

# Zimbabwe Review

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## OBITUARY

### Alex Tawanda Magaisa died on 5 June, aged 46

*Professor Nic Cheeseman, from the University of Birmingham – a friend of Alex Magaisa – writes:*

**Alex Magaisa, who has died aged 46, was a law professor at the University of Kent and a major force for democracy in Zimbabwe.**

In the face of severe political repression under the ZANU-PF government of President Robert Mugabe, Alex Magaisa served as a trusted advisor to the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) opposition party led by Morgan Tsvangirai, and helped draft the country's new constitution.



*Alex Magaisa: '...his ideals shone as a beacon of hope, an example of what the country could yet become'. (Professor Nic Cheeseman, University of Birmingham.) Photo with thanks to the University of Kent.*

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Magaisa's subsequent emergence as one of the country's most respected political commentators was built on his remarkable ability to communicate academic insights to a mass audience. The elegance of his prose, and willingness to speak truth to power, meant that Magaisa's words regularly entered the inboxes – and hearts – of fellow Zimbabweans.

By the time of his death, he was an irreplaceable public intellectual.

#### Rise to national prominence

Magaisa's rise to national prominence began in the 2010s. Following the flawed presidential elections of 2008, President Mugabe was forced to accept a power sharing government in which Tsvangirai took up the role of Prime Minister and the Constitution Parliamentary Committee (COPAC) was established to revise the country's outdated and authoritarian constitution.

In 2011, Magaisa took a leave of absence from the University of Kent to become a core member of the technical team advising COPAC, a move that reflected his deep love of his birthplace. Even though Magaisa spent much of his life outside of the country, his commitment to Zimbabwe, and to the fight for its future, never waned.

The constitutional review process was as fraught as it was important, with Mugabe disrupting the talks and preventing meaningful change.

The negotiations, and the consistent harassment of the MDC team, were brought to wider attention by the documentary *Democrats* (directed by Danish film-maker Camilla Nielsson, and which won the Best Documentary award at

*Continued on next page*

*Alex Magaisa: continued from page 1*

the Tribeca Film Festival. See: <https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/documentaries/democrats/>)

Though the resulting draft had a number of limitations, the new constitution was widely seen to be an improvement on its predecessor, and was approved by almost 95 per cent of voters in a referendum in 2013.

By this time, Magaisa had already moved on to an even more high-profile position, serving as a Chief Advisor – effectively a Chief of Staff – to Prime Minister Tsvangirai for the final two years of the power-sharing government. In this role he helped Tsvangirai to prepare for the 2013 general elections and, when they were manipulated by the government, formed part of the MDC legal team that unsuccessfully filed a petition at the Constitutional Court.

### **Background**

Magaisa was well qualified to act as a legal advisor, having studied, practised, and taught law.

Born on 9 August 1975 in the then Charter District of Rhodesia (now Chikomba District in Zimbabwe) he grew up in both towns and villages, which he credited with giving him an equal affinity with both urban and rural life.

After graduating with an undergraduate degree at the University of Zimbabwe, he joined the respected law firm, Gill Godlonton & Gerrans, as an Associate. Magaisa subsequently pursued graduate studies at the University of Warwick, graduating with a PhD in Law in 2003, before joining the University of Kent Law School in 2007.

A respected expert on company law, intellectual property law and international financial regulation, Magaisa published on a range of issues including constitutional practice and land law in Zimbabwe.

### **‘Big Saturday Read’**



*Alex Magaisa’s ‘Big Saturday Read’ – ‘became an institution’.* (<https://bigsr.africa>)

Ironically, it was after moving away from the political and legal frontline that Magaisa’s wider influence blossomed.

An erudite author and a balanced analyst, his commentaries on Zimbabwean politics combined passion and rigour, filling the vacuum left by a heavily censored and polarised media.

With almost 500,000 Twitter followers, he had more online devotees than the country’s main newspapers, and his *Big Saturday Read* (BSR) – a weekly long read that provided a historically informed take on the issues of the day – quickly became an institution. Through his essays, Magaisa became a much loved teacher and intellectual guide for thousands of Zimbabweans.

### **The Constitutional Law Centre (CLC)**

A patient mentor and constructive ally who did much to foster solidarity within civil society, Magaisa played a leading role in the creation of the Constitutional Law Centre (CLC) in 2021, bringing together a number of important legal and human rights organisations. Motivated by a deep belief that Zimbabweans should know their constitution, Magaisa hoped the CLC would promote research and advocacy about the rule of law, human rights and constitutionalism.

Like much of his research, Magaisa’s publications for the CLC combined forensic academic analysis and practical policy nous. It was this combination of academic and real-world expertise that meant that time with Magaisa was seen as gold dust by students, activists, researchers, and diplomats, alike.

### **‘A beacon of hope’**

A hugely popular individual, Magaisa’s affable personality and refusal to be drawn into name-calling enabled him to maintain admirers on both sides of the political divide, a rarity in a polarised system.

While Magaisa never shied away from the hard work required to transform Zimbabwe, during a period in which politics became increasingly exclusionary, his ideals shone as a beacon of hope, an example of what the country could yet become.

As Magaisa wrote of his vision for the BSR, ‘Our values are as embedded in the Constitution of Zimbabwe ... openness, transparency, accountability, equality, diversity, respect and pluralism. We believe every voice matters and that we must always remain vigilant to prevent a tyranny of the majority’.

