



The Journal of the Britain Zimbabwe Society

2020 BZS Chair's Report

BZS Chair Kathy Mansfield Higgins looks back over a busy but unusual year

The 2020 AGM on 10 October was a Zoom event, which allowed more people than usual to attend. It was very good to see old and new friends.

2019/2020 started well – but then everything changed.

1. Research Day 2020

Planning for this was going well and continued up to March 2020. We had a venue – in Oxford, at our usual venue, St Antony's College, and thoughts of changing location to London. We had a theme: *Migration: People, Ideas and the Creative Arts*. We had interesting people committed to speak – some paying their own fares from Zimbabwe and southern Africa. The Research Day team was steaming ahead with all enthusiasm.

2. Strategic Planning meeting, London: 12 January, 2020

The last Strategic Plan had run its course and members present developed SP 2020 – 2025. It has a trimmed-down Mission Statement and a set of five Strategic Objectives disaggregated from this. An additional objective focussing on financial viability and independence was designed. So, from this optimistic start we went into 2020. Then COVID-19 struck and the Research Day was postponed until 2021.

3. Our first Executive Meeting by Zoom: 11 July

The meeting followed up the issue of falling attendances at the Research Day and BZS's static membership – which Pauline Dodgson-Katiyo raised in her 2019 outgoing report. This brings me to the next point.

4. Emphasis on attracting new members and new interest in the BZS.

One way of doing this – perhaps the only way – is to upgrade our social media presence. We now have a small media sub-committee – which met recently:

- Philip Weiss – Webpage and, with Rori Masiane, the Facebook page.
- Pelagia Nyamayaro – our Instagram account
- Rori Masiane – the WhatsApp chat group.

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There is a Twitter account that does not function. All these efforts to have a social media presence require people – volunteers among us – to manage the various platforms.

An outcome of the meeting was that we agreed that th should reference each other so that we have a joined-up media presence. An issue has been there are two Facebook pages with the same name. They look very different. Ours has the same photograph of Chilo Gorge as the Webpage. Our link is: <https://www.facebook.com/britainzimbabwe>

If we are serious about wanting to engage with as wide a community of people as possible, we must up our game on these platforms. If we do not, the BZS could simply wither away – as the Executive withers away ... not to put too fine a point on it!

Improving our social media presence is a project in motion – the web page and Facebook and Instagram need content – please help the Society by contributing interesting features, news and thoughts.

5. Race, Diversity and Representation

These concepts were also on the agenda for the 11 July meeting. We were clear that the BZS is not an activist

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organisation, but want to bring together our community, creative and artistic, and scholarly initiatives, and to use our social media platforms to do this.

The future

Research Day 2021

We will progress with planning for this as a multi-media, dual-function event, using both physical and virtual possibilities depending on the COVID-19 situation.

Outreach and strategic relationships initiatives

I will mention three that have involved some of us over the last few months:

- With the Caine Prize for Literature (see page 15)
- With the Africa Centre
- With the Business Council for Africa, through Knox Chitiyo – who sits on its Board. As well as a commercial investment arm it has a philanthropic

arm: it will donate up to £5k for an educational project/individual. We are looking at working up a proposal to submit to the BCA for a Zimbabwean project. (See page 6).

6. Our journal, the Zimbabwe Review

This continues to go from strength to strength – thanks to Jenny Vaughan and all contributors.

A question: should we save money on postage by making it available digitally? We will ask you again if you would like to receive it this way.

7. My most sincere thanks ...

to the small group of Executive Members who keep the Society going. To all of us – please do your bit to support the Society:

1. Recruit at least one new member to the BZS this year and
2. Use our social media platforms and post items!

Kathy Mansfield Higgins, October 2020

Reporting Zimbabwe: journalist Paul Davey on why the UK media seems so often to overlook Zimbabwe

Using social media, as emphasised by our Chair, Kathy Mansfield Higgins, is vital to raising awareness about Zimbabwe and Zimbabweans in the UK and in the rest of the world. But we do need to understand how the media works – and how to make it work to bring issues we care about to the traditional mainstream media. Journalist Paul Davey describes how the media works.

So often, something important happens in Zimbabwe – and the UK press appears to pay no attention to it. Social media pages and groups are filled with anguished cries of Zimbabweans asking ‘Why hasn’t the BBC or Sky covered this story?’

It seems important to us – but news space and time is finite and it is distributed on the basis of its consumers. No paper or TV station is going to give much time or space to a story that is unlikely to attract the most possible attention and engagement of their established market.

To the Western media, Zimbabwe is much the same as Myanmar or Armenia: it’s a long way off and, except when there’s a dramatic war on, what happens there is unlikely to be of much interest to their readers. This is especially true when, like Zimbabwe, it has been off the tourism must-see destinations for a couple of decades.

Sure, there’s the it-used-to-be-a-colony element, but even then, it has largely fallen off the radar and only shows up as a blip when there’s a coup or something similar. Editors see it as a post-colonial minefield, riven with complexities that they fear don’t easily chew down to easily digestible news.

Even then, when it does make the media as a news story, it has to compete with other far more popular topics

– Brexit, COVID-19, the Royals, even the soaps and *Strictly*. For the popular media – the tabloids – those are the stories people in the UK want to consume. They are what draw the advertisers in.

A parochial press

Arguably there’s a greater likelihood of an international story breaking into the broadsheets, but even then the UK press is more or less parochial. But once the front page has been filled with a story about Brexit, and another about COVID, then on the other pages there might be a bit of space left for scant coverage about events in a far off country – and it becomes a toss-up between the sad story about a lost penguin in Argentina (people love stories about penguins), a story about a hijacked cargo boat off the coast of Somalia (people love stories about pirates) or, just possibly, a story about government corruption in a Southern African country – though some readers, they realise, might have family living there).

Wired into complexity

Because our country is of interest to us as Zimbabweans, we’re wired into various social media networks, peer groups, etc, and we have a grasp of the details and perhaps the complexity of the story that the rest of the world just doesn’t have. And our story is very complicated, riven with the ‘ah buts’, the ‘what ifs’ and the ‘if it hadn’t been for’. And that’s before we get to our personal biases – and we all have those!

Zimbabwe’s situation cannot be explained quickly and easily. In the media, the light and shade that we understand has, for brevity’s sake, to be distilled down to the

most basic of elements; ‘our’ story gets stripped of the very elements that make it ‘our’ story.

In fact, even though we don’t see it, a lot of reporting does happen. All the world’s wire services have people on the ground either in Zimbabwe or close by. They record, they report and they put out thousands of words, pictures and hours of footage – it’s all there, available to all subscribing news outlets, all painstakingly refined for factual accuracy through the wire services’ strict editorial filtration systems.

Every news story from anywhere in the world hangs by a thread because at any moment something bigger could come along – like the time I spent the whole day outside the Labour Party headquarters in London, certain that a story would make front page of our UK newspapers. Then the news broke that Brad and Angelina had split up and most of the photographers and video journalists and reporters had gone home. The next day my wasted hours of waiting for a picture had been relegated to the inside pages. My picture? Never used.

Getting the story out there

So how do we get Zimbabwe’s story out there?

Occasionally, there’s a great feature story from Africa in which human interest does break through. This is usually because it has some sort of ‘Oooh’ or ‘Ahhhh’ factor. An example I can think of right now, the *Jerusalem Dance Challenge**, is a story that just begs to be featured and would, I suspect, do well, especially online, throughout the West – it just needs a decent gust of wind behind it from a good commissioning editor somewhere, some beautifully crafted journalism and it’s bound to get picked up.

But it won’t tell the world about the complexities of the Zimbabwe situation, and those complexities will at best

be explained in ignored reports on the wires that live only a short few hours before something else replaces them.

How do we combat this?

The short answer

The short answer to the problem is social media. And that’s not second-best. Let’s not forget that for many people these days social media is where they get all their news – papers and TV are so ‘last decade’.

We must use it as much and as often as we can – not just talking to ourselves, but talking to the world, explaining the complexities where and when we can. That’s important because, if you want the traditional media to cover Zimbabwean stories, do remember that all news organisations keep several sets of eyes on social media.

But as much as they trawl Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, they do so through a very sceptical eye.

