a way in which in making Mugabe the sacrificial lamb to entrench the discourse of renewal, the Mnangagwa regime sought to (idiomatically-speaking) 'steal the opposition MDC's thunder' epitomised by its Mugabe must go mantra. Although celebrated as the nation's founding father, Mugabe is mostly represented in post-coup ZANU PF discourses as the weak point in ZANU PF. His removal is therefore symbolic of renewal and refuelling of ZANU PF for delivery. As the single most important obstacle to progress, Mugabe's removal from power was portrayed in ZANU PF discourses as fulfilling the opposition's rallying cry that 'Mugabe must go', hence the irrelevance of opposition politics as Mugabe had gone. The 'New Dispensation' is thus portrayed as characterised by "a new culture of governance, defined by new ways of doing things, a new democracy and new ethos" (Mangwana, 2018 – a script that clearly imitate opposition discourse. The 'New Dispensation' as reflected in *The People's Manifesto* is couched in a reform framework, people-centred policies previously rallied by the MDC such as re-engagement and dialogue with the national and international community. Where the opposition was preoccupied with the "Mugabe must go" politics and lack of democracy in ZANU PF succession systems, ZANU PF used the discourse of newness to curve for itself the duty of re-visioning and re-configuring the nation. Hence the removal of Mugabe is portrayed as a product of ZANU PF internal processes of dealing with its own problems. In a way, this renders the opposition parties useless as they failed to deal with the Mugabe 'problem'. These images of reform presented in the post-Mugabe era cement ZANU PF's liberation rhetoric and overtake oppositional parties' discourses of change because the change is evoked and implied in ZANU PF's restored legacy, that ushered in a 'New Dispensation

'and a 'Second Republic'. As Makombe notes, the ability to bring about the change is symbolised by the ouster of Mugabe:

> The discourse of a "new Zimbabwe", which has now become the trademark of President Mnangagwa'e regime, was once associated with opposition politics… President Mnangagwa's discourse of a "new Zimbabwe' appropriated the opposition discourse and attempted to draw a line of demarcation between the ZANU PF of Robert Mugabe and the ZANU PF of Emmerson Mnangagwa (*Unpublished*).

There is evidence of intertextuality, "rhetoric responsiveness" (Blackledge, 2005), as texts show traces of different discourses borrowed, consenting and contending with each other. The "Zimbabwe is Open for Business" discourse itself was implied (although not popularised) in MDC's *JUICE* (2013) Manifesto.[37] The (re)invention of the policy in ZANU PF discourse is strategically linked to Operation Restore Legacy as one of the mechanisms of breaking from the old and shaping a "new dispensation".

The November 2017 march is a symbolic event that characterises the 'New Dispensation'. It is evoked in ZANU PF's discourses of transition as the motif of the birth of the 'New Dispensation'. The theme of Operation Restore Legacy is centred around the metaphor and notion of the "the Voice of the People" being "the voice of God"; that is, the symbolic representation of a people united in pursuit of the goal of removing Mugabe as the inspiration for 'facilitating' his eventual deposition. On the day, people across political parties, cultural divides and racial disparities converged in the streets of Harare demanding Mugabe's resignation. The day presented an opportunity, as Mhlanga (2017) puts it, "for sincerity as people were unrestrictedly allowed to share their despair, frustration and the betrayal of the liberation ethos by some people they lived with for this long". Marching alongside the military was the first of its kind given the notoriously heavy-handed nature that protests were previously put down, and ironically, would be put down in the post-Mugabe. The march features prominently in *The People's Manifesto* where it is invoked as evidence attesting to the notions of "Servant Leadership" and "The Voice of the People". The march is depicted as representing a revolutionary movement in which people expressed themselves, giving the state signals on how they wished to be governed. In this narrative, the army and Mnangagwa are evoked as acting in the service of the people and national interest on the simple basis that they carried out

[37] The manifesto highlights that, "…businesses have been shutting down, over the years and emigrating to more competitive environments. An MDC government will ensure Zimbabwe is open for business" (p.1).

the people's wishes to get rid of Mugabe. The march becomes a ZANU PF yet national event representing the people's rallying around the party's transition strategy. It is expresses that:

> We applaud the People of Zimbabwe for demonstrating unshakeable faith and commitment toward a peaceful transition of power, which continues to perplex our partners in SADC, the African Union and the world over. We stand apart as a unique nation, driven by values of mutual tolerance, peace and unity which we have displayed, notwithstanding our diverse demographic, cultural and political persuasions. As a result, the country added a new chapter to the paradigm of conflict resolution and settlement. This is an embodiment of ZANU PF's adherence to all principles of Peace, Unity and Development cherished by all Zimbabwean (*The People's Manifesto,* 2018: 10).

Underlining ZANU PF's rhetoric of servant leadership encapsulated in the metaphor "The Voice of the People is the Voice of God" and 'practised' through the deposition of Mugabe ostensibly on the people's instructions, is the mystification of Operation Restore Legacy as at once the people's project and, on the other hand, a ZANU PF process.

The significance of the march is inflated and appropriated to feed into ZANU PF's discourse of people-centredness, newness and alliance with the people and also to disentangle them from the realm of opposition where the 'Mugabe must go' chorus previously resided. Somers (1994: 616) explains such significations as "constellations of relationships (connected parts) embedded in time and space, constituted by causal emplotment". The Restore Legacy construction constitutes the means by which ZANU PF ratifies a shared meaning of the past, present and future. ZANU PF's images of re-engagement, dialogue and co-operation in the march reimagines ZANU PF as capable of being, at the same time, the ruling party that the people abhorred and an embodiment of their dream nation, hence the construction of the march as the people's voice in practice to remove a (old) ZANU PF dispensation. The way the march is presented in *The People's Manifesto* conveniently downplays and tones down power contestations at the heart of Operation Restore Legacy. Though power is usually characterised by domination, "power is not necessarily linked with conflict... and power is not inherently oppressive" (Giddens: 1984: 237). Power's transformative capacity is emphasised in the 'New Dispensation' discourses. As Karlberg (2005: 5) contends, "there is power in cooperation and even when power is unequally distributed it can still be expressed in forms that are not oppressive". It can be empowering for people with the same interests to transcend their differences, dialogue and work together for a common purpose. This is the kind of discourse that ZANU PF peddles with their call for re-engagement and unity as requisites for accountable government – an ideology steeped in the symbolism of the march.