He is survived by his wife, Shamiso, and his two sons, Tinomuda and Anotida.

*Nic Cheeseman is Professor of Democracy and Director of the Centre for Elections, Democracy Accountability and Representation (CEDAR) at the University of Birmingham. This review first appeared on the website Democracy in Africa, (<http://democracyinfrica.org>) where Professor Cheeseman adds that he ‘would like to thank the many friends who helped to write and strengthen the piece, and sees this as a collective effort, befitting Alex’s unifying approach.’*

## Further tributes

### From NoViolet Bulawayo

The award-winning author wrote the following on her Facebook page, and it is printed here with her permission:

When they rest you tomorrow, perhaps your beloved Gandamasungu will sigh all your names in farewell.

Perhaps, the skies above it will darken from ancient Zimbabwean birds, resplendent in dresses of grief.

Perhaps the ongoing struggle for independence will bend its head and feel its soul sink once more.

Perhaps we will say, yet again, in our heads, the things we would have said when we could still say them. And perhaps, some day soon, we will all know to raise those heads and read between the lines of this wretched last act that which your brave, selfless, rare, true, tireless heart that so loved Zimbabwe, that so loved us, knew and lived by till the final heartbeat ... for when we do, is when we, too, will sing your song, and we will sing it so loud you will hear us and know the better, the democratic Zimbabwe you believed in but did not live to see, would have come at last -- we would have found, in your song, a power greater than the people in power.

It is time to say go well, Mukoma Alex Tawanda Magaisa, and also to say, thank you. Thank you for your unwavering Song.

(My deepest condolences to the family, friends, comrades-in-the-struggle, and students of brother Alex).

### A wall of memory

A site devoted to memories of Alex Magaisa can be found at <https://alexmagaisa.clc.org.zw/wall-of-memory-obituaries/>

Among the tributes recorded there are the following:

*He exemplified the famous words uttered by JFK. 'ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country.' Dr Magaisa did not need invitation to contribute to his country. His life's desire was to see a fully functional Zimbabwe built on democratic principles, rule of law and human rights. (Maximilian Lion)*

*Dr Alex Magaisa's contribution to democracy and good governance remains unquestionable and unparalleled. (Tafadzwa Chikumbu Executive Director, Transparency International, Zimbabwe)*

*Magaisa remained an inspirational public intellectual in the Zimbabwean media space even after the GNU had ended ... He showed how the power of a good narrative helped understand some of the complex matters of political life with his Big Saturday Read (BSR) blogs ...he was a storyteller who summoned for contemporary times contours of village wisdom. (Vivid Gwede)*

*In an interview, a pro-democracy campaigner in Zimbabwe, David Coltart, told University World News that Magaisa was one of the finest legal brains Zimbabwe had ever produced.*

*He said his ability to simplify complex constitutional*

*issues so that the general public could understand them was unparalleled.*

*Coltart said the academic was a man of principle who, throughout his life, stood for constitutionalism and respect for the rule of law and democracy.*

*'His role in the development of the new constitution was critically important and his role in the implementation of that constitution going forward was also fundamentally important and it is in that role that the country has been robbed of this great legal brain,' said Coltart. 'He was always passionate about Zimbabwe and he saw his time in Britain as temporary. His loss is irreplaceable to our nation.'* (Kudzai Mashininga)

*... In the shadows of the 2023 elections, it feels particularly painful and unfair that such a great, detailed, diligent mind is gone. Dr Magaisa gave his all to the democratisation agenda of Zimbabwe through his pen and knowledge. (Natasha Fuyane)*

*Go well Musairwa. Zimbabweans will miss your incisive analysis of the political developments in this great country that we all love. Go well, thought champion. (Luke Tamborinyoka (a change champion and a citizen from Domboshava)*

### ... and from his colleagues and students

*A Celebratory Memorial Tribute to Dr Alex Magaisa by Kent Law School can be found here: <https://www.ku-doboard.com/boards/dsP2TM8r>*

The tributes include:

*... his legacy will live on in his political contribution to the country that he loved, as well as the support, intellectual inspiration and many kindnesses offered to students and colleagues over the years.*

*We will miss him tremendously. (Professor Sally Sheldon)*

*He was a wonderful teacher who exuded passion and instilled an enthusiasm in students. He was kind and caring. He will be dearly missed. (Law Student)*

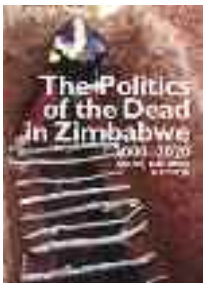
*At the beginning of third year, I was very worried about the introduction of masks clashing with my need to lipread as I am deaf but Dr. Alex came up to me randomly after the first seminar asking if there was any way he could support me. That meant a lot. (Toyosi Badejo-Okusanya)*

*Alex definitely touched the hearts of many students, and as such his memory and achievements will live on. I would like to thank Alex for all of his help with my studies. I send my condolences to his family. May he rest in peace. (Jessica Marks)*

*In a world where many do not pride themselves on being Zimbabwean, he gave me a purpose and showed us that one-day things will change ... Thank you for showing us that we do not have to settle for the bare minimum and that we can always strive for change even though it may not be safe to do so. (C Ndlovu)*

## Book Review

### *The Politics of the Dead in Zimbabwe 2000-2020: Bones, Rumours & Spirits* Kathy Mansfield Higgins reviews Joost Fontein's examination of 'necropolitics' in Zimbabwe



**Put simply, this book explores the issues surrounding the deaths of certain people in Zimbabwe, especially the political uses made of their bodily remains.**

The book actually goes back much further than 2000, to Nehanda and to Great Zimbabwe, so perhaps the title does not do justice to the historical reach of the author's scholarship. But it concentrates on more recent times.