With work, you can get your stories out there. Like and share as much as you can – but be warned, make sure it’s backed up with evidence: if there’s any doubt, and a post looks like it might not be credible, it gets ignored and someone else’s post from somewhere else will become of greater interest.

Paul Davey is a Zimbabwe-born London-based freelance video journalist, writer and press photographer.

An example of Paul’s work can be seen in his coverage of the 31 August demonstraton outside the Zimbabwe Embassy: https://youtu.be/K5KZ8zinJkw?fbclid=IwAR3nPCtaQ7Yy1PEBL8ZIxQCKIGPucso-6vQSxFKyevHG5CzsoSaAtxZY_hA

** See: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/07/nomcebo-the-voice-behind-jerusalem-south-africa-global-hit>*

Repaying a Debt: Sunanda Ray and Farai Madzimbamuto on bringing reparation funding back to support African universities

Discussion around reparations usually entails the acknowledgement that most of Europe and North America became wealthy as a result of the slave trade: the capture and sale of enslaved people and through their forced labour in commercial farming, and the sale of their children.

‘Reparations’ involves compensating the descendants of enslaved people for the injustices carried out against them. It also recognises that, when slavery was abolished, governments compensated owners and shareholders, not the enslaved people themselves. In 1833 the British government took out a loan from the Rothschild banking syndicate to pay a total of £20m, or the equivalent of 40 per cent of the national budget, to more than 44,000 enslavers in the Caribbean and in Britain.

Many ordinary Britons benefited from being shareholders, owning portions of enslaved persons. British taxpayers paid

back this loan over 180 years – ending only in 2015. The Danish, Swedish and Dutch states similarly paid millions in reparations while, perversely, the Haitian government was forced to pay France more than 200 million francs compensation for its people rebelling against enslavement, concluding only in 1947¹.

Database

A vast database has been established at The Centre for the Study of the Legacies of British Slave-ownership, University College, London, which has facilitated research that demonstrates the extent to which the slave trade shaped modern Britain^{2,3}.

Slavery financed the Industrial Revolution, along with the building of major cities, ports and institutions².

The owners of slave plantations and other colonial enterprises gained prestige and status though making huge

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donations to leading cultural institutions, such as the National Gallery, the Royal Academy, the Tate, the Victoria and Albert and the British Museum, and to renowned universities. The Bank of England and other high street banks (RBS, Barclays and Lloyds), railway companies, insurance companies and the Royal Mail flourished through their connections with the profits derived from the colonies and the slave trade^{2,3}.

Black Lives Matter campaigns

The Black Lives Matter campaigns have sharpened debates about restorative justice and the responsibility of beneficiaries of the slave trade. A few businesses and institutions that gained fabulous wealth from slavery and British reparations to shareholders are now looking for ways to give back to black and minority ethnic (BAME) communities through more inclusive and diverse employment policies and investment in BAME community projects⁴.

Some of the more progressive ideas are to support educational institutions in countries where enslaved people created wealth for Britain. Glasgow University has recently established a partnership with the University of West Indies to fund a joint centre for development research. The £20m it has paid is approximately, in today's money, what it gained from the Scottish slave trade and plantations of tobacco and cotton in the 18th and 19th centuries⁵. In 2017, All Souls College at Oxford paid a £100,000 grant to a college in Barbados and set up an annual scholarship for Caribbean students, in recognition of funding from a wealthy slave owner used to build a library named after him in 1710⁴.

What about Africa?

So what about countries in Africa that were colonised by Europeans and had their natural resources extracted to fuel the industrialisation of Europe, at the expense of the African people?

The people of Zimbabwe, whose land was occupied by Cecil Rhodes, were not slaves but were forced to work in mines and commercial farms to pay government taxes. They did not benefit from the wealth they created and were impoverished by colonialism.

Belgium is only beginning to acknowledge the devastation caused by King Leopold II in what is now known as the Democratic Republic of Congo⁶.

In southern Africa, the riches plundered by Cecil Rhodes and his cronies went to glorify the universities in Britain and South Africa but did not develop university education for the majority of Africans or their descendants who provided the labour and often their lives to extract the gold, diamonds and other precious metals from the earth.

As Simukai Chigudu pointed out earlier this year, the glorification of Cecil Rhodes can be witnessed at Oxford University: in the Rhodes statue looking down at Oriel College, in the famous Rhodes Scholarship which hand-picks a few of the brightest students from around the

world to study at these exalted centres of excellence.

These scholars are not obliged to return to contribute their knowledge or skills in the development of their disciplines in their parent countries. The praise for the generosity of Rhodes to these universities leaves unacknowledged the exploitation of African labour and theft of land from which his wealth was built. Attempts to get the statue removed through the Rhodes Must Fall protests have not yet succeeded because Oriel College risks losing £100 million in donor gifts from wealthy alumni⁷.

A need for restorative justice

Discussing reparations requires acknowledging the need for restorative justice for people of Africa and to bring some of the funding for educational institutions back to African universities. Instead of scholarships that take the best students away from the continent, investment that creates tertiary education opportunities for more students would help to develop the academic workforce, university departments and their programmes, as well as the skills, knowledge, talents and creativity of individual students and their educators.

Because funders worry about corruption, having accountability mechanisms and demonstratable good governance could be conditions for universities to get funding. In recognition of Rhodes's exploitation the former Southern and Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, students from Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi could be funded to attend universities in South Africa, which have stronger institutional governance than their home countries. But the aim must also be to help build stronger institutions in those home countries.

In Health Professions' education there are several examples of development collaborations between universities in high income countries and lower-income ones, which can advance scientific knowledge of improving health outcomes. Most opportunities get snapped up by South African universities because they have the administrative resources to write and cost grant applications, and governance structures and established reputations that funders consider reliable. If twinning arrangements and other forms of capacity building for less resourced countries were written into applications as part of reparations, these would support development more internationally.

A good model for this was created by the Primafamed Family Medicine twinning project. In this, eight Departments of Family Medicine of South African universities, in partnership with the University of Ghent, were twinned with training sites in African countries with newer programmes, such as Botswana, Malawi and Namibia. The Royal College of General Practitioners in UK has actively contributed to capacity-building in some of these countries by facilitating networking and 'South-South strategies' through South African universities⁸. The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RSCI) has similarly collaborated in the establishment and flourishing of the

College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA) with support from Irish Aid since 2008⁹. This collaboration supports the training and assessment of surgeons and sub-specialist surgeons in 14 countries of the region (from Sudan to Namibia), as well as the use of e-learning resources and building research and quality assurance cultures that will lead to improved health outcomes and patient safety in the region.

Several other specialist medical colleges (for example anaesthetics, obstetrics and gynaecology, paediatrics) have also been set up, but are hindered by lack of sufficient funding and administrative support. One way of compensating former colonies for their loss of wealth would be for the British Royal Colleges of Medicine (and others) to support such initiatives in Africa.

In conclusion

In conclusion, partnerships and collaborations that recognise the importance of restorative justice and reparation are essential for development and strengthening of institutions in former colonies of British and other European nations. The payments proposed for white commercial farmers in Zimbabwe may be seen as similar to compensating shareholders, plantation owners and slave traders, rather than compensating farm workers and communal farmers for their losses.

Development of a nation cannot work like this; appreciation of the interconnectedness and interdependency of humanity enables us all to rise up. An example is given

here of how reparations could facilitate growth of the health sector in East, Central and Southern Africa. The same principles could be applied for other disciplines, cultural and social institutions.

To move forward, knowing the history of how we came to be where we are is necessary, but acting to redress the inequalities created during these relationships is essential.

Footnotes

1. K Manjapra. How the long fight for slavery reparations is slowly being won. *The Guardian* 6 October 2020
2. P Gopal. Much of Britain's wealth is built on slavery. So why shouldn't it pay reparations? *New Statesman* 23 April 2014.
3. M Francois. It's not just Cambridge University – all of Britain benefited from slavery. *The Guardian* 2 May 2019.
4. K Rawlinson. Lloyd's of London and Greene King to make slave trade reparations. *The Guardian* 18 June 2020.
5. S Carrell. Glasgow University to pay £20m in slave trade reparations. *The Guardian* 23 August 2020.
6. CD Banona & J Sepulchre. Belgium – moving from regrets to reparations. *Human Rights Watch* 30 June 2020. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/06/30/belgium-moving-regrets-reparations>
7. S Chigudu. As one of Oxford's few black professors, let me tell you why I care about Rhodes. *The Guardian* 12 June 2020.
8. De Maeseneer J, Twagirumukiza M. The contribution of primary health care to global health. *Br J Gen Pract.* 2010;60(581):875-876. doi:10.3399/bjgp10X543998
9. RCSI/COSECSA Collaborative Programme. <https://www.rcsi.com/surgery/global-surgery/our-work/cosecsa> Accessed 12 Nov 2020.