The March is characterised by images of "mutual tolerance", "unity" and "conflict resolution and settlement" which projects a sense of re-engagement, of "building, together with the People, including those in the Diaspora, a thriving national economy whose benefits will be equitably shared by all Zimbabweans" (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 11). The marchers exist in ZANU PF's narrative of the Operation as sites of aestheticising actions and ideas related to Mugabe's removal. The people are thus defined in terms of the party's claimed intentions and vice versa. This explains why the invitation to go and vote for ZANU PF is sarcastically extended to the opposition, as the following quotation shows:

> It is, therefore, a national duty of everyone of us – none but ourselves, the youth, women, the disabled and disadvantaged, the vulnerable from across the political, ethnic and racial divide to go out in our historic numbers to vote for ZANU PF in the forthcoming elections. (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 73, *bold in original*)

"Historic numbers" in this quotation is a metaphor of aestheticising and moralising Operation Restore Legacy. Numbers link to the 'people' and their established 'goddness'. Numbers are also connected to the notion of democracy where the old adage "majority rules" dictates political action. Numbers are a key feature of the historic march and their symbolic significance is valorised as ZANU PF invokes them to claim the people's instruction (the voice of God) and democratise the coup (for the majority rules).

Gardiner (2006: 62) argues that the ideology of "Servant Leadership" foregrounds a metaphor of "transactional, transformational, and transcendent leadership" which constructs the party in terms of the people. Collective will is reinforced by the emphasis of "the People" throughout the texts and speeches. Behind the Servant Leadership ideology is a twofold concern to ostensibly re-construct identities and renew moral order and social obligation in dealing with the Zimbabwean crisis.

Servant leadership is a metaphor of leadership in which the leader creates the impression that he or she has placed service and the people before self. Greenleaf (1998: 123) points out that:

> The servant-leader is servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions... The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature.

In *The People's Manifesto*, Mnangagwa is identified as a servant leader, hence the claim that "[d]ue to his commitment to serving the people and loyalty to the Party, Cde. Emmerson Mnangagwa faithfully served the people of Zimbabwe in various portfolios" (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 6). Here the contradictory domains of servant and leader create a paradox which projects Mnangagwa as both a person of authority and a servant to whom authority is performed. This can be further gleaned from the claim that Mnangagwa, "will listen to the people, and the ZANU PF government will serve the People of Zimbabwe" (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 6). The Servant Leadership ideology reconfigures power and authority in biblical allusions. The way Mnangagwa pledges to serve portrays a Christ-like figure, equipped for stewardship and care of the people's needs. ZANU PF presents an allegedly new leadership model and development paradigm to, according to them, effectively and efficiently serve the kingdom of Zimbabwe.

Though servant and leader seem antithetical, the essence, as Greenleaf (1998) explains, is that the servant, by acting with integrity and spirit, builds trust and lifts people and helps them grow. The leader who is trusted, shapes others' destinies by leading the way. A servant leader is not obsessed with acquiring or holding onto power but is more concerned "about the benefit and growth of others rather than putting their own desires or goals first" (Campbell, 2017). In Servant Leadership, moral obligations and principles are depicted as the driving forces in execution of duties. Values associated with a good servant are obedience, consistence, commitment, dedication, honesty, loyalty, integrity and social responsibility. However, the superfluity of these values can be unmasked in what Greenleaf (1998: 110) explains as "concern for justice (rather than order), for the performance (rather than the form) of an institution and for the appropriateness (rather than the result) of power and authority." A servant is supposed to be willing to serve. It is this enthusiasm that is illuminated in ZANU PF texts as Mnangagwa and ZANU PF "appeals to … all Zimbabweans" and "seek a renewal of the mandate from the People" to enable them to extend the transformation agenda (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 11). This attitude that one cares and is willing to serve is the hallmark of 'customer service' where emphasis is on demonstrating that the people matter and that their welfare is valued. Images of power to dominate are subordinated by need for power to serve and transform the nation. That is why ZANU PF discourse is characterised by business innuendos more that political connotations.

Zimbabwe is ('re-) open for business: Tracing the business metaphor

"Zimbabwe is open for business" references a model of action in the form of a metaphorical hypothesis with deep political implications related to sustainable socio-economic transformation. In post-coup ZANU PF discourse, Mugabe's rule is depicted as having disabled national development by shutting down 'national' business, which the 'New Dispensation' under Mnangagwa will open. The 'New Dispensation' finds course of action in this metaphor. It is a strategic metaphor that takes a liberal developmental agenda that is diametrically opposed to Mugabe's indigenisation, nativist oriented programmes. The nation is re-imagined as a business and its development as dependent on the 'business' leaders' dexterity in creating a conducive environment for growth. Market orientation is a business philosophy that focuses on identifying customer wants or needs in order to meet them. This approach focuses on designing and selling ideas that are designed to meet customer demands. However, meeting such demands is not always guaranteed hence the 'necessity' of propaganda in sustaining impressions about commitments to deliver on them. Words such "restoring", "re-opening", "re-engagement", "rebuilding" characterise the party's imaginary of newness. The discourse of openness aims to influence "forms of consciousness" (Fairclough, 2001:3) that opens up to the promise of economic and political conveniences of newness. The metaphor of business in *The People's Manifesto* (2018) maps onto the domain of newness, correspondences of planning, strategy, rebranding; change and expertise in the 'operations' of the national entity.

The "open for business" mantra is operationalised in ZANU PF discourses to create and sustain a hegemonic brand. Operationalisation is conceptualised here as a dialectical process in which the transition discourse is enacted as new ways of (inter)acting, inculcated as new modes of being (identities) and materialised as constituting the new disepensation – hence a "new way[] of organising space" (Fairclough, 2013: 180). According to Fairclough:

> Inculcation is a matter of, in the current jargon, people coming to "own" discourses, to position themselves inside them, to act and think and talk and see themselves in terms of new discourses. A stage towards inculcation is rhetorical deployment: people may learn new discourses and use them for certain purposes while at the same time self-consciously keeping a distance from them. One of the mysteries of the dialectics of discourse is the process by which what begins as self-conscious rhetorical deployment becomes "ownership" - how people become unconsciously positioned within a discourse (2003: 208)

The business metaphor is pervasive in *The People's Manifesto* (2018) – it forms the nucleus around which ZANU PF's political legitimacy forms. The mantra creates strong imaginaries of modernity, interconnectedness, transformation, productivity and prosperity. As Nyambi (*Unpublished*) highlights, "the 'new' dispensation created a rhetorical discursivity that channelled perception and thought towards images and notions of the transition with interested political intentions". The shift from political to business and economic jargon reflected in *The People's Manifesto* (2018) makes ZANU PF discourse appear more objective and authoritative.

Business undertones in ZANU PF campaign discourse illuminate the complex web of activities and actions (ways of doing and managing business) necessary to achieve the much hyped newness and 'New Dispensation'. As Albrighton (2013) explains, "[m]etaphors are valuable tools in business, particularly when people need to appeal to others. Because metaphors nearly always depend on familiar physical objects as their vehicles, they make abstract concepts more concrete and sensory-rich". The irony of the business rhetoric lies in its 'unintentional accuracy' in exposing the ambivalences in the discourses. As noted by Davies (2018), business terminology "seems to be born of and lend itself well to several different possible motives, which often can't be easily discerned; they include sheer pretentiousness…., deliberate and strategic ambiguity, projections of authority or objectiveness, or simply being fashionable and speaking the lingo" of the corporate world. The series of association and images surrounding the business metaphor expose the paradoxes characterising the 'New Dispensation'. The term 'business' in this political context is ambiguous – it raises questions about the kind of business and for whose 'profit'?