In his conclusion, the author explains that he has:

... tried to grapple with the problem of how to understand the historical, cultural, social and political particularities of 'parochial deaths' in the wider context of death as a shared human experience, by focussing on how the politics of the dead has emerged as a particular cultural-political phenomenon in Zimbabwe exactly in traction with aspects of death that may have much wider social, political and historical purchase; such as the productive uncertainties that derive from the excessivity of human remains and from the unfinished incompleteness of death. In developing these arguments, I have sought to engage recent debates about materiality, especially as applied to human corporeality, in critical discussion with developments in political anthropology that focus on the interplay of bio- and necropolitics in performative stylistics of power. The 'social hermeneutics' to which this has led, and that lies at the core of this book, centres the profound but productive uncertainties of death. (p.284).

The extract illustrates the content and the style of this weighty text: a serious and original examination of the politicisation of some deaths and manners of dying, and ways of remembering the dead in Zimbabwe. It's not an easy read for a lay person who had better be prepared to engage with the author on a journey of intellectual intensity as it involves navigating a forest of complex sentences that seek to explore a landscape of ideas about death, dead bodies, politics and power.

#### 'Necropolitics'

I had to track down the meaning of 'necropolitics'.

The Cameroonian political theorist Achille Mbembe wrote a paper in 2003, followed by a 2016 book, translated in 2019 as *Necropolitics*. In the original paper he coined the concept and the word, explained as:

...the economic and political management of human populations through their exposure to death... Wars, genocides, refugee 'crisis', ecocide and contemporary processes of pauperisation and precarisation reveal how increasing masses of individuals are now governed through their direct and indirect exposure to death. (CLT website A. Pele. 2 March 2020 <https://criticallegalthinking.com/2020/03/02/achille-mbembe-necropolitics/>)

It is a radical theory of society, Pele explains, that sees a solidification of political, economic and military devices oriented towards the eliminations of human populations.

But also, 'small doses' of death, for example, of people living in extreme poverty and/or fearful conditions that

destroy their bodies and the value of their social existence.

Throughout history, we can observe that, although the term may be new to some of us, Roman legions, as a single example, were pretty well versed in necropolitics.

Fontein seems to argue that the violence perpetrated by ZANU-PF in the *Gukurahundi* as well as continuing episodic acts of terror against individuals are examples of large and small 'doses' of death within the concept of necropolitics.

#### 'Fleshy materiality'

In contrast to the density of the academic language elsewhere, the reader is constantly reminded, in stark words and phrases, of the 'fleshy materiality' (p.84) of bodies as the dead are described as 'fleshy, leaky bodies' sufficient times throughout the text to bring home to us that this book is about just that. The central theme is about the uses made of these bodies and of the memories of them as the living people they once were.

A sub-heading in Chapter 3, which is a case study of the controversial and much publicised exhumations at Chibondo in 2011, reads: '*Too "fresh", "intact", fleshy, leaky and stinky?*'

Perhaps this is as good a shorthand as any for the author to take us into the controversy surrounding this event, immensely harrowing both for any family involved in looking for dead relatives, and for the nation as a whole.

Using this context Fontein tells us:

Given these uncertainties about identities of the dead, and the manner of their deaths, questions were also raised about whether the grotesque displays of human remains paraded to villagers, teachers and even children, and on television, were really a thinly disguised threat, part of ZANU PF's more violent, demonstrative and performative politics, in the face of waning rural popularity and forthcoming elections. (p123).

We are not told who raised these particular questions – a noticeable omission given the plethora of references/footnotes elsewhere. The author speculates that the ZANU PF government seized the discovery and exhumations of these bodies as politically useful, reminding the population of its 'capacity for violence' and using the exhumations as 'part and parcel of ZANU PF's performative stylistics of power.' (p.124). It is fascinating stuff. This is what is meant by the title '*The Politics of the Dead*'.

#### Case studies

Chapters 4 to 7, which make up half of the book, set out case studies of infamous deaths and explore the controversies surrounding these – those of Solomon Mujuru and the late President Mugabe; and of two mediums. Chapters 5 and 6 explore 'the uncertain ... incompleteness of death ... by reconsidering the political significance of ancestors and spirit mediums in postcolonial Zimbabwe'. (p.192).

In Chapter 5, Fontein explores the story of the ‘diesel n’anga’, a spirit medium who claimed, in 2007, to be able to procure refined diesel from rocks. Fontein includes this to illustrate how, in a context of economic woes and fuel shortages: ‘... the politics of the dead, and the uncertain incompleteness of death at its core, are an everyday problem and phenomena as well as sometimes an intensely political one.’ (p.286)

It seems obvious that the deaths of Solomon Mujuru and President Mugabe were politically significant with far-reaching consequences. The Mujuru chapter is included, we are told (p.159), because:

I am interested in understanding what the uncertainties and unresolved or unfinished nature of this mysterious and gruesome death does politically, and how it fits into, and exemplifies Zimbabwe’s broader politics of the dead.