Sunanda Ray and Farai Madzimbamuto are doctors who have worked in Zimbabwe Botswana and Britain for more than 30 years, mainly in public sector health services. They have had a longstanding involvement in health and human rights and are now working for the University of Botswana Faculty of Medicine.

A New and Vital Presence: Kathy Mansfield describes the work of the Zimbabwe Theatre Academy



The Zimbabwe Theatre Academy (ZTA) was established in 2017 by Lloyd Nyikadzino. Lloyd is also the Coordinator in Zimbabwe for the Zimbabwe Centre of the International Theatre Institute (ITI)

<https://www.iti-worldwide.org/>

This new and vibrant presence on the Zimbabwean arts scene has a mission: 'We are dedicated to contributing to the professionalisation of theatre in Zimbabwe through training, research, mentorship, performances and collaborations.'

Sustainable theatre training

Lloyd Nyikadzino, with Programmes Manager Teddy Mangawa, aims to offer professional and sustainable theatre training for talented young people who face the challenge of being accepted by the mainstream theatre training institutions of higher learning. The monopoly of theatre training at universities places an academic entry qualification burden

on artists who want to couple their talents with modern theatrical skills but lack the academic requirements of universities, and often the fees. The Academy was created to enable regular long-term training, collaborations, co-creation, knowledge and skills sharing.

The Academy's primary focus is to identify talent with potential and provide specialised training and experience, strengthening the skills of young and or emerging theatre professionals, so generating new contemporary Zimbabwean theatre-makers. This, in turn, offers a forum through which community can explore, re-describe and celebrate social issues, using theatre as a safe vehicle. By revisiting and re-describing community mythologies, theatre offers communities an opportunity constantly to redefine their value systems.

The Zimbabwe Theatre Academy offers an alternative means of uplifting lives through providing a unique outlet for youth and community to demonstrate

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their amazing stories and dreams – giving equal priority across the gender divide and any other form of marginalisation. ZTA has become a vehicle for nurturing and amplifying new and old voices. Free expression is at the centre of any vibrant democracy.

The Mitambo International Theatre Festival

The ZTA has also launched the Mitambo International Theatre Festival, which had its second outing in October 2020 (on line because of COVID restrictions, with virtual performances and presentations).

The Business Council for Africa – a BZS partnership: Knox Chitiyo introduces a link with the philanthropic work of a body whose remit is investment in Africa

The Business Council for Africa (BCA) dates back to 1957. It is a UK-based international organisation whose core remit is the promotion of investment in Africa.

The BCA has hosted numerous high-profile Africa-themed events in the UK and in Africa, is highly networked, and has affiliates on the continent. In 2018 the BCA was divided into two separate but linked organisations. Invest Africa is the commercial part, hosting events and also doing research and development (R and D) work. The other half is the BCA, which has repurposed to African philanthropy. I am currently on the BCA Board of Directors and was formerly an Acting Chair.

A renewal

In 2020 the BCA underwent renewal, including the appointment of a new Chair – Arnold Ekpe, an international financier. Arnold was formerly CEO of Ecobank West Africa and has worked with the World Bank.

The main remit of BCA philanthropy is education, and it is currently giving financial support to two initiatives in Africa. One, under the aegis of the East Africa Association (Kenya), is assisting a Vocational Training College there. The other is support for a talented University student in Ghana.

The BCA has some funds available and, in August, at the last Board meeting, it was agreed that the BCA would support any approved project up to a maximum of £5,000. I had previously suggested that Zimbabwe be considered, given the extreme hardships being faced there. At the August meeting, the BCA Board indicated that they might consider a proposal to fund a Zimbabwean educational project if one was brought to the Board's attention.

The BCA agreed to keep the 'educational' parameters fairly broad, and these encompass everything from school to University to vocational to health education etc.

The possibility of the BZS being a conduit for a Zimbabwe funding application to the BCA was discussed at the October BZS Executive meeting, with the Executive

Lloyd and Teddy are building up this socially engaged organisation. I am a member of the Board of Trustees, whose role is to guide and offer wise counsel to the remarkable group of young people, whose optimism and hands-on work in their troubled country provide a stark counterpoint to the picture of unending misery we are used to.

Find them on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pg/zimtheatreacademy/posts/>

Kathy Mansfield Higgins is Chair of the Britain Zimbabwe Society.

agreeing that this could be an opportunity worth pursuing through our networks and partners. We subsequently alerted UK and Zimbabwe-based organisations to this, and invited the submission of Zimbabwe educational project proposals.

The BZS shortlisted the most promising applications and decided on a final nominee. We will liaise with the nominee about their proposal, which I will present to BCA colleagues ahead of the BCA Board meeting in December.

It is worth noting that BCA funding applications are run on a competitive basis, and other BCA Board members are likely to be sending in proposals pursuant to their African countries of interest. There is thus no guarantee that a Zimbabwe proposal will be accepted by the BCA Board, and it is important to manage expectations. This notwithstanding, it is still worth trying, and we have to let boldness be our friend.

A potential opportunity

More importantly this is a potential opportunity for the BZS not just to make a link with the BCA but also to make a real world, real-time, positive difference in Zimbabwean lives, by 'helping the helpers'.

It is also useful for the BZS 'brand' that, when the opportunity allows, we occasionally engage in limited developmental initiatives in-country in Zimbabwe, through partnerships. The precedents are there: in 2011–13, the BZS partnered with the Council for Assisting Refugee Academics (CARA) to establish a Virtual Learning Centre at the University of Zimbabwe, and subsequently the BZS has partnered with Chipso Chung and other arts and culture luminaries regarding the arts in Zimbabwe.

I am very grateful to BZS colleagues for their support in this venture and also to the various organisations which expressed an interest. The final outcome – either yes or nay from the BCA – remains as yet untitled.

But we shall do our best. Zimbabwe deserves no less.

Knox Chitiyo is President of the BZS. He introduces a second partnership, with the Caine Prize for Africa, on page 15 of this issue.

The proposals

Outlined below are the four proposals submitted to the BZS Executive from which a choice was made for presentation to the BCA. The proposal chosen – with plenty of discussion and some difficulty – was that from the Zimbabwe Health Training Support (ZHTS).

Zimbabwe Health Training Support (ZHTS)

We are a UK-based group of nurses, doctors and health professionals who support fellow health workers in Zimbabwe. Set up in 2006 by Zimbabweans in the UK, the charity provides training and support for nurses, doctors, physiotherapists, radiographers, pharmacists and other community health workers.

ZHTS responds to specific statements of need by Zimbabwean organisations with whom we have strong links, such as the Universities of Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Association of Church Hospitals and Ingutsheni hospital. ZHTS is currently working in the following three important areas:

• Training mental health workers

Since 2014, ZHTS has been supporting the mental health training of nurses working in the major psychiatric hospitals in Zimbabwe.

• Supporting family medicine

Family doctors are critical to Zimbabwe's health system but, until now, there has been no specific training programme for doctors who want to develop a career in family medicine. ZHTS is helping to change that.

• Building a skills database

ZHTS has been building up a database of health professionals in the UK who can support their fellow workers in Zimbabwe. We have supported the training in Zimbabwe of 200 midwives, 450 mental health workers and 50 paediatricians and nurses. We are particularly proud of our mental health and research skills training in Binga Hospital and Mpilo Hospital. Since COVID-19 we have been supporting grandmothers and child-led homes in Mbare, Harare, with groceries and maintaining our strong links with health care professionals and the Ministry of Health in Zimbabwe.

ZHTS is seeking funds to build on the delivery of Mental and Sexual Health workshops with healthcare workers and vulnerable groups in Zimbabwe. The project will also develop training materials for scale up of these workshops beyond the proposed communities. See: <http://zhts.org.uk/>

Kufunda Village

Kufunda is a learning centre in Zimbabwe.