Characterised by the rhetoric of newness, the metaphor of business and its connotations of openness constitute part of ZANU PF's political marketing. Metaphorising the nation as a business reflects several semantic and political layers that define the temporality of political contestation. In business, marketing is necessary in processes of turning an idea into a feasible venture and convincing people that the business can deliver value to consumers. As (Davies, 2018) argues, corporate and marketing jargon is instrumental when it comes to the media and arenas, "where formal relationships are negotiated, proposals are pitched, deals are done, speeches are delivered, products and services are advertised, and opinions or beliefs are expressed — often publicly, persuasively, delicately". Mnangagwa's newness is thus strategically connected to new ways of doing 'business'. The positive connotations of this political metaphor can be felt in associations of responsibility inferable, for instance, from the following quotation:

> Cde. Mnangagwa's astuteness and principled stance on the role of the private sector in national development has seen him become the first Zimbabwean President to be invited to the prestigious 2018 World Economic Forum in the Swiss Alps at Davos. This clearly demonstrates the confidence and trust the world leaders have in Cde Dambudzo Mnangagwa. Recently the prestigious Time Magazine has acknowledged him as one among the top 100 most influential people in the world (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 5).

It is hyperbolic that he is the first President to be invited to Davos as there has only been one other president, Mugabe. The implication in this characterisation of an 'invitable', "astute" "principled" Mnangagwa is that for the 37 years Mugabe has been president he failed to reach such heights of trust that the corporate world has for Mnangagwa. This image also serves to show that within record time, Mnangagwa has already been integrated in the global business community and won the hearts of the international community in ways that Mugabe failed. Language is thus used to rebrand ZANU PF and so put it in a good stead to rebrand the nation for a successful re-integration into world business networks.

Discourse in ZANU PF political texts in the post-Mugabe era is not only a mechanism of fashioning an acceptable transition that unsettles the coup discourse in the public sphere. Rather, discourse is also used to entrench previous identities and ideologies as long as they safeguard the party's hegemony. In this light, we can see that unlike in previous years where Mugabe was evoked as synonymous with the party, stress is now on the party and how it is self-oiled to continue despite Mugabe's fall. The party features more prominently in post-Mugabe political discourse in ZANU PF where its usual history of the liberation struggle is constantly aligned to statecraft and political legitimacy. *The People's Manifesto* (2018) highlights that, "The revolutionary and democratic ZANU PF continues to seek broad based development and economic emancipation of the people. This is founded on its unshakeable principles that uphold justice and equity for all" (*The People's Manifesto,* 2018: 1). The liberation struggle is ZANU PF's trademark that validates its identity, values and attributes. To return to the metaphor of business and openness, it should be noted that business is related to organisation and organisational culture as well as ways of doing business. By reinforcing its past, ZANU PF buttresses its capacity for continuity and in the process accentuate its resilience as an organisation over the loss of its leader.

Beard (2000) argues that the most common source domain of metaphors in politics are sport and war. Both domains involve physical contests to attain victory. The sport metaphors ironically capture the power dynamics in Zimbabwean politics. Victory is the ultimate goal as

parties package themselves to win votes. As Gibbs (1994: 142) points out, metaphors from sport and war are "not just rhetorical devices for talking about politics, for they exemplify how people ordinarily conceive politics." In the 'match' against other teams, ZANU PF has to play to win. For one to engage in a game, possession of the relevant skills is mandatory and experience is treasured. ZANU PF discursively builds its success on the foundation of its history – that is, its being a key political *player* since its inception during the liberation struggle. Its claim to proficiency is reinforced by recoursing to the history of attained victories and goals, particularly national liberation, which is re-constructed as constituting the necessary experience for delivering socio- economic development.

Sports and war metaphors in ZANU PF discourse post-Mugabe implicate goals but stress the capacity of the 'team' to achieve them. This can be related to what Larkoff and Johnson (2003:11) say about the conceptual metaphor:

> The very systematicity that allows us to comprehend one aspect of a concept in terms of another (e.g., comprehending an aspect of arguing in terms of battle) will necessarily hide other aspects of the concept. In allowing us to focus on one aspect of a concept (e.g., the battling aspects of arguing), a metaphorical concept can keep us from focusing on other aspects of the concept that are inconsistent with that metaphor.

The cognitive frames in the political metaphorisation of the nation as a business and political contestation as sport evoke associations of competition and rivalry. Inherent in the nature of business and sport is competition. The competition is often characterised by the clash and protection of interests between competitors. Grygiel (2015: 8) explains how business can be "conceptualized as a form of structured competition which, in turn, inevitably leads to retaliation, direct confrontation, fighting, use of weapons and even innovation". Grygiel expands that "this usually involves dominance, expansion, growth and taking territory" (2015:8). Taking territory "can be equivalent to a hostile takeover, merger or acquisition". This presupposes beating the competition or, in other words, winning the game. In this respect, the art of politics/business is like the art of war or rules of a game. In each case, "the object is to be bigger, faster, and stronger than your opponent" (Grygiel, 2015: 8). As a result, when politicians present themselves as business people, they constitute competition – not for so much for delivering services to the people as to being the mechanism of delivery. The discourse of openness and newness reveals how the 'New Dispensation' in Zimbabwe is far more esoteric and metaphoric than ever before. It illustrates new frontiers in contestations of legitimacy emerging from constant shifts in the Zimbabwean postcolonial body-politic. In this discourse,

the ‘new’ ZANU PF is essentially taking stock of the movement, reinventing its weak spots and entrenching strengths. Mugabe’s fall is strategically re-discoursed and reconfigured as the proverbial blessing in disguise that creates the necessary opportunity for renewing, recalibrating and restructuring the party in light of new challenges faced by the nation.

Voxi Populi, Vox Dei (The Voice of the People is the Voice of God)

In CDA, changing the range of discourses is changing the terms of debate. Fairclough (2018: 21) explains that, other terms of debate which are discourse dependent include: “how existing states of affairs can be problematised, and therefore what range of solutions (goals and actions) are available; what range of explanations are available, and what counts as explanatory”. The characteristics of the maxim, “**Voxi Populi, Vox Dei**,” (*The People’s Manifesto*, 2018: 2), its “poetic boldness and epigrammatic finish, its Latin and lapidary formulation, and its apparent connection of a patriotic love of the people with religious fervor, give it an air of authority and almost of sacredness” (Lieber, 1874: 405). The maxim, used by Mnangagwa to describe Mugabe’s ouster is perhaps the best example that demonstrates the importance of discourse in Mnangagwa and ZANU PF’s politicisation of transition. The “Voice of the People” as “the Voice of God” is a conceptual metaphor that seeks to discursively cleanse and inscribe favour on Mnangagwa’s succession. The religious intonations in this maxim are buoyed by the fact that “Zimbabwe is a highly spiritual country” *(The People’s Manifesto,* 2018: 54). However, though metaphors endeavour to reflect a reality, “the relatively abstract target may be quite unstructured and inchoate and the more concrete source schema gives it a structure and an order” (Goatly, 2007: 16). This means that though metaphors presuppose capturing a pre-existing reality, in most cases they constitute or invent a reality rather than describe it. The entire framing of the axiom “The Voice of the People is the Voice of God” and the “Servant Leadership” dogma is predicated on the idea that ZANU PF’s actions vis-à-vis the coup are determined by the collective will of the people whose voice, like God’s, is the party’s command.