The author relies primarily ‘on reports that appeared in local and international newspapers’ (Footnote 6, p. 159), noting that the Zimbabwean journalist Geoffrey Nyarota ‘lamented how the media’s political polarisation contributed to the “rumour mill” of “pure speculation” about Mujuru’s death.’ (*ibid.*p.159).

Nevertheless, the chapter goes forward to offer

speculation and ideas heavily referenced almost exclusively from media reports. A summarised testimony from the pathologist at the inquest includes gruesome details about the state of the man’s internal organs, for example. (p.176). It is difficult for me to understand what political scholarship, and we readers, gain from being made privy to this and some of the other ‘gossip’ in these chapters on Mujuru and the late President, as lamented by Nyarota.

I had been really interested to read this book but I’m still not sure whether it further illuminated, for me, any of the deep undercurrents of Zimbabwe’s political world described here in a nexus of death and decay and political utilitarianism.

I am still thinking my way through it. And reading it again.

*The Politics of the Dead in Zimbabwe 2000-2020: Bones, Rumours and Spirits*

Joost Fontein, James Currey, 2022

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*Kathy Mansfield Higgins is Chair of the Britain Zimbabwe Society.*

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## *All about Enaleni*

### *Na Ncube describes a project that brings together rural Zimbabweans and the diaspora in a productive social enterprise*

**I still remember how we gave the organisation its name – Enaleni Community.**

My brother and I had been driving for a long distance, visiting farmers belonging to the Turn Matabeleland Green (TMG initiative)<sup>1</sup>.

One of our stops was a village called Enaleni, in Matabeleland South. The only directions we had received from the last farmer we’d met was ‘drive along this road for a long while until you see a big tree with a sign post written in white paint’. We didn’t know how many kilometres ‘a long while’ was (and neither did he) – so, of course we got lost.

But his directions turned out to be accurate, except the sign had long since fallen off. (We found it after going back to the age old tradition of ‘ask the locals’!)

We loved the village, had a great time with the villagers and left carrying rich memories – rich enough to name our own work after it.

#### **Pivoting away from charitable work**

*Inala* is ‘a good harvest’, and ‘*Enaleni*’ literally means ‘where there is great harvest’: it invokes images of lush vegetation, hard work, co-operation, well-being and of course plenty of food.

Despite so many media narratives that suggest otherwise, these are the African villages I grew up in, and have been drawn back to working in since I said goodbye to corporate life some years back.

Enaleni is a ‘community of interest’, registered under the Co-operative Rules within the UK’s Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). By definition, a community of interest brings together people with a common interest, a shared purpose in a thing.

Our community’s interest was the well-being of rural farmers in Zimbabwe, bringing together mostly (but not exclusively) those members of the Zimbabwean diaspora who shared that interest.

Forming Enaleni was a pivoting away from our previous purely charitable work under The Global Native<sup>2</sup> towards a social enterprise. We wanted to find a way to stop begging for grants (I’ve done a lot of that!) and start financing our people’s development ourselves. Not that I am knocking that way of financing development: over the years we raised considerable sums of money that way for Ebenezer Agricultural College<sup>3</sup> and we are satisfied with the work we did there.

But this was a new step, a way to invest not just in their development, but in ours too.

To get *inala* in any one village generally takes – well – a village: everyone coming together and doing what they can with what they have.

This is the spirit of our organisation – there is no ‘us’ and ‘them’ between the diaspora and the farmers, we all contribute, and we all benefit.

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This is how it works.

Diaspora invest part of their remittances in the organisation. This investment is used to help farmers along the market access route, which is one of the pressing needs rural farmers have.

### **The first three years**

In the first three years, our work consisted of investing in large trucks which we shipped home, and these enabled rural farmers to access reliable and affordable transport for their produce. This was especially helpful, as most farmers grow perishable vegetables and many are faced with the option of either paying exorbitant fees to middlemen, or risk produce rotting in the fields for lack of transport. Farmers pay for this transport, which gives diaspora investors a little earning on their investment.

Over those first three years, we:

- served 2,400 rural farmers from three villages who were able to reduce post-harvest losses and increase their incomes;
- created 25 jobs, which we estimate impacted about 100 people in the affected households;
- engaged 60 diaspora investors, who earned an average of 5 per cent returns on their investments – much better than monies left in their UK savings accounts.

Furthermore, we received feedback on how our diaspora savers were building savings, some for the first time, some using the opportunity to get out of debt.

This was great news, as our intention was always to live up to the name, not us helping them, but all of us working together for our development, whether in the diaspora or in Zimbabwe.

### **COVID and its aftermath**

Then COVID happened.

For almost two years we were unable to do anything much, but we used the time to think hard about our goals, and how well we were meeting them.

Our aim remains to assist farmers to access markets, but this is more than just transport. Rural farmers sometimes do not have good quality produce, sometimes the packaging is poor, and there will always be logistics issues.

We decided then that our next step should be to work towards setting up a pack-house. This will enable farmers to deliver produce to us, and we can manage quality, packaging and logistics. A first step towards that was finding land to work from and setting up a viable horticulture enterprise that will form the backbone of the work.

So we divested of our trucks, bought a 20-hectare farm in Zimbabwe and work there has started. It employs 27 people and grows vegetables which we sell to local supermarkets as well as the main vegetable market in Bulawayo.

If it is true that the journey of a thousand miles starts with one step, we have certainly set out of our journey towards improved market access for small-scale farmers, but we have a long way to go yet.