We are learning our way into what it takes to build healthy and vibrant community – exploring and seeking to live what we believe to be possible, perhaps living the future today.

• Healing with the land

We are committed to regenerating the land and fostering healthy and sustainable relationship with land and natural environment. Since 2019 we have started working with Biodynamic Farming. We grow our food in such a way that we continue to enrich and improve the soil with the vision to leave the soil in a better and better condition year on year.

We are well on the way with our Agroforestry pilot with a bold vision of eventually planting 10,000 trees in a syntropic farming system that works with a diversity of trees (fruit, nuts, indigenous, and biomass trees). We are learning to integrate our

small cow herd – seeking to increase the herd, sell the males for meat and increase our stock of females.

All of this is done in collaboration with our Waldorf-inspired School and together with parents and nearby farmers – so we can grow and learn together.

• Healing in community

Core to Kufunda's work is learning how to become stronger together. We have worked for the past 18 years with rural communities using participatory approaches to help communities identify what they most care about and find the way to move towards this together.

We support communities heal the social fabric, acknowledging and using the wealth and resources they have; and enabling communities to become strong, empowered agents of their own destiny.

Kufunda is seeking funds to develop a training process and accompaniment programme for women facilitators to initiate and host women's empowerment circles in their own communities. See: <https://www.kufunda.org>

The Stevenage Kadoma Link Association (SKLA)

The Stevenage Kadoma Link Association (SKLA) was formed in 1989 with the twinning of the towns of Kadoma in Zimbabwe and Stevenage in the United Kingdom.

One of the many fruits of the Link is a scheme for the payment of school fees for disadvantaged scholars who show great potential for primary and secondary school education. This has helped many school students since its inception in 1996. A number of these have done so well that they passed A-levels and qualified for university or other forms of tertiary education.

The SKLA applied for BCA funding because the school fees scheme has never had the resources or systems in place to continue support beyond A-level. This means that, in some cases, potential achievements and career openings have been denied, and the Kadoma Stevenage Link Association (KSLA) – the Kadoma partners of the link – is seeking to remedy this by establishing an income-generating poultry-rearing project.

The Association is seeking funds to assist the Link's High School beneficiaries with tertiary education tuition after successful completion of their A-level studies. See: <https://www.facebook.com/StevenageKadomaLinkAssociation/>

Budiriro Trust

Budiriro Trust is a small UK-registered charity, which has provided scholarships in Zimbabwe since 1967.

The Trust offers scholarships to gifted young people dropping out of education before 'A' Level when they can't afford to pay the school fees for Sixth Form. Scholarships are offered at six nominated low-fee non-government boarding schools, throughout Zimbabwe.

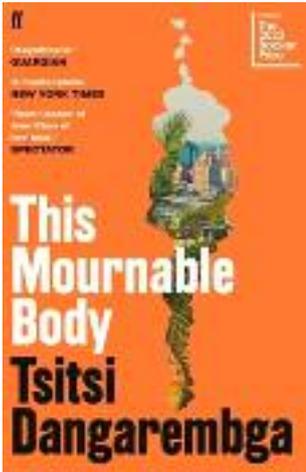
Two co-ordinators, one in Northern and one in Southern Zimbabwe, who act on behalf of the Trust, build relationships with the schools and with students.

Through getting to know students and teachers personally, trustees can be confident in the Budiriro Trust being caring and effective on the ground. Head teachers submit applications for lower sixth scholarships, having selected nominees of higher education potential on the basis of merit and need.

The BCA application is submitted in the hope of helping to fund ongoing work. See: www.budirirotrust.org

Reviews

This Mournable Body: Pat Brickhill on Tsitsi Dangarembga's third novel in a trilogy the first part of which was published in 1988



In an interview with *The Rumpus** website in 2018 Tsitsi Dangarembga said, '... My observation has been that women often find it difficult to mourn themselves and their circumstances. ...

'It is the idea that society foists on women that suffering is a woman's lot. It's beginning to change, but we still have a long way to go. Such women do not know how to mourn their circumstances.

It's a question of being allowed to grieve for yourself.

'One has to see oneself as worthy to be able to grieve about the negative things that happen to one. With depression, one does not wade through but more or less drowns. Grieving and mourning because they are active, pull one through, in spite of being terribly difficult. This, I think, is true whether one is grieving or mourning for oneself, or for someone else. I think that many Zimbabweans have not begun to mourn their situation actively yet. They are still denying it so as not to feel the pain.'

Unsettling

Known for her dramatic opening lines – her first book *Nervous Conditions*, famously began 'I was not sorry when my brother died' – Tsitsi Dangarembga's latest novel, *This Mournable Body*, begins: 'There is a fish in the mirror', which the author describes as 'a nod to Virginia Woolf'. Dangarembga describes her protagonist, Tambudzai, as 'a woman who hates herself'.

Initially I found Dangarembga's use of the second person as a narrative voice jarring, unsettling. Perhaps it made me feel too close to Tambudzai's crumbling life and proximity touched a raw nerve, making me feel defenceless?

I persisted and realised it was more her ability to tear down the barricades people build when they need to hide from a cruel world that disturbed me. Dangarembga has a rare talent for exposing both the beauty and the beast in people and in Zimbabwe.

Ebbing

In the first of the book's three parts, *Ebbing*, Tambu's life is unravelling.

Without a job – having resigned from her copywriting position when she could no longer cope with her white male colleagues passing off her work as their own – she is also under pressure to leave her accommodation at a hostel for young women because she is too old.

That might evoke sympathy, but Tambu seems to have few redeeming qualities. Her behaviour is self-destructive, she is friendless, childless, husbandless and filled with resentment and bitterness.

She makes no attempt to assist Gertie, a young woman from the same hostel who is attacked at a combi rank for being 'skimpily dressed'. Tambu has already picked up a stone to use against Gertie when their eyes meet and the young woman pleads for help. Tambu merely drops the stone.

As the story unfolds the reader learns more about how Tambu's life choices are blighted not only by her insecurities, fears and personal circumstances (despite having all the prerequisites for success, including a university education), but also by living in Zimbabwe – about which her cousin says, 'There can't be a country that hates women as much as this one.'

Mai Manyanga, who lets rooms on her property, recognises something of the trials of the rural areas that Tambu has fled, saying, 'Those people know when God has given them something good. Because those people really know suffering.'

Belonging nowhere

Tambu finds the idea of returning to her family home unthinkable: she remembers it as a place 'where nothing ever glittered or sparkled'. She moves to a dank room at Mai Manyanga's, where the downward trajectory of her life continues. With her savings almost depleted and forced to forage for food in Mai Manyanga's vegetable garden, Tambu ponders whether marriage to one of the old lady's sons might provide her with a solution.

The arrival of Christine, a relative of Mai Manyanga's, and a fellow ex-combatant and friend of Tambu's aunt, brings another dimension to the life that Tambu is living. She delivers an unsolicited gift from Tambu's mother – a bag of mealie meal from the rural areas, a part of her life from which Tambu is deeply alienated.

Tambu belongs nowhere. Her unhappy education at a white school in the Rhodesian times alienated her – both physically and emotionally – from her family but she found no alternative home, even after independence, when the flame of hope grew ever dimmer.

Christine, on the other hand, 'has that layer under her skin that cuts off her outside from her inside ... The women from war are like that, a new kind of being that no one knew before.' There is something in Christine that Tambu both connects with and hides from.

Tambu becomes determined to look for a job, and live where there is no one from her past or present.

Things appear to be turning around when, after she climbs thirteen flights of stairs at the Ministry of Education, Tambu secures a job as a teacher. She spends hours

reading up on biology, a subject she knows little about, but, despite her efforts to succeed, her students nickname her TTG – Tambudzai the Grief and later MG or Mega Grief. Pressure mounts, and Tambu takes to drinking.

Suspended

In the second part of the novel, *Suspended*, Dangarembga subtly tackles the accumulating fallout of emotional scarring of Tambu's upbringing. After a nervous breakdown, we find Tambu in a mental institution where her grip on sanity is challenged even further.