In the ‘New Dispensation’, “language emerged as an indispensable mechanism of epistemising the idea that the leadership renewal in ZANU PF was, above all, in the interest of the nation” (Nyambi, *Unpublished*). The mantra ‘The Voice of the People is the Voice of God’ sketches an envisioned political ethic that ZANU PF presents as symptoms of its re-structuring efforts. The implication that people spoke with ‘one’ voice during the demonstrations and that the

military action represented the people's deliberative power is conscious rhetoric aimed at depicting the role of the people as active agents. This can be inferred from the following:

> ZANU PF is grateful to the people who spontaneously took to the streets in their millions across the country, demanding the immediate resignation of the former President for abrogating his duty to uphold, defend, obey and respect the Constitution. This ushered in a new dawn under a united rejuvenated ZANU PF, which respects the ideals of the Liberation Struggle and is committed to supremacy of the People's aspirations and their fulfilment under its reverent guardianship. (*The People's Manifesto,* 2018: 69)

Zimbabweans who marched in support of the army operation are evoked in metaphoric terms as voices and their collective energies and aspirations as godly (the voice of the people is the voice of God). 'Godness' here implies following the people but it also intimates the moral justice of doing so. The people, we are told, marched "demanding the immediate resignation" of Mugabe. Of interest here is ZANU PF's notion of their concerns, Mugabe's "abrogate[ion] of his duty to uphold, defend, obey and respect the Constitution". The expectation to obey is portrayed as the hallmark of servant leadership. The constitution and the people emerge as an epistemic force that is deified to inscribe on its interests, imperative agency and urgency. The people's participation in the 'coup' is assigned symbolic value and becomes ZANU PF's constitutive basis for transmission and reproduction of the representation of the people's will. It represents at best a scenario where the political elite sought and courted the citizens, providing a platform for "special interests to *impersonate* the public will" (Fishkin, 2009: 1, *italics in original*).

The policy text is titled "The People's Manifesto" – a clear testimony to an attempt to embroil people in the government programme. In line with democratic practices, the legitimacy of actions and policies such as *The People's Manifesto* primarily rests on the extent to which they legitimately represent, or can successfully claim to represent, some group or larger set of social interests. The emphasis on "the People" in the text reveals a shift from imageries of authority to metaphors of servanthood in which the government self-projects as responsive to its people; hence the claimed belief that the "government is accountable to the people who elect it" (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 1). Government is differentiated from governance as a "a more rigid and narrower set of activities among a narrower set of participants (usually civil servants, elected politicians and some influential or privileged interests)" (The Open University, n.d). Governance is highly normative in global and development issues as it acknowledges innovative forms in which all stakeholders of an organisation are involved in making decisions.

The images of "state capture", "people taking to the streets in their millions across the country", the quest to defend the ideals of the liberation struggle and commitment to "supremacy of the People's aspirations and their fulfilment" under ZANU PF's "reverent guardianship" (*The People's Manifesto*, 2018: 69) create a linear storyline of the socio-economic conditions translating to political concerns that called for collective action. Collectivity, as hinted above, is evoked as amounting to godness and hence the impression that allowing the people to march in demand for Mugabe's removal was an act of following the "voice of the people" which is the "voice of God". As clarified by Schlozman, Brady and Verba, (2018 :2), "[a]mong the requirements for a functioning democracy are mechanisms for the free expression of political voice so that members of the public can communicate information about their experiences, needs, and preferences and hold public officials accountable for their conduct in office". The people's march, particularly its facilitation by the army, is reconstructed as the epitome of democracy. The people's role becomes symbolic as it bolsters and legitimises the political transition and the 'New Dispensation' democracy rhetoric.

Though ZANU PF discourse sounds sincere on commitments to transform the economy and acting on the needs of the people, most of the party's political metaphors manifest in mantras such as "Zimbabwe is Open for Business" and "The Voice of the People is the Voice of God" are "highly malleable and open to the techniques of impression management perfected by the persuasion industry" (Fishkin, 2009: 2-3). As much as there is emphasised positivity in these metaphors, there is also a lurking negativity that betrays inconvenient realities. Due to the ambivalences and ambiguities surrounding the terms the 'voice', 'the people' and 'God', it can be argued that what ZANU PF is "doing with words" is to re-construct a reality rather than describing an existing one. As Fishkin (2009) explains in *When People Speak*, voices are vulnerable to manipulation. In Rosillo-Lopez's (2017: 5) words, what is captured as public opinion, the people's voice, "could be used, abused and reused". Perhaps there is no better testimony to Fishkin and Rosillo-Lopez's assertions (in the Zimbabwean context) than the current denial of space for anti-government protests in contemporary Zimbabwe.

The metaphoric axioms "the voice of the people is the voice of God" and "Zimbabwe is open for business" and the 'New Dispensation' represent things that are more symbolic than realistic. As Edelman (1971: 68) explains:

> Each metaphor intensifies selected perceptions and ignores others, thereby helping one to concentrate on desired consequences of favoured public policies and helping one to ignore their unwanted, unthinkable, or

> irrelevant premises and aftermaths. Each metaphor can be a subtle way of highlighting what one wants to believe and avoiding what one does not wish to face.

The voice metaphor mystifies agency – it creates the impression that the people have the power to make things happen. Yet the axiom is known for its controversy, which, one can argue, symbolise the instability of its simplistic invocation by ZANU PF for political purposes. Speaking on the axiom, Alcuin (1771: 191) says "[w]e would not listen to those who were wont to say the voice of the people is the voice of God, for the voice of the mob is near akin to madness". Mnangagwa and ZANU PF's invocation of the axiom serves their rhetoric of populism. In this light, it would be difficult to explain the fact that the people who unanimously voted for Mnangagwa's dismissal through provincial petitions are the same people who also supported and celebrated Mugabe's demise[38].