*Above: Na Ncube (left) shows a visitor around Elaneni in November 2021. Below: tomatoes graded and packed in crates, ready for processing. Photos from the Elaneni Community*

### **Notes**

#### *Organisations mentioned*

#### 1. Turning Matabeleland Green (TMG)

TMG have provided training in horticulture and chicken-raising to 11,000 rural farmers mostly women and young people. Their training includes basic agri-business skills, conservation farming and basic market principles.

2. The Global Native is the charity we first set up to do our development work, registered with the charity commission. We mostly raised grants and supported local organisations, the one we worked with most is

3. Ebenezer Agricultural College in Matopo: <https://www.thezimbabwean.co/2012/03/ebenezer-a-stone-of-help/>

*Na Ncube is a development practitioner turned farmer who is now running a social enterprise that invests diaspora remittances in local agriculture. She says: 'In a world of growing inequality, I have a passion for social change and development, and it is my firm belief that development cannot be endowed, it must be achieved by our own sweat and exertion.'*

## Review: Mosi oa Tunya

*Kay Powell describes 'a marvellous pot-pourri' of content and language in a skilfully designed publication*



**'The first multilingual, pan-African, online literary magazine from Zimbabwe' claimed the subtitle on the cover of the first issue of the *Mosi oa Tunya Literary Review* in January 2021**

My first reaction was 'How wonderful!' My second was 'How brave ...'

Because it takes courage to launch a magazine, more so if it is a literary magazine, and even more so if you're in a country whose lack of resources to support such a venture means you're on your own.

The brave people behind this launch were Tendai Machingaidze and her mother Ellen.

### A project 'to keep me sane'

'In 2020, I got COVID,' says Tendai. 'Being quarantined indoors, I needed a project to keep me sane. My mum and I had been talking for years about starting a literary magazine, so I began messing around with magazine designs and calling her frequently to bounce ideas back and forth. A few months later, *Mosi oa Tunya Literary Review* was born.'

Although Tendai holds several degrees – mostly in science – her heart was always in fiction.

'Growing up, my parents used to take me and my siblings to the Mount Pleasant Library every Saturday morning. I fell in love with novels at an early age and secretly wanted to write one for many years.'

Her dream came true in 2014 with the publication of her novel, *Acacia* (African Perspectives Publishing). Tendai's short stories have featured in many publications, including the anthology *Writing Lives* (Weaver Press, 2013), a pan-African journal *The Kalahari Review* and the prestigious American online magazine, *Brittle Paper*.

Of her partner in this venture, Tendai says, 'It has been wonderful working with my mum on something we both love dearly. I learn so much from her! She is excellent at identifying 'diamonds in the rough' and her background has fully equipped her to work with grassroots writers and help them polish their work for publication.'

Ellen's background, too, is impressive – secondary school English language teacher, Principal Writer at the Curriculum Development Unit, Educational Assessment Director at the National Examinations Council, author of school textbooks, reviewer for the Annual Literary Awards, and educational adviser for the Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED – an NGO that has changed the lives of thousands of Zimbabwean girls).

'Culture is embedded in a people's language,' writes

Ellen. 'We are excited by the prospect of having the full spectrum of Zimbabwean culture represented in our magazine as we embark on this journey to publish and promote storytelling in the rich diversity of all our languages.'

### A multilingual approach

There are 16 official languages in Zimbabwe. The three dominant ones – Shona, Ndebele and English – as well as an indigenous minority language, Nambya, are represented in the first three issues of the *Mosi oa Tunya Literary Review*. The dominant languages will continue to account for most of the content, but from Issue 4 onwards each issue will introduce another indigenous minority language. Earmarked for Issue 4 is Tonga.

Paging through Issue 3 left me in no doubt that this ambitious multilingual approach is achievable. Not only does it work, it also imparts a refreshing sense of inclusivity and carries the exciting prospect of unleashing writing talent from across the country.

Just as refreshing as the magazine's range of languages is its variety of content – a marvellous pot-pourri that inclines you to dip in and out of the magazine at will. Book reviews, short stories, commentary, poetry, children's stories, artwork, news of literary prizes – they're all here. And quite a lot of the content comes from beyond Zimbabwe's borders. In Issue 3, the countries represented included Canada, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and the UK.

### Authors and design

Each issue of the magazine also has a featured author, poet and artist. To date those include: Tanaka Chidora, a Zimbabwean whose poetry anthology *Because Sadness is Beautiful?* won him high praise; Ghanaian writer Peace Adzo Medie, whose novel *His Only Wife* was named as a New York Times Notable Book of the Year; Sue Nyathi, South African-based but Zimbabwean-born author of the acclaimed novel, *A Family Affair* (Pan Macmillan, 2020); and Lin Barrie, who expresses her passion for Zimbabwe's natural environment through poetry and paint.

Bringing all of this together is an exceptionally high level of magazine design. I've subscribed to many literary magazines during my lifetime in publishing, but I've seldom seen on one as professionally, thoughtfully and attractively designed as this one. Text is given space. Colours suit the content. The typography is easy on the eye. The illustrative material draws you into the words, rather than becoming a distraction. And navigating the content is a smooth, simple experience.

The designer is Brandon Pfunder, an American missionary who worked in Zimbabwe in the 1990s, then

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Mosi oa Tunya: *continued from previous page*

returned home and embarked upon a career in design. But throughout this time, he missed Zimbabwe deeply.