Her alienation increases. Anxiety and undiagnosed post-traumatic stress haunt her. She is seen by the hospital psychiatrist where unable to resist, Tambu speaks 'and ... telling her means confessing to yourself, a thing you do not want to do.' The doctor challenges her, saying, 'I wonder what would happen if you stopped hiding behind the door to the world you have closed.'

Eventually it is decided that Tambu will go and live with Nyasha and her family. They are welcoming, but for Tambu there is no respite. She believes that Nyasha has shown poor judgement by marrying a person, a foreign one, what's more, who has no money. The bag of mealie meal follows her to Nyasha's home and, unable to dispose of it, Tambu hides it at the back of a cupboard.

Nyasha comes across as a sympathetic character, struggling, largely unsupported, to be more than a mother by empowering young women through her workshops. But Tambu's relationship with her is brittle – she worries that Nyasha doesn't like her but at the same time appears critical of Nyasha's life choices.

Tambu says, 'Sometimes forgetting is better than remembering when nothing can be done.'

'Forgetting is harder than you think,' says Nyasha. 'Especially when something can be done. And ought to be.'

Arriving

In a final irony in the third part of the novel, *Arriving*, a chance meeting with Tracey Stephenson, a farmer's daughter she knew from school and the advertising agency, seems to signal a new chapter in her life.

Tambu's luck appears to turn and with a job offer, furnished house as a perk and a regular independent income the reader dares to hope as 'For the first time since you left the hostel ... your heart beats calmly in your chest.'

Then, one evening Tambu arrives home to find the bag of mealie meal from her mother has been discovered where she left it at Nyasha's and delivered to her new house. It is almost an omen as Tambu is unable to consume or discard the gift – in the same way perhaps that she is unable to have a place of acceptance or of belonging in her rural home or in the life she is trying to carve out for herself. The pace of the story quickens and leads to an unexpected ending.

Whether it is a resolution or not I could not tell.

A daily fight

Zimbabwe is my place of belonging so there is much that is familiar in this book. Some people have remarked that it detracts from this story if one has not read the first two books – but I believe *This Mournable Body* can be read on its own – though something of the book could be lost to someone less conversant with Zimbabwe without reading *Nervous Conditions* and *The Book of Not*.

Male characters are deliberately secondary in this novel. Tsitsi Dangarembga describes herself as a feminist, coming from the tradition where 'the personal is political' – she says she likes 'to tell good stories and to look at the interface between the personal and the political'.

There are so many battles that black Zimbabwean women must fight daily, living in a country reeling from the colonial past, repressive present, in an entrenched patriarchal society. *This Mournable Body* makes dramatic progress in capturing this trauma and the breaking points. Another reviewer said simply that it 'An intriguing read which really hits home on how difficult circumstances can push the hyena within to rear its ugly head'.

I couldn't have said it better.

This Mournable Body by Tsitsi Dangarembga 363 pages, Faber and Faber, first published in the US in 2018, in the UK in 2020, ISBN 9780591355525, Paperback

This Mournable Body was on the shortlist for the 2020 Booker Prize, awarded on 19 November. (The winner was Shuggie Bain, by Scottish writer Douglas Stuart.)

**The Rumpus* interview is at: <https://therumpus.net/2018/08/the-rumpus-book-club-chat-with-tsitsi-dangarembga/>

Pat Brickhill is secretary of the BZS

Noel's Story: Pat Brickhill on reviews Kathy Mansfield's account of a life 'both ordinary and extraordinary'

In the current uncertainty it has been a joy to read the heart-warming 'Noel's Story'. It is a gentle, warm and sympathetic, often sad and occasionally happy, story of the resilience and survival of the human spirit in the life of Noel Feldman.

Kathy Mansfield met Noel a few years ago while he was working behind the counter of a farm shop in the

eastern highlands of Zimbabwe.

Over a few years while visiting the area, she became intrigued, as I was, by the story of a life that is both ordinary and extraordinary.

This is an interesting approach to writing – not quite a ghost-written memoir nor a standard biography, as the author paints the background of each scene in Noel's life

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within the historical context of a country also undergoing trauma and transformation.

Birth and early years

The story begins with the birth of a boy on 25 December 1947 in Southern Rhodesia – where racial groups are segregated, similarly to the way they are in South Africa at the time. There are no celebrations: he is born white into a highly dysfunctional alcohol-fuelled Coloured family. When mother and child return home to the Coloured suburb of Barnham Green in Bulawayo all hell breaks loose. The baby is rejected and literally thrown into a rubbish bin, to be retrieved by his mother.

Here the story becomes rather speculative. We learn that the father of the baby is a white policeman from a nearby police station where Noel's mother often fled to escape regular domestic violence.

What the nature of their relationship was we do not discover except that the policeman wanted custody of the child. Noel's unnamed biological father was deported from Southern Rhodesia because of his relationship with Noel's mother.

Noel remained with his mother for a week when a brutal attack left the baby with two broken legs.

Social Welfare intervened and the baby was placed in an orphanage for Coloured boys.

In care

Today, there are ongoing debates about how children rescued from broken families should best be cared for, and which option is most beneficial to their long-term well-being and emotional development. Fostering can be temporary or short-term and thus unsettling, leaving a sense of insecurity. Adoption within an existing nuclear family can leave issues of belonging.

An orphanage might provide a place of safety teaching a child that he or she isn't the only one in that situation. Camaraderie and friendship can develop and peers can become siblings of a different kind. Retired Judge Chris Greenland, who grew up in an orphanage alongside Noel, makes a touching statement in his own autobiography, which is included in Kathy Mansfield's story.

I started collecting heroes very early. My first hero was a four-and-a-half-year old lad, Noel Feldman, whilst we were still at the orphanage.

Tracking down

Noel remained in care for the remainder of his childhood. He would not see or hear from any member of his family until he was 18.

When Noel was leaving primary school and the orphanage, the Mother Superior told him all she knew about his past. Traumatic as that was, we do not learn how the information was received.

After primary school, Noel and the other boys his age were sent to Embakwe Mission School, a secondary boarding school for Coloured boys near Plumtree.

Academically, Noel does not achieve much at school,



although he appears to thrive on other levels. Dr Mansfield writes:

He'd had companionship, he'd had fun, he'd learned to fend for himself, he'd learned to make others laugh, to manipulate, to talk, to sing and mimic and be the centre of attention.

Following a period of conscription, Noel finds that in civilian life he needs an identity card – and for that he needs a birth certificate. And to get that, he must find his mother.

Managing to track down the place where he spent his first week of life, he is met with a savagely hostile reception from the remnants of his family, and learns his mother is living in Arcadia, a Coloured suburb of the capital (then called Salisbury).

He finds his inebriated mother. There is no recognition or emotional reunion. In a heartbreaking passage, the author writes that more than 50 years later as Noel describes the meeting, he cannot stop weeping.

The whole story?

This is a slim book, and by no means the whole of Noel's story. We hear of his working life, even a little of his relationships. We learn how his life was affected by the economic meltdown of the country and his journey to the place where Kathy Mansfield would meet him.

It struck me how much relationships matter, and how in Noel's life without any family, he nevertheless made an impression on the people he met and continues to form enduring bonds.

He has love and gratitude for the beautiful part of the world where he now lives, but his life away from his workplace struck me as very solitary. Whether it is a lonely life it is hard to say. But he is a much-loved person at the farm stall in Nyanga.

A quietly productive life

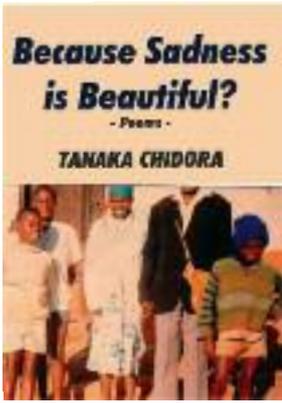
Noel's quietly productive life has been forged from a very bleak start. Kathy Mansfield has opened a window with a tremendous amount of sensitivity and allowed us to look inside.

One slightly negative comment is that I would like to have learned more of Noel the man and had more detail of how he coped with his life. Perhaps Noel has built protective walls, perhaps he has learned that nothing is gained by living in the darkness?

Noel played his best hand with the cards life dealt. Kathy has voiced his story beautifully and here we have an opportunity to hear it.