Conclusion

The post-Mugabe era presented, in ZANU PF, an unprecedented political crisis that required careful management vis-à-vis the political risks of succession. The military's involvement in ZANU PF succession politics created a political conundrum in terms of how the party could recover its image as a democratic establishment. Mugabe was not a mere politician – he had evolved over the years into a phenomenon, an ideology and even an institution. His violent deposition was always going to destabilise ZANU PF's self-projection as a party with a functional succession system. This chapter analysed some of the ways in which the Mnangagwa regime deployed discourse to negotiate the political risks posed by the negative associations of coup attendant on Mugabe's removal through the army-led Operation Restore Legacy. Paying attention to the workings of discourse including language, imagery, metaphors and symbolisms implied and implicated in constructions of notions of newness, transition, renewal and succession, this chapter revealed the unique hegemonic use discourse in ZANU PF's attempts to influence public opinion about the meanings and consequences of Mugabe's ouster. Metaphors were seen to be the major mode of discursive repackaging of ZANU PF as a self-modulating and self-correcting party with an intact succession system. Metaphors of "the voice of the people [being] the voice of God", the nation as a business, restoration and new

[38] Mnangagwa was expelled from the party and government following recommendations made by all the party's 10 Provincial Coordinating Committees. Following Operation Restore Legacy, Mugabe was "fired as head of the ZANU PF party " for inciting division. Following the party's decision he had to resign urgently, failure of which the party promised to impeach him (Chutel, 2017). In a dramatic turn of events Mugabe was replaced by Mnangagwa.

dispensation, revealed ZANU PF's sense of political risk caused by the Mugabe factor and how, through discourse, the party sought to cognitively perspectives, experiences and conceptions of the coup and its aftermath.

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION: REALITY THROUGH STAINED GLASS

Introduction

This study set out to examine rhetorical deployment of discourse in political texts during the crisis period in Zimbabwe. Centering the notion of sustainable economic development in selected official political texts in post-2000 Zimbabwean context, the study examined how discourse is implicated in the crisis' construal, management and how it can be resolved. The selected policy texts give insight into how political texts, discourse and genres are operationalised in context of the crisis. This study explored the artistic designs of policy pronunciations and the expressive dimension of language in these texts. The study demonstrated the pervasive influence of language in the dynamics of the Zimbabwean crisis and how various socio-political interventions are influenced by power ideologies. Apparent in these texts are strategic means to problematise the situation and reimagining ways of addressing the socio-economic crisis. The crisis creates space for competing discourses and power contestations as different political assemblages compete to make their ideologies, choices, policies and interests prevail (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012). This study reflected on ways in which representativeness and legitimacy are (re)defined and manipulated through the framing of development.

The study emphasises how subjective regimes of truth and orders of discourse, construct and constrict versions and visions of sustainable economic development. In particular, I analysed the narrative accounts, the language, grammars, images, diction, symbolism and other forms of narrative style in the selected policy texts, focusing on how these elements of expression inform rhetoricity. The argument is that behind the language, grammars, metaphors, images and symbolisms in these texts are ideological structures, political philosophies and dogmas that reflect and refract what is at stake in the temporalities of development agendas. Paying attention to the constitutive, innovative and transformative power of discourse illuminates the gap between rhetoric and reality in Zimbabwe. Though never given much attention, it is largely through discourse that social practices are formed, expressed, propagated and contested. This thesis is anchored on the perception that people need to be aware of the colours and lens through which they look or are made to look at the reality of the Zimbabwean crisis "to avoid the epistemic fallacy of confusing the nature of reality with our knowledge of reality" (Fairclough, 2005: 916-17). Reality is seen through structured ways of representation that evoke particular

understandings that subsequently enable and/or disable, encourage and discourage certain modes of thinking about the crisis and political players contesting to deal with it in government.

Given that narratives and discourses are not transparent windows through which reality is reflected, *#Team ZANU PF* (2013), *Zim Asset* (2013), J*UICE* (2013), *BUILD* (2015), *IDEA* (2015) and *The People's Manifesto* (2018) constitute and construct reality in ways that represent views and interests of different stakeholders. This discussion took cognisance of the fact that political texts such as manifestoes and political parties' blueprints are malleable narratives that can be read from political, cultural, sociological, historical as well as literary perspectives. Like any expressive texts, the focal policy texts are "conditioned by time, and represents humanity in so far as it corresponds to the ideas and aspirations, the needs and hopes of a particular historical situation" (Fischer, 1978: 12). The study demonstrated how familiar methods of critical discourse analysis and textual analysis, that focus on the semantics and aesthetics of style (usually applied to the study of literary texts) can be used in analysing political texts. Examination of the semiotic economy illuminated how modes of knowledge production and modes of action are intertwined in complex ways. The discourse approach revealed the effects, affects and efficacy of language in shaping social practices, institutions, and the social order. Meanings such as development, nationalism, the liberation struggle, history, democracy are conventionalised and conventionalise political temporalities. A critical discourse analysis approach provided a distinctive mechanism of understanding the relationship between discourse and non-discursive moments of social practices and discursive processes of agenda setting in the development agendas. Analyses of discourse shows how imagination and strategic interests influence the way texts are framed, events are connected and meaning is (re)created. The semiotic (intersubjective production of meaning, in relation to social relations, their reproduction and transformation) processes mirror power relations that sustain and are sustained by particular discourses. This prompted a CDA approach as it problematises things that are taken for granted in people's habits of thinking and systematically analyses issues on domination, manipulation and ideologies. Linguistic frames, as demonstrated in the discussion in this study, demonstrate how underlying structures and political identities shape political strategies and ways in which these strategies are circulated, vouched for, defended and fetishised through language.

Political texts are mostly treated and approached as scientific texts based on facts and objective knowledge. Rooted mainly in business, economic and social science disciplines and methods, analyses of the texts are often technical (in the realm of empirical, quantifiable evidence) and

more inclined to interrogating policy efficiency. As Leach et al (2010: 127) explain, the assumptions in policy views is that "it is a linear process in which rational decisions are taken by those with authority". As Keely and Scoones (2003) note, approaches to policy processes in such studies reflect an inadequate engagement with the policies' temporalities, particularly their human dimensions. Leach et al also assert that, to understand policy better, there is need to cast aside these assumptions of linearity and rationality in policy models and understand them as "a more complex and messy process involving a multiplicity of actors, with several key characteristics" (2010: 128). Though the study of policy texts within the social sciences may explain how involved actors, designs and implementations influence development agendas, it is difficult within the dictates of their disciplines to account for the politics of circulation; that is, how policy enters and influence the public sphere. The gap in knowledge that this study sought to fill concerns the rhetoric deployment of texts and discourse as a political strategy in generating and influencing meanings vis-à-vis the Zimbabwean crisis.

The study analysed policy texts, focusing on how their discourse reflects certain dynamics of the politics of representing, conceptualising and dealing with the crisis. The language of manifestos analysed in this study create development imaginaries meant to influence perceptions of the crisis. Imaginaries are ways of recreating the world that do not describe and reflect social reality but constitute discursive (semiotic) representations. As della Faille (2011: 215) notes, analyses that focus exclusively on the dynamics of power and Zimbabwean politics through speech, text and images have not broken into mainstream debates "and remain[s] a marginal field of analysis in addressing the challenges bedevilling the Zimbabwean nation". Versions of the crisis and the political implications they engender are shaped by narratives and discourses that define, problematise, and frame time-space. Narratives and words at the heart of policy articulation are invested with discursive power and form the basis for political self-legitimation. A CDA analysis of these policy narratives draws attention to a series of signs designed to shape perceptions, consciousness and attitudes about the Zimbabwean crisis. It is in this light that this study approached the Zimbabwean post-2000 crisis as also a crisis of discourse. The study underlines how the crisis is, to a greater extent, a struggle – not so much of ideas as of their circulation to influence public opinion. It examined how the linguistic strategies (language choices and expressed meanings), argumentation patterns (relations and interactions between arguments) and rhetorical structures (means of persuasion) influence reception of discourse.