‘Zimbabwe lives in me. It changed me,’ he writes. And when he heard about the *Mosi oa Tunya Literary Review*, he felt compelled to contact Tendai and Ellen and ask to be a part of their endeavour.

‘His love of Zimbabwe and Africa shines through in his work,’ says Tendai. It really does.

#### **A print edition?**

Given the magazine’s high standard of content and design, as well as its multilingual and pan-African appeal, I asked Tendai if it would ever be available in print?

‘The aim is indeed to sell a print edition internationally, while retaining the online component. But the costs and logistics are beyond our current capabilities ... We will keep at it though, and continue to seek out partnerships with like-minded lovers of literature and art.’

Whether or not a print edition does become possible, what has already been achieved deserves huge applause. Congratulations and thank you, Tendai, Ellen and Brandon!

#### **How to find the on-line edition**

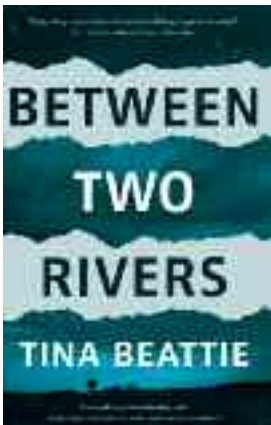
*Mosi oa Tunya Literary Review* is a twice-yearly publication. The next issue is due later in 2022. To download issues of the magazine, go to <https://www.mosioatunya.com>, where you will also find the blog, carrying articles and interviews about Africa’s literary scene. You can also follow the magazine on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. And if you’d like to contact the editors, their email address is [mosioatunyareview@gmail.com](mailto:mosioatunyareview@gmail.com)

*Kay Powell grew up in Zimbabwe and lives near Cambridge, UK. Her career in book publishing includes setting up a UK agency to provide publishing services to international development organisations. Her first novel, Then a Wind Blew (Weaver Press, 2021) was reviewed in the June 2021 issue of Zimbabwe Review.*

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## **Review: Between Two Rivers**

*Pat Brickhill on a novel about ‘a country that once lay between the rivers Zambezi and Limpopo’*



**I was in the rural Eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe when I completed this review.**

There, it struck me that the abyss between a country at war and one at peace is immense. Likewise, the gap between the rural and urban environment, and the lives of the black and white populations in Rhodesia, which were

worlds apart even in the same country.

#### **Ambivalent response**

This recognition tempered my initially ambivalent response to the author’s portrayal of several characters. I found them stereotypical: some without any redeeming qualities, others almost saintly, and others again having a fluctuating moral compass. Perhaps the author exploited this technique to add depth to the forces women have to negotiate in ‘a man’s world’.

*Between Two Rivers*, published in 2022, is a novel about the last days of Rhodesia, a country that once lay between the rivers Zambezi and Limpopo. A civil war was gradually engulfing the deeply divided country, where a small white elite controlled every aspect of the lives of the oppressed black majority.

Today we know the country as Zimbabwe.

#### **Three women**

Tina Beattie’s book spans just over two decades, describing a time that would strip away the veneer of the hedonistic life of pleasure and plenty enjoyed by a small minority, manifesting the dark side of human nature, and laying bare the open wound of subjugation and discrimination inflicted on the majority.

She digs deep into the bitter conflict by examining the lives of three women: Jenny, Beatrice and Morag.

I would like to have learned more about the characters introduced in the beginning of the book who are destined to play a devastating role in the story. For example, David, who has a sexual relationship with Jenny’s mother, with Morag and with Jenny. He is presented without any judgement, perhaps to illuminate the human frailties that are present in us all.

Likewise, Jenny’s father, who struggles with single parenting and came across as kindly but ineffectual.

Jenny is a gentle, gifted pianist who arrives in Rhodesia from Britain with her ill-matched, unhappy parents. She marries young, to a totally unsuitable man. Bruce is a testosterone-fuelled macho man, a violent white Afrikaner hunter with few redeeming features. Jenny struggles with her determination not to emulate her mother in her own mismatched and abusive marriage. Her relationship with her children is overshadowed by her struggle with her own calamitous situation.

The third woman is Scottish liberal doctor Morag



who travels to Rhodesia to escape an unhappy love affair. I found Morag both strangely worldly, yet very naïve, when it came to living in Rhodesia – remaining, even after decades, fairly ignorant of ‘Rhodesian culture and the country’s challenging history’.

Beatrice struggles between two cultures – her Christianity, assumed while attending the mission school, and her traditional beliefs. It’s unclear whether it is this conflict of cultures or her miserable life which sends her mad; or if the passages about her grandmother (who appears to Beatrice as a fly, a vulture and a monkey) are intended to symbolise her transition in her journey to liberation.

In Rhodesia, black women were, by law, categorised as perpetual minors. They battled both the repressive white state and a patriarchal traditional culture – and were often caught in the crossfire of the vicious civil war. Chiedza Musengezi’s insightful review (<https://www.tinabeattie.com/post/humanity-in-its-beauty-and-brokenness>) celebrates Beatrice interpreting her actions as leaving ‘her poorly paid employment in defence of her own independence ...’.

### **Back-story**

The back-story is told in flashback to the 1950s. The novel opens in the 70s with Jenny’s son Sean, ironically, telling the women in his life that he is going to ‘fight the terrorists so that Rhodesia will be a safe place’ not only for his mother and sister but also for Beatrice, her children, and his own future children.