Noel's Story by Kathy Mansfield, 135 pages, Kunaka Creative Writing, first published 2020. Available as an e-book from Troubador Publishing, eISBN: 9781800468399, £4.99. Softback available from Kathy Mansfield, kathymh@gmail.com, £10 inc.p&p.

New books from and about Zimbabwe

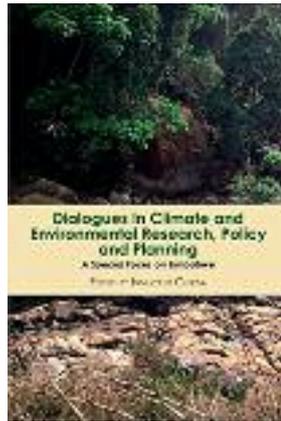


Tanaka Chidora
Because Sadness is Beautiful?
A debut anthology of poetry ‘with the nerve and verve of firework displays’, in which ‘words are just fugitives scuttling away from the recognition of the reader’ (Memory Chirere, University of Zimbabwe). 144 pages, paperback, Mwanaka Media and Publishing, Zimbabwe, 2020, ISBN 9781779295965

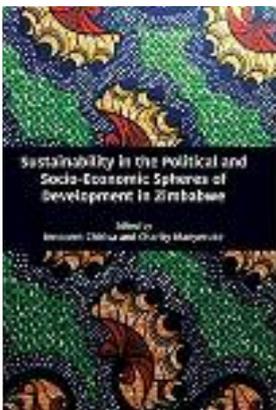
Innocent Chirisa

Dialogues in Climate and Environmental Research, Policy and Planning – A Special Focus on Zimbabwe

Examines climate change on the plateau bordered by the Limpopo and Zambezi, where the evidence is of immense environmental change hitherto unknown including water stress and droughts, heat waves and flooding.



The effects span all sectors from agriculture and forestry to engineering and construction, and demand government prioritisation, whether for mitigation or adaptation, or the ‘do nothing’ option. The contributions explore regional research, gender, disaster preparedness, policy-making, resilience, governance, urban planning, risk management, environmental law, and the food-water-health-energy-climate change nexus. 242 pages, paperback with colour photos, Langaa RPCIG, Cameroon, 2020, ISBN 9789956551163



Innocent Chirisa, Charity Manyeruke (editors)
Sustainability in the Political and Socio-Economic Spheres of Development in Zimbabwe
Starts from the premise that the major determinants of global environmental change are human beings themselves. Managing environment change effectively means understanding the complexity of people.

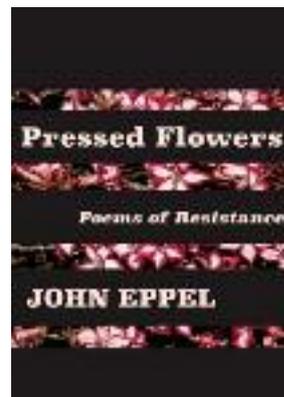
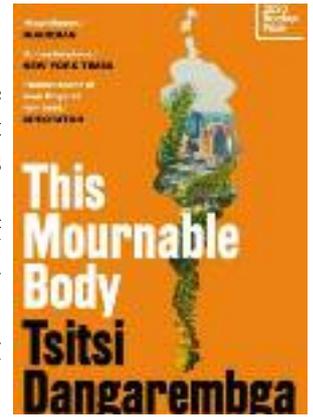
The contributors dissect development as an endangered species needing the key actors involved to rethink their decisions and actions in the interest of more sustainable futures. 514 pages, paperback, Langaa RPCIG, Cameroon, 2020, ISBN 9789956551514

Tsitsi Dangarembga
This Mournable Body

Shortlisted for the Booker Prize 2020 – see the review by Pat Brickhill on page 10 of this issue.

This completes the trilogy of *Nervous Conditions* (1988) and *The Book of Not* (2006). 384 pages, paperback, Faber and Faber, UK, 2020, ISBN 9780571355525

(First published in 2018 by Graywolf Press, USA and included in November 2019 New Books listing.)



John Eppel

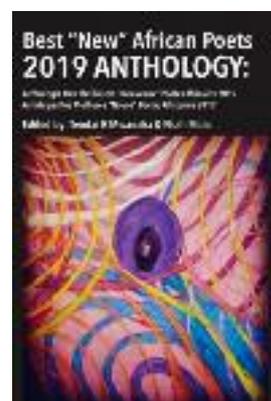
Pressed Flowers: Poems of Resistance

Poems holding images from nature, like flowers laid like wreaths at the site of man’s inhumanity to man. 98 pages, paperback, Mwanaka Media and Publishing, Zimbabwe, 2020, ISBN 9781779296153

Abigail George

Parks and Recreation

A collection of short stories from a South African blogger at Goodreads, essayist, poet, playwright, short story writer and novelist. 220 pages, paperback, Mwanaka Media and Publishing, Zimbabwe, 2020, ISBN 9781779296115



Tendai Rinos Mwanaka, Nsah Mala (editors)

Best New African Poets 2019 Anthology

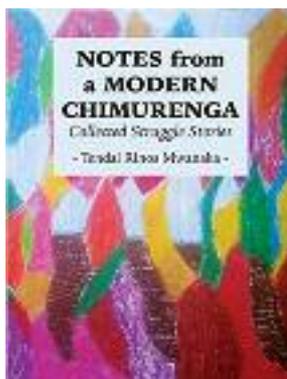
Over 600 poets have been given voice in this series which was started five years ago, making it an important archive of new African poetry.

Every year space is given to as many poets as can be accommodated; and many have gone on to publish their first collection and to win prizes. The 2019 Anthology contains 197 poems from more than 100 poets writing in English, Portuguese, French, and a host of African indigenous languages, from the continent and the

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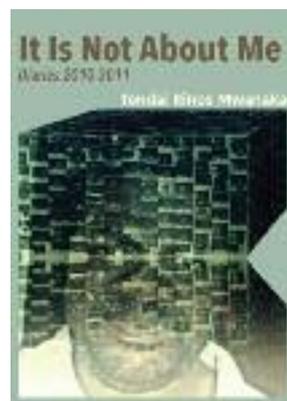
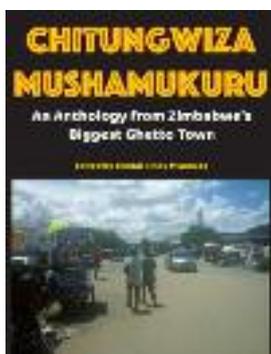
diasporas. 302 pages, paperback, Mwanaka Media and Publishing, Zimbabwe, 2020, ISBN 9781779296108



Tendai Rinos Mwanaka
Notes from a Modern Chimurenga: Collected Struggle Stories
Stories of political struggle short stories from the formation of tribal trust lands, the liberation wars, the Gukurahundi massacre, the late 1990s democratic struggles pitting ZANUPF against the MDC, migration and exile, corruption, mismanagement, beatings and killings. 182 pages, paperback, Mwanaka Media and Publishing, Zimbabwe, 2020, ISBN 9781779064820

Tendai Rinos Mwanaka (editor)
Chitungwiza Mushamukuru – An Anthology from Zimbabwe's Biggest Ghetto Town

Sprawling to the south east of Harare, Chitungwiza is Zimbabwe's biggest suburb yet also Zimbabwe's Hollywood. It has produced Zimbabwe's creatives and creative industry from film, books, poets, musicians, entertainers, academia, media practitioners, sculptors and those involved in other visual arts. This anthology includes work from 11 writers and an artist who have called Chitungwiza their home, or have written home about this place, or have created artworks highlighting culture, identity, lives, and position. 106 pages, colour photos, paperback, Mwanaka Media and Publishing, Zimbabwe, 2020, ISBN 9781779295989



Tendai Rinos Mwanaka
It is Not About Me: Diaries 2010-2011

Snapshots of life in Zimbabwe during the early years of the Government of National Unity of Morgan Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change (MDC-T), Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF government and the smaller MDC-N of Welshman Ncube. They grapple with Zimbabwe's slippery politics: the broken economy, the changing social landscape, a moribund culture, spiritual and physical poverty, unrequited love, reading, writing, the condition of the artist and the art of diarising. 188 pages, 2020, Mwanaka Media and Publishing, Zimbabwe, 2020, ISBN 9781779065155