As hinted above and demonstrated in the literature review, most scholarly enquiries on the Zimbabwean crisis have focused on the socio-economic and political indexes of the crisis without explicitly accounting for the semiotic economy, that is, the constitutive role of language in social processes and social order in general. This study shifted focus to discourse, exploring the use of language in (re)constructions of time and space in the context of crisis. Language was analysed as an epistemological entry point to shifts in the narrative and mechanics of policy formulation, circulation, framing, contestation and defence by political actors. The study showed that this approach enables new ways of comprehending the temporality of political interests, justifications, versions, sub-versions and subversions of development policy, agenda and ideology. Recognising policy texts as complex repositories of imaginary constructions and linguistic constellations broadens ways of discussing and addressing diverse and divergent perspectives of the Zimbabwean crisis and sustainable economic development agendas. These approaches unravel obscurities related to knowledge, ideologies and power.

Discussion of findings

The first chapter introduced the study, providing the background which contextualises the relationship between discourse and critical aspects of its use in political practice in post-2000 Zimbabwe. The chapter also spelled out the aims of the research which delineate the thesis statement, rationale, theoretical framework, methodology and chapter outline. Chapter Two expanded on the introductory chapter by giving an overview of the state of knowledge on discussions on the Zimbabwean crisis, sustainability and discourse studies. The chapter critically engaged with what has been written about these issues as a way of grounding the study's critical, theoretical and methodological approaches. Discourse in a crisis context reflects issues at the intersection of power and how agency is constructed, distributed and contested in post-2000 Zimbabwean political texts. In challenging existing methods, concepts and paradigms of knowing the Zimbabwean crisis and the contested nature of sustainable development, the study examined how language, text and discourse constructed and deconstructed, stabilised and destabilised imaginaries of (lack of) progress.

Following on Fairclough's (2003) observation that in any political system, power is obtained and hegemonies sustained through discourse, Chapter 3 focused on the hegemonic tendencies of ZANU PF discourse of sustainable development in *Zim Asset* (2013*)* and *#Team ZANU PF* (2013). ZANU PF's political discourse reconfigures social realities and the crisis in ways that

surreptitiously understate the party's role in the crisis while stressing its agency as the undisputable political custodians of the nation. The crisis is largely framed as a product of western imperialistic machinations designed to reverse the Zimbabwean revolution and gains of the liberation struggle. Discourse is used construct evidence of these machinations and the extent of their impacts on the nation in ways that covertly summon and compel patriotic awareness. Discourse is further used to harness and channel the potentially resultant national(ist) loyalty to ZANU PF – which projects itself as the historical institution at the centre of resistance to (neo)colonial hostilities. Sustainable development is thus discursively constructed in ZANU PF's policy texts in ways that (re)create, order, institutionalise, affects and sustain its revolutionary identity and the hegemonic associations it implies. The chapter revealed how the time-space of crisis informs ZANU PF discourse's nativist tendencies, unveiling the political conveniences of re-imagining the crisis in narrow terms as a mere symptom – not only of neo-colonial onslaught but also ZANU PF's steadfast resistance. In this discourse, nationalist rhetoric comes to be the natural panacea to the crisis, just as the perceived foreign anti-nation plots are fixed as *the* cause of the crisis. In this light, the "twin evils of regime change and the illegal economic sanctions" *(#Team ZANU PF*, 2013: 7) are treated not so much as the causes of the crisis as the justification for ZANU PF's continued stay in power as the self-legitimated revolutionary vanguard of the nation. The crisis is thus historically and socially contingent; it becomes a critical resource for (re)framing development within the liberation struggle ethos.

The stylistic features and diction in ZANU PF texts regulate the discourse of crisis and foregrounds only the causes that reconstruct the crisis as a challenge that only ZANU PF can resolve. ZANU PF's formulation of problems and proposed 'new' strategies for pursuing economic growth and development are largely metaphoric as the crisis has to be understood in terms of on-going liberation struggle(s). Consequently, ZANU PF's revolutionary and development stance become rhetoric as they reconstruct the mandate of fighting and defending the national liberation goals in the face of the nation's socio-economic challenges. Through categorisations and simplifications reflected in their discourse, ZANU PF is able to both "articulate particular system-framings, goals and narratives, and – importantly – to discipline people into accepting such framings as part of the natural order of things" (Leach et al, 2010:84). ZANU PF's politicisation and accentuation of its revolutionary identity for hegemonic purposes was also revealed in the party's discourse of land – arguably its key site of decolonial rhetoric. Paying attention to how discourse is appropriated and mobilised to

solemnise the party's ideologies and create urgency and a sense of national risk, the chapter reflected how the grammars of nativism centred autochthony in re-identifying land as the ultimate site of national identity in Zimbabwe. Claimed by ZANU PF as the object of its liberation war effort, land is evoked in ZANU PF political texts as identifying – not just the nation but also the identity of its legitimate caretakers.

Chapter Four explored how, through discourse, notions of liberal democracy are deployed in MDC oppositional politics to project it as a politically and economically viable alternative to the ruling ZANU PF's conservative, nationalist strands of democracy. The chapter examines how the opposition MDCs redefined and appropriated the concept of democracy for their oppositional political strategy based on accentuating ideals of the modern state. As reflected in *JUICE* (2013), MDC discourses present democracy as both the opposite of and potential alternative to ZANU PF's authoritarian rule. Although the MDC has quite often demonstrated 'undemocratic' behaviour in its own internal succession processes manifest, for instance, in the formation of factions such as the MDC-N and MDC-M and the violent crackdowns on prospective leadership candidates such as Thokozani Khupe and Douglas Mwonzora, the party has attempted to harness discourse to project and identify with a culture of democracy. As with ZANU PF's rallying leitmotifs of liberation, patriotism and nation(alism), democracy in MDC texts is a political construct whose constructedness is a critical site to understand the dimensions and dynamics of opposition politics in the crisis era in Zimbabwe. Analyses of opposition discourse illuminated the politics of democracy as a political concept that is strategized both to contest and create power for the MDC. The invocation of democracy in discursive projections of democracy as an alternative strategy of national development is political and ideologically loaded. This is mainly because, as hinted earlier, as a concept and practice, the term has its inherent instabilities not least of which is its amenability for adoption by ZANU PF – the party that the supposedly democratic MDC claims to be ideologically opposed. Analyses of constructions of democracy in *JUICE* demonstrated the systematic incorporation of layers of signification of democratic ideology and practice that institutionalise (and/or are institutionalised in) difference. 'Difference' here refers to MDC's self-construction, through discourse, in terms of its oppositional inclinations to ZANU PF – a party that the MDC associates with the unfolding crisis. A select package of values are constructed in essentialist discourse as pinnacles of democratic governance. The metaphors, images and analogues used to project various aspects of these values and how they were carried in MDC evoke democracy (as conceived by the MDC) as the missing link to the nation's myriad problems. The crisis is

thus conceptualised in *JUICE* as a multiplicity of complex political, social and economic challenges linked to the dearth of democracy.