Beatrice came into Jenny’s life as a domestic and nanny when Jenny was expecting her second child. We do not meet Beatrice’s husband who works on the mines in South Africa ostensibly to support his family but who abandons his family. Beatrice is also pregnant with her second child and gives birth to her son Maxwell shortly after Jenny has her baby, also a son.

Beatrice is devoted to her charges but at the expense of her own children, who are forced to live in the village. The two sons once childhood friends are separated by racist attitudes as they grow older.

### **Towards a conclusion**

The voices of the three women are successfully employed to drive *Between Two Rivers* forward through twenty years as the novel heads for its dramatic, though not totally unexpected conclusion.

As the story unfolds each woman’s experience of her particular life sheds more light, each story coming from a different perspective. It is not only soldiers that are affected by conflict. Everybody loses in war and Beattie portrays this vividly and effectively.

Despite my occasional reservations, there is no doubt Beattie has captured and revealed a disturbing and shocking window into the crumbling disintegration of the life white Rhodesians had once taken for granted, believing they and it to be indestructible.

Tina Beattie’s writing is expressive though necessarily uncomfortable and brutal. Her use of the language of the time is shocking but crucial to represent the tempestuous times the book is describing. She is a gifted writer with the ability to paint a vivid and lasting picture with her words. She has made a significant and important contribution to the recreation of the story of the last days of Rhodesia.

It is an excellent and gripping read.

*Between Two Rivers*, Tina Beattie,  
Weaver Press Zimbabwe, 2022  
ISBN: 978-1-77922-414-92022  
<https://weaverpresszimbabwe.com/store/literature/novels/between-two-rivers-detail>  
Published in the UK by Troubador

*Pat Brickhill is a freelance writer and secretary of the Britain Zimbabwe Society*

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## **THE RHODES NYANGA HISTORICAL EXHIBITION**

*Marshall Nyanhanda describes an exhibition that does much more than tell the Rhodes story*

**The Rhodes Nyanga Museum, now known as the Rhodes Nyanga Historical Exhibition (RNHE), aims to provide a professional, educational and balanced view of the history, natural heritage and culture of the communities of Nyanga, and the surrounding district.**

The museum is situated on land first purchased from the Chartered Company in January 1893, and sold in 1897 to Cecil John Rhodes. He lived there in the original homestead, and built a large stone barn to stable horses, with a harness room and store-room attached. After his death in

1902, the Rhodes Nyanga Estate was bequeathed to the nation and in 1917 the property was transferred to the BSA (British South Africa) Company administration.

In 1974, the National Trust – now the National Trust of Zimbabwe (NTZ) – acquired the right to use the barn for exhibits relating to Nyanga.

The Rhodes Museum was developed, including relics from Rhodes’ farming enterprise and articles of local historical interest. Old maps, photographs, documents, household furniture and personal belongings were

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*Exhibition: continued from previous page*  
collected for display. Prehistoric artefacts uncovered when land in the area was cleared for development were also donated.

### **Public support**

During the first decade of the 2000s, a lack of interest and community engagement meant the general upkeep and appearance of the Museum deteriorated considerably. Then, in April 2011, the NTZ established a Nyanga Branch and a committee of enthusiastic local residents volunteered to upgrade the museum. New displays were planned and additional historical material collected. Donations were sourced to revive the RNHE.

A generous donation from the Beit Trust (for which we are very grateful) facilitated the initial refurbishment of the buildings and a young curator could be employed and trained.

Public support was, and still is, most encouraging. Many additional historical objects and valuable books and journals have since been donated or loaned from all over the country. The Exhibition's broad view is on the unique natural heritage and the history and culture of the area.

All this is administered by NTZ, a voluntary organisation, and is operated by the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe and receives no state assistance.

As the collections and displays expanded, there was an urgent need for more space. The Committee decided to convert the barn loft and the harness room.

Careful renovation followed and, in 2013, the harness room became the Don Grainger Reading and Research Room.

Dr Grainger had donated valuable memorabilia in the form of medals and awards, and he remains one of the most loyal supporters of RNHE. Later that year, he discussed the project with the Australian Ambassador, Matthew Neuhaus, and the Australian Embassy, through their Direct Aid Programme. The official opening of the loft, now called the Petheram Loft and the Don Grainger Reading Room was held in 2016.

### **Heritage education**

More recently, in line with heritage education programmes operating at various local schools, assistance has been given by the Solon Foundation, which supports educational projects in Southern Africa. The International National Trust Organisation (INTO) has also assisted with funding for Heritage projects. In 2015 our local educational project was awarded first place in an international competition run by the INTO.

The main body of the exhibition remained similar to the original 1970s display, consisting of Rhodes' personal furniture and photographs.

To this have been added information, pictures and artefacts associated with the development of the Rhodes



*The Rhodes Nyanga Museum is based in stables built by Cecil John Rhodes in 1897. Photo: Rhodes Nyanga Museum*  
Nyanga Estate. Rhodes' time line and other details of the man and his achievements are displayed.

The original archaeological exhibit has now been enlarged. Assistance from archaeologists Robert Soper and Rob Burrett was sought, while the Prehistory Society of Zimbabwe donated a large number of Professor Soper's Nyanga booklets for distribution through the RNHE to local schools. The Exhibition now includes displays on early Manyika African culture, traditional leadership and local crafts and foods. The development of education, religion, fishing and tourism is set out using pictures and documentation. Short family histories of some well-known Nyanga pioneers, such as the Moodie family, are displayed.