2020, Mwanaka Media and Publishing, Zimbabwe, 2020, ISBN 9781779065155

Martison Nhamo

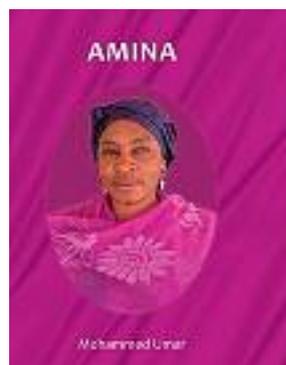
The Fundamentals of Teaching Practice – A Guide for Student Teachers

Seeks to support student teachers, newly qualified and even experienced teachers in their classroom discourses. A thoroughly researched, authoritative and accessible textbook covering all the important concepts and basic skills. 206 pages, paperback, Africa Talent Publishers, Zimbabwe, 2019, ISBN 9781779069566



Mohammed Umar

Amina
Ndebele edition of this much translated novel about the efforts of the heroine and her friends to bring about change in the conditions of women in Nigeria. The author is from northern Nigeria, and lives in the UK. 200 pages, paperback, Salaam Publishing, UK, 2020, ISBN 9781912450497



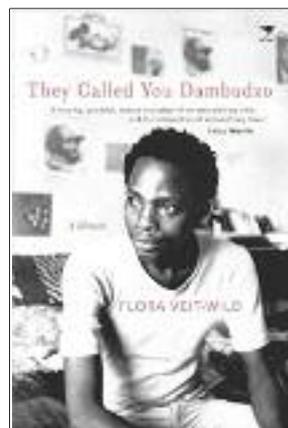
Mohammed Umar

Amina
Shona edition of the above. 218 pages, paperback, Salaam Publishing, UK, 2020, ISBN 9781912450480

Flora Weit-Wild

They Called You Dambudzo – A Memoir

A memoir with a 'double heartbeat'. At its centre is the author's relationship with the late Zimbabwean writer, Dambudzo Marechera, whose award-winning book *The House of Hunger* marked him as a powerful, disruptive, perhaps prophetic voice in African literature. Flora Weit-Wild is internationally recognised for her significant contribution to preserving Marechera's legacy. From 1983, she and Marechera had an intense, personal and sexual relationship. The memoir explores this, and the complicated aftermath of his death in 1987 from HIV-related pneumonia. 292 pages, paperback, Jacana Media, South Africa November 2020, ISBN 9781431430499



Shining Through the COVID-19 Storm: Munyaradzi Madzokere describes a community-based sports organisation reaching beyond its original remit

On page 14 of our September issue, we published a short article by Iain Whyte, about the Homeless World Cup. Iain kindly arranged for us to publish the following article about the organisation behind the Zimbabwean team's participation.

Zimbabwean community-based organisation Young Achievement Sports for Development (YASD) has managed to continue to make an impact on lives in the disadvantaged Hatcliffe Extension community, despite the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak.

YASD uses sport to transform communities. When its programmes were disrupted by the coronavirus outbreak, the organisation swiftly found ways to help a community hard hit by the effects of the epidemic.

‘One issue that has come out as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak is how families survive hand-to-mouth. So we have partnered with other organisations to deliver food packs to vulnerable families – almost 70 – 80 per cent of the Hatcliffe Extension community,’ YASD programmes co-ordinator Petros Chatiza explains.

YASD has also managed to sink a borehole at the satellite school Hatcliffe Extension primary school, to cater for the community, and is supporting a group of young women who have come up with a money-making project – preparing potatoes and selling hot chips to contribute to their own and their families’ upkeep.

‘We have been running a programme focused on girls and young women who have been trained to become coaches for young girls. We started early 2018 and were reaching out to around 200 girls in primary and secondary education, giving them basic training in hygiene and skills like understanding money,’ Chatiza says. ‘We were building a strong network in Hatcliffe. When the coronavirus came, the programme stopped, so we decided to support projects like the chip-making one the girls had come up with.’

Education as the key

In the 15 years it has existed, education has always been a key aspect of YASD’s programmes – having paid for school fees for hundreds of children, from primary school to college. Some of the children who benefitted are professionals now as well as parents and YASD is always looking for ways to make sure education continues to be accessible to all kids

‘We are also focusing on what kind of support we

should give so that we are better prepared beyond COVID-19 for any other disaster that could hit us. Our focus is to make sure that we improve access to education, especially to young women, some of whom are already mothers,’ says Chatiza. ‘We should be prepared to ensure that the community has better learning facilities and better access to information technology.’

‘The Homeless World Cup defines us’

Through YASD, Zimbabwe has participated at nine Homeless World Cup global events since making a debut at the Cape Town 14 in 2006.

The Homeless World Cup is a network of over 70 international partner organisations that uses football to change the lives of the homeless, disadvantaged and marginalised throughout the world.

This year the event scheduled for Tampere, Finland had to be cancelled because of COVID-19 .

‘The Homeless World Cup has defined us,’ Chatiza says. ‘It is one of the unique ways we are changing lives especially among people facing social exclusion. Our drive has always been participation, empowerment and inclusion. When we take players to the Homeless World Cup we talk about how those that are sidelined and, over the years our Homeless World Cup team has included people with different abilities and face different kinds of exclusion. We had a deaf player in Glasgow in 2016 and we had a player living with albinism in Mexico 2018. There is a story we continue to tell every year. We had also had a mixed team in which women participated in Cardiff last year.’

Chatiza is pleased with what YASD has managed to achieve. He says, ‘We have reached out to more than 7,000 young people who have come to YASD and most have become responsible adults and this has been one of the greatest achievements.’

In a bid to maximise their impact and influence, YASD has brought famous sports personalities to Hatcliffe Extension such as members of the Australian cricket team in 2017.

Former Warriors stars namely Edward Sadomba, Ashley Rambanepasi and Evans Gwekwere have also interacted with children in some of YASD’s programmes.

Munyaradzi Madzokere is a Zimbabwean journalist, based in Harare.

The Scandal of British Indifference Trevor Grundy on Perrance Shiri's legacy

'But he was not there. He does not know what happened. He (Benito Mussolini) does not know that the ultimate truth is that history ought to consist only of the anecdotes of the little people who were caught up in it.' *Extract from Captain Corelli's Mandolin by Louis de Bernieres*

In 1986, Perrance (also known as Perence) Shiri, Zimbabwe's (ZANU PF's) latest sponsored national hero, was flown to the United Kingdom, where he attended a series of top-level meetings with British military personnel at the prestigious Royal College of Defence Studies in London.

He went on to study there under the supervision of some of the UK's top military strategists.

It was slaughter year number three in Matabeleland.

Looking the other way

In Harare, the British High Commissioner and his advisers were fully aware of what was happening during *Gukurahundi* but the Foreign Office in London told them to look the other way.

One of the HC's top advisers resigned because he could no longer take the indifference and breathtaking hypocrisy Britain showed to mass slaughterers.

In an interview with Fergal Keane (BBC *Panorama* presenter of *The Price of Silence* documentary, released in March 2002), General Sir Edward Jones, who commanded the British Military Advisory and Training Team (BMATT) from 1983-1985 said that Shiri was the first officer from the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) to be so honoured.

'... he came down here and we had a most enjoyable Sunday lunch and he charmed our other guests.'

Fergal Keane asked if he was ever 'uneasy' about the welcome that Shiri was given in Britain.

'He was going to be important'

Jones replied: 'It's very easy to question these sort of things. Undoubtedly, he was the man who was going to be important in Zimbabwe and I think it was against that we should influence him positively in so far as we could.'

We shall never know if British 'influence' worked. Perhaps it did.

Maybe 50,000 or 100,000 would have been slaughtered and not just the generally accepted 25,000, were it not for that chat over roast beef and Yorkshire pudding.

Also on that programme was Mike Auret of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) – who said that the meeting between Britain's top

military brass and Shiri was 'unforgivable'.

He said: 'Perrance Shiri knew exactly what was happening. He gave the orders and he, if no-one else, deserves the World Court. The crimes committed by the Fifth Brigade under his command were gross crimes against humanity. ... He should never have been allowed to enter Britain.' And, after a long pause, 'No doubt Hitler could be charming. But Shiri was responsible for the deaths of thousands of people – horrifying deaths.'