Like any other policy text, the MDC's policy text *JUICE* was formulated in accordance with the exigencies of institutional intention. Democracy as one of the most central and durable ideas in politics provides grounds for contestations and contestability in both its theorisation and practice as it is easily subject to "verbal hijacking" (Arblaster, 2002:9). This explains why even ZANU PF's nationalistic discourses and its liberating history are centred on notions of democracy and why there are many 'movements for democratic change' as the oppositional parties have splintered many times and the splinter groups cite lack of democracy in the main 'democratic parties'. This means that democracy was not always going to be a straightforward concept that the MDC could unproblematically harness to stand as the alternative to ZANU PF. Meanings in MDC texts are conventionalised to naturalise contingent democratic party ideology(ies), designs and interests. Democracy discourses reflected in MDC texts represent the necessity for a break with the past, which is in sharp contrast to ZANU PF's valorisation of history. MDC discourses express rejection of ZANU PF's authority and tradition of democracy which they depict as characterised by depredations. They represent themselves as true defenders of democracy, advocating for material improvement and the constitution of human rights. As would be expected in language-mediated contestations and political representation, discourses of democracy reflect narrow fixations of terms and meanings that fix identities of the self and the rival other. Because style is part of how political actors use language to compete as well as to establish the basis for political legitimacy, my analysis examined how the MDC narrative and stylistic designs are incorporated into its strategies of agenda setting, identity construction, and legitimacy. The resultant 'democratic discourse' fixes political identities in post-2000 Zimbabwe as occupying essentialised opposite ends of authoritarian power and democratic opposition. In this discourse, democracy is synonymised with the new, the modern and the enterprising, giving it a more alluring 'governance' texture than what the MDC portrays as the old and unimaginative ZANU PF.

Contrary to other chapters that focus on political texts of male-led parties, Chapter 5 explored the constitution of gender dynamics in Zimbabwean political texts through the analysis of Joice Mujuru's party(ies) and their policy texts *BUILD* (2015) and *IDEA* (2018). The chapter examined the dialectical relationship between discourse and gender in post-2000 Zimbabwe and how the body and its associated traditions and symbolisms in liberation history is mobilised and instrumentalised in Mujuru's political and development discourse. Discourse in Mujuru's

political texts re-invents gender as a method of politics geared towards delivery rather than a mechanism of political exclusion and hegemonic control as conceptualised in ZANU PF discourses. Centering Mujuru's liberation war heroism, the texts discursively expose the injustices of male political agency reinforced by exclusive claims to the liberating act. While keen on projecting Mujuru's liberation credentials, the texts invoke rather stereotype attributes of motherliness, trustworthiness, temperance, passionate, caring and accommodating disposition to re-construct a female identity that speaks to Zimbabwe's problems of disunity, political polarisation, corruption, violence and maladministration.

Chapter 5 also revealed how, in their political discourses, *BUILD* and *IDEA* evoke the masculinisation of power in ZANU PF as symptomatic and also symbolic of cultures of disingenuity, opportunism and political misogyny that is holding the nation to ransom. Gender or rather, ZANU PF's notion of gender is thus connected to the ruling party's flawed sites of political legitimation, philosophy and practice of leadership. In this way, Mujuru and her parties claim relevance by focalising the discourse of gender transformation, and re-inscribing femininity as constituting the essence of clean, efficient and tolerant leadership. The gender of power is strategically re-configured – not only to include Mujuru as a potential political leader but to make her the right candidate for political leadership. Power is re-imagined, re-gendered and re-distributed in ways that moralise Mujuru's potential leadership by immoralising the prevailing male-centric system. Gender inclusivity is not only vouched for – it is also given a political identity – it is bound up with the justice of Mujuru's 'female' leadership.

Gender discourse in *BUILD* and *IDEA* expropriates the liberal democratic inclinations for newness, modernity, transformation and enterprise in its associations of ZANU PF's male-centric politics with a fatal absence of imagination and capacity for change. The idea of a female presidency is thus re-imagined as a break from the politics of the old epitomised by ZANU PF and the crisis it has presided over. In the same vein, femininity is associated with newness, advancement and inclusivity.

Chapter Six focuses on the discourse of (sustainable) transitions in ZANU PF's 2018 election text *The People's Manifesto* (2018). The chapter reflected on how, despite the political and economic ramifications of the 2017 coup, the post-Mugabe era is framed and represented in the manifesto as a form of progress. In this manifesto, anecdotes of "restoring legacy" and the imagery of a "new dispensation" create and sustain notions of a new political order whose relevance is strategically built around the rejection of the old one. Reading the 'New

Dispensation' and 'Second Republic' as conceptual metaphors that cognitively reconfigure perceptions of the world, l explored how ZANU PF's strategic narrative provides insight into post-2000 and post-Mugabe politics of development, ideology and power. The chapter displayed how rhetorical aspects of style and discourse, especially metaphors of newness, discursively re-imagined the 2017 coup as a legitimate form of transition that guaranteed transformation. The chapter unravelled the (post) political in the 'New Dispensation', drawing on how processes and results of transition are grounded on representations and imaginaries. Analyses of the metaphor and discourse of the 'New Dispensation' exposed ambivalences at the heart of constructions of ZANU PF and Zimbabwe post-Mugabe and how the meanings of transition and succession are contingent upon the party's hegemonic interests and sustained by language.

The discourse of newness in *The People's Manifesto* reflects the workings of rhetoric as the Zimbabwean transition is sketched and concretised in discourse with little to no correspondences to reality on the ground. Reality is manufactured in (and through) discourse. So, while it is common knowledge that ZANU PF remained in power with previous political identity (minus Mugabeism) intact, the party deploys the metaphor of the 'new dispensation' to map associations of change, transformation and newness onto the party's political philosophy and practice under Mnangagwa. An analysis of the names, labels and brands used to visually map the 'new dispensation' framed through movement of meanings along a chain of discourses without much change reflected a continuity in the party's use of discourse for its strategic construction of history. This political use of language is much akin to the Third Chimurenga (revolution) propaganda of the early 2000s when ZANU PF raved up its publicity mechanisms to saturate public opinion with a narrative of progress in its economic recovery 'operations', while the reality on the ground reflected a steady cataclysm of the economy. The chapter demonstrated how ZANU PF's discursive reconstructions of succession and transition are caught up in a web of tensions, challenges, dilemmas, and opportunities as temporalities mutate in response to sustainable development needs that guarantees the party's political longevity.

Implications for linguistic approach to political texts and development

The main hypothesis in this study was that understanding political and public policy in Zimbabwe has long been a preserve of quantitative and social science disciplines. Knowledge resulting from strictly disciplinary methods is limited and limiting. I argued, that using

qualitative or quantitative designed methods, attempts to rigorously observe and/or measure a phenomena and interactions so as "to provide a descriptive or predictive model that explains the events observed" (ISEM, 2018) does not account for the cognitive processes and intention to influence. While policies may have measurable processes, goals and ends, part of their nature which involves drafting for public circulation, is a narrative and rhetorical process. Within this broader context, I favoured a CDA and narrative analysis method to interrogate the interplay between political texts as a narrative genre and politics in the context of contested notions of what constitutes a sustainable economic development agenda for the nation. CDA and narrative theories by Fairclough and Fairclough (2012); Fairclough (1992; 2001; 2003); Riessman, 2005 and others provided an analytical framework to understand the discursive effects of rhetoric mediated through various elements of narrative styles related to epistemological contexts at hand.

The goal was to understand the interplay of meaning and purpose, to re-think ways of knowing some of the ways in which the Zimbabwean crisis influences policies and the state and nature of political discourse on sustainable development in Zimbabwe. A discourse-oriented approach to policy illuminated the politically symbolic meanings of the crisis as framed by political parties, and how the semiotics of textuality enable the policies to contest for influence. Attention to discourse shed light on how, beyond issues of feasibility and chances of success, the political 'success' of policies rested on the aesthetic discursivity of their discourse structures and that political players invested a great deal in ensuring their texts' discursive appeal. The study also revealed that discourse mediated political identities in a context characterised by unprecedented polarisation. In this finding, part of what (un)makes policy involved its relationality – that is, its becoming as a conscious effort to engage or respond to other policies in the public sphere. In this light, a discourse, language and content analysis of political texts revealed how political identities in contemporary Zimbabwe are formed, deformed, continue and are interrupted and (in the case of Mugabe and Mugabeism) rested, depending, of course, on how they (in)convenience the party's public impressions of efficiency.

As the lifeblood of the political identities, language was seen to function at multiple levels and layers (especially in opposition political discourse) as a mechanism of contesting, acquiring, maintaining and sustaining power. As the medium of discourse, language was seen to occupy an important place in re-configuring sites of legitimacy especially in the context of crisis. Borrowing from Fairclough's (1989) hermeneutics of textualised discourse, I observed that part of claiming legitimacy in the context of Zimbabwe's fluid public sphere involved the

systematic and interested deconstruction of conventionalised sites of legitimacy, especially liberation struggle heroism. As Fairclough (1989: 26) argues:

> In seeing language as discourse and as social practice, one is committing oneself not just to analysing texts, nor just to analysing processes of production and interpretation, but to analysing the relationship between texts, processes, and their social conditions, both the immediate conditions of the situational context and the more remote conditions of institutional and social structures.

In this light, I noted how anti-hegemonic policy texts particularly the MDC's *JUICE* and Mujuru's *IDEA* and *BUILD* use discourse to unsettle normative constructions of history that legitimate ZANU PF hegemony by delegitimising the opposition on the basis of liberation war credentials. In the same vein, beyond destabilising ZANU PF's sites of power, discourse is deployed by the opposition to foreground the justice of inclusive criteria of determining political legitimacy. *IDEA* and *BUILD* were seen to not share the MDC's vehement reorganisation of sites of political legitimacy. Instead, the texts invoked Mujuru's liberation struggle heroism to accentuate her qualification, but go further to foreground her femininity and its stereotypical dispositions of temperance, honesty and compassion, to stress her difference.

However, although CDA and narrative analysis acknowledge the role of discourse in organising the world and illuminate the workings of transformative agency and power, the study notes that discourse is just one among many other significant modes and mechanisms of politicking. It is therefore important, while noting the immense contributions of a CDA approach to Zimbabwean policy analysis, to mention its limitations. In narratology studies, the meaning of a "text is always indeterminate, open-ended and interactional" (Denzin, 2008: 32). This opens up texts to diverse interpretations and to make meanings elastic. So, although discourse analysis is critical in understanding some of the structures of power shaping the Zimbabwean crisis and how reality is discursively constructed for political purposes, multiple readings can come up with equally multiple interpretations of texts and their meanings.

Shaftritz, Layne and Borick assert that approaches to public policy studies vary greatly and the knowledge they proffer is susceptible to disciplinary bias because "each academic discipline has its own biased bag of tricks with which to view the public policy world" (2005: viii). By virtue of its concern with the people's welfare, challenges and opportunities in addressing social problems, public policy is inherently an interdisciplinary phenomenon that requires multi-and-trans-disciplinary methodological and theoretical approaches to better understand its

various forms and shapes in crisis situations. As Fairclough (2000: 226) explains, "[d]iscourse analysis ought ideally to be an interdisciplinary undertaking". In this regard, insight from other cultural enquiries, political science, history, philosophy and economics created invaluable context for the analysis of the textualisation of policy in political texts. Economic data and historical records, for instance, were instrumental in my observation that certain discourse-mediated information about Mugabe's ouster post-coup ZANU PF texts was factually false. This allowed me to critically approach the discourses of the militarised transition, particularly the paradox of newness, with prior knowledge about its hegemonic intentions. I was, therefore, able to link the discursive effects of ZANU PF's post-Mugabe manifesto to the urgencies of restoring legitimacy, given the coup connotations attendant on Mnangagwa's ascension to power on metaphorical and literal 'back' of the army-led "Operation Restore Legacy".

In contrast to scientific definitions and normative representations in policy making, knowledge is not universal but is embedded in specific cultures, that is, institutionalised practices of decision-making and means of legitimation. Technocratic knowledge used to explain, evaluate and justify positions and expert knowledge emphasise 'usable knowledge' yet in increasingly polarised political environments scientific definitions and ideological inclinations transcend universal meanings and definitions of terms. Universal validity and expert consensus are insufficient criteria on which to base feasible policy solutions because crises are characterised by conflicting interests, normative dilemmas and high levels of uncertainty which seek to legitimate and influence power. Given the similarity of political practices in especially liberation movement-ruled countries in southern Africa such as Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Botswana etc, the findings of this study are important in understanding how political legitimacy is (re)constructed and contested in the backdrop of poor economic delivery. The study highlighted how policy pronouncements characteristically operate in obscured and complicated relations in which conditions of uncertainty are simplified and data used strategically or symbolically to legitimate policy solutions that are framed on overtly political grounds. Despite the high level of erudition, many policies fall short on the ground due to the complicated relations between discourse and power. Action-policy relations are affected and effected by the interplay of institutional processes and actors' representation of different forms of expertise (knowledge) and interests. Normative discourses and 'standard' definitions of crisis compete throughout policy processes and obscure inherent ideological pitfalls, policy challenges, strategies and peripheral principles and goals.

Further studies may zoom in on individual political establishments and trace the historical trajectory of their political textualities. It would be interesting, for instance, to understand how discourse reflects shifting ideologies and political practices of the mainstream MDC party as it undergoes several splits in its young life.

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