As we all know, Shiri went on to command the Zimbabwe Air Force and later on, organised the farm invasions by war veterans in 2000 and beyond.

Black lives matter?

Soon after *Gukurahundi* and a Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe was knighted. After 13 white farmers were killed during Mugabe's land grab, the knighthood was taken away.

Black Lives Matter, but ...

During the campaign of terror which Mugabe and his killers dismissed as 'a moment of madness' (some moment ... some madness) Shiri was known in Matabeleland as the 'Black Jesus' because he had powers of life and death over so many people.

The *Panorama* team spoke to an eyewitness who saw Shiri select women in Silobela village in 1983 to be taken away to be raped, and to another who saw him beat an old man unconscious.

Coming clean

North Korean soldiers kept well away from television cameras, although they had trained the Fifth Brigade at the request of Robert Mugabe.

Lord Renwick, an adviser to Lord Soames during the last days of Rhodesia and first days of Zimbabwe, said: '... in Bosnia or Kosovo, the world gets its act together ... Milosevic ends up facing a crimes tribunal in the Hague. Now, if we really want to do something about these situations in Africa, we can't fail to try to do something similar.'

Coming clean about official indifference to one of the 20th centuries best ignored genocides might be one way of starting a British campaign to help make a difference in Africa, even only about how the British see the past.

Trevor Grundy is a British reporter who lived and worked in Central, Eastern and Southern Africa from 1966-1996. This article is from his personal blog, Trevor Grundy News, 7 August 2020.

The Caine Prize Africa – a BZS partnership: Knox Chitiyo introduces the second of two proposed partnerships

This has been a fraught year globally, albeit with some echoes of hope. As the BZS prepares to celebrate its 40th Anniversary in 2021, so 2020 has been a year in which the organisation has fused reflection, continuity, renewal – and change. Encapsulating this are the BZS partnerships with other organisations.

The longstanding and vibrant partnership with the SKLA endures; and there are two new, initiative-driven partnerships on the horizon. One is with the Business Council for Africa (see page 6) and the other with the Caine Prize for Africa.

Initial discussion

On 8 September, 2020, BZS Executive members held an informal Zoom meeting with Dele Fatunla, the Administrator for the Caine Prize Africa (CPA). This meeting followed an initial discussion between Dele and me about a possible partnership between the BZS and CPA. Dele had indicated that the CPA was keen to build partnerships with other organisations, and he wanted to sound out the BZS.

The CPA is interested in translating African literature written in English into the vernacular(s), and

was reaching out to the BZS with regards to Zimbabwean literature. (This year, the CPA is mainly looking to translate short stories.)

The BZS has had informal contact with the CPA in years gone by – particularly during the CPA tenure of Dr Lizzy Attree – so this seemed a good opportunity to revive a former link.

Looking for linguists

During the Zoom meeting which was kindly hosted by Professor Diana Jeater and co-chaired by Dr Pauline Dodgson-Katiyo, it was agreed that the BZS would assist in looking for linguists to translate Zimbabwean works published in English, into Shona and Ndebele; the BZS may eventually also partner with the CPA in promoting the completed works.

The BZS Executive conversations with Dele were very much an exploratory dialogue, and it is too soon to know the ‘shape of the water’ with regards to a more definitive BZS-CPA partnership. It is nevertheless a positive for the BZS that we were approached by the CPA, and we look forward to further discussions and possible future collaboration(s).

Knox Chitiyo is President of the BZS.

News

Stevenage-Kadoma Link

As Stevenage’s twin town of Kadoma entered lockdown early this year, we heard of huge challenges faced by the whole community there. Face coverings were made mandatory, and no-one was allowed on the streets without them.

One specific case came to our notice: a community maternity clinic which was struggling without such protective equipment. So SKLA sent an initial amount to help, and 200 face-masks were quickly bought. We circulated the information about this to our supporters, including Stevenage Borough councillors.

Of course, Stevenage itself has been confronted with the all too familiar challenges. Despite this, and much to our delight, six of the borough councillors – clearly moved by what they read – provided a portion of their allocated budgets to assist

our friends in Kadoma.

Inevitably, the impact of lockdown has hit Kadoma’s already fragile economy very hard, and the most disadvantaged members of the community have been put in real peril. In stages, the funds provided from SKLA and Stevenage councillors amounted to over £1500.

As always, this was managed scrupulously by our partner Association in Kadoma.

We received many photos and comments showing distribution of essential foodstuffs and personal care products. The Mayor of Kadoma featured in one of these. (See the picture opposite.)

Much as the food and other goods were received with gratitude, these will only last for a short time. Far more lasting is the impact on people’s spirits of the fact that people thousands of miles away were thinking of them and – even faced with their own challenges – were wanting to show solidarity.



The Mayor of Kadoma Alderman Action Nyamukondiwa received food hampers from Stevenage-Kadoma Link, funded by Stevenage Councillors, to be handed over to vulnerable members within the community of Kadoma. The hampers comprise various basic commodities that include sugar, salt and rice. This was a response to the impact of COVID-19 especially to people living in foster care, those living with disabilities, orphans and widows. Contents for the hampers were sourced and prepared by the Link’s Chairperson Marionette Karombe and the Link Secretary Jane Chigumira.

The involvement of councillors in this is itself a major development, and this is another step in the deepening of the friendship between the two towns.

This was the message we had

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from Kadoma:

Thank you, once again, Stevenage people for putting smiles on the faces of the needy people in our city. Some of the beneficiaries could not hold their tears of joy when they were receiving these groceries. To the team that went around it was both joyful and sombre moment as beneficiaries expressed their gratitude.

Appeal

Richard Selman writes:

Are there any members out there with personal experience or know of someone with experience of living with Type 1 Diabetes in Zimbabwe? The lead singer on the far left in the

video, *Takunda Munetsi*, which you can see at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CKPINqxP3AM> is in his second year of coping with Type 1 diabetes. His survival depends on daily injections of insulin to maintain proper blood glucose level.

He will turn 16 in December. He and his brother were orphaned about ten years ago. Fortunately they were taken in by their father's sister and raised with their older cousins.

In the two years since Takunda's onset he has experienced several setbacks involving blood sugar spikes that have put him into a coma resulting in emergency stays in clinics. It is amazing how he bounces back and remains eager to learn and be

creative. I am sure he would benefit from association with peers who face challenges similar to his. Extra funding for insulin would be helpful too.

I am also curious if compact, wearable insulin pumps are available in Zimbabwe. He would be a great candidate for one!

In the meantime, my wife Florence and I are helping with his medical expenses. Florence recently posted a Birthday Fundraiser:

https://www.facebook.com/donate/753804378536480/?fundraiser_source=external_url on

Facebook to help with Takunda's expenses. If anyone would like to help us help Takunda they can send me an email at: rselman00@gmail.com.



Contact the Britain Zimbabwe Society

President: Knox Chitiyo

2021–2022 Officers and Executive

Chair: Kathy Mansfield Higgins

Vice-Chairs: Millius Palayiwa, Rori Masiane

Secretary (Minutes/Correspondence): Pat Brickhill

Secretary (Membership): Margaret Ling

Information and Publications Officer: Jenny Vaughan

Web Officer: Philip Weiss

Treasurer: Margaret Ling

Other Executive members:

Pauline Dodgson-Katiyo

Diana Jeater

Pelagia Nyamayaro

Victor de Waal

Julius Mugwagwa

The Stevenage-Kadoma Link Association

Vacancies exist on the BZS Executive.

If you are interested in joining the Executive, please contact Pat Brickhill.

Britain Zimbabwe Society Membership Form

To join and receive your regular copy of the Zimbabwe Review, postings on the members e-mail discussion forum, and Research Day discount, please print and send the completed form below with your subscription cheque to:

Margaret Ling, BZS Membership Secretary, 25 Endymion Road, London N4 1EE

Please enrol me/us in the BZS at the following annual rate (tick relevant box).

(You may also join the BZS online, payment by credit/debit card or PayPal, via our website:

www.britainzimbabwe.org.uk/membership)

Rate

Ordinary £21 **Unwaged/student** £10

Joint (two at one address) £25 **Institution** £50

Membership runs by calendar year; renewals are due on 1 January each year.

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