Following requests from teachers accompanying groups of school children, a time line from the earliest known inhabitants of the country to the events of the year 2000 was created through the combined efforts of the local committee members and local teachers.

### **New displays**

There are now several new displays in the Petheram Loft. A typical late 1800 to early 1900 homestead takes up most of its eastern side. It includes diverse historical, antique objects and memorabilia. The History of Pharmacy in this country is traced through a collection of pictures and medical memorabilia donated by the Lancasters, a Nyanga family whose ancestors established some of the earliest pharmacies in the country. A related section on herbal and traditional medicine is planned.

The History of the Women's Institute and Home-craft Clubs gives an idea of the diverse work that the organisation achieved through the years, by women of all races in this country. A generous donation from the National Federation of WI's of Zimbabwe went towards cabinets and display material. The old Wagon Shed currently houses a temporary exhibition of Shona sculptures by the local artist, Jonathan Matimba (1940–2013).

An 1890 ox-wagon and 1900 buggy are great

attractions, as is the steam engine which came up from South Africa in 1904.

The Museum's mission is to be the custodian of the properties and sites of cultural heritage and natural beauty which are held in trust to maintain and manage them for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of Zimbabwe and as a legacy for future generations.

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## *Ruth Weiss: Trevor Grundy celebrates the German-Jewish journalist and author who served Zimbabwe well*

**On July 5, 2022, Dr Frederick Lubich of the Old Dominion University in Virginia, USA, launched an 800 pages Festschrift (German for a *liber amicorum* or book of friends) honouring the life and work of one of Africa's best known human rights campaigners, the German-born journalist and novelist, Ruth Weiss.**

The venue for the ceremony could not have been more appropriate. Courtroom 600, at the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg (close to where Ruth was born on July 26, 1924) is where the first 24 Nazis were put on trial at the end of World War II.

Said Ruth: 'I came from a little place near Nuremberg which was at the centre of things during the Nazi period. I felt the impact of Hitler at the age of nine. My family left Germany in 1936. We literally grew up overnight.'

And the story of her growing up, first in Germany, then South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and so many parts of Europe, is incorporated in this vast book and told by many who respected and took her as a role model.

### **Recognition from her peers**

Zimbabweans will best remember Ruth Weiss as chief training officer during a government-sponsored programme launched in 1981 to teach young reporters how to explain national and international finance to their readers. With her was the journalist Jan Raath of *The Times* and Mahmoud Amr, a former London bureau chief of the *Middle East News Agency* (MENA), who went on to be the official spokesman for the Egyptian Government.

Her business/economics writings were succinct, balanced, informative and entertaining. She followed political as well as business trends throughout Central, Eastern and Southern Africa for *The Guardian* and *Financial Times* in London and, as a broadcaster for *Deutsche Welle* in Berlin and the BBC in London and was recognised by her journalistic peers as an expert on African micro- and macro-economics.

The cover of her biography, *A Path Through Hard Grass – A Journalist's Memories of Exile and Apartheid* (foreword by a lifelong friend, the Nobel Prize Winner Nadine Gordimer) shows Ruth with a microphone in her hand interviewing the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole at the 1976 Geneva Conference.

That picture could have been her with any of the other

There are plans to develop the area as a tourist resort, so administration of the Rhodes Estate has now been given to the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Authority.

*Marshall Nyanhanda is Curator Rhodes Nyanga Museum*  
<https://ntoz.org/properties/rhodes-nyanga-historical-exhibition/>

African leaders she met during her decades working as a reporter in Central, Eastern and Southern Africa – Nelson Mandela, Robert Mugabe, Joshua Nkomo, Herbert Chitepo, James Chikerema, George Nyandoro, Samora Machel, Sam Nujoma, Jonas Savimbi, Julius Nyerere. And many, many other less well-known but just as important men and women who shaped post-colonial Africa.

She respected their aims and won their respect, yet had the courage to criticise them once they won – something so few Western journalists had, even though the vileness of some of the new leaders matched, or went beyond, those of the continent's former European masters.

### **Germany and South Africa**

The Germany Ruth Weiss was born into is described not only in her biography but also in *Ruth Weiss in her own words* written in 1990 and included in *The Rift – The Exile Experience of South Africans* by Hilda Bernstein (Jonathan Cape, 1994).

Ruth describes her German childhood:

The Jewish children had to leave their various schools fairly quickly ... my father was employed by a non-Jewish firm so he lost his job fairly early in 1933 ... (he) was given this ticket and he went to South Africa ... I knew what it was to be ostracised and discriminated against on a day-to-day basis.

Ruth's father sent for the family and, in 1936, they settled on the wrong side of the tracks in Mayfair, Johannesburg.

'And we were very poor, really poor. We couldn't speak English; my father translated.'

The similarity between the way Nazis treated Jews and the way some whites treated blacks and mixed race people was not lost on this shy teenager.

She said to her parents, 'You know, in Fuhrer (her birthplace) they wouldn't play with me because I'm Jewish. And now here I'm not allowed to play with another child because they're black.'

Ruth's sister left school so Ruth could do her matric.

'I got a scholarship on the strength of my matric results – I wanted to do BA. LLB., but couldn't do that because I didn't have the money. ... And I couldn't get a loan because I was German.'

Ruth got a job with a local law firm as an articled clerk. She left after a short time and she turned instead to writing, influenced by a handful of the Jewish

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*Ruth Weiss: continued from previous page*

quasi-Marxists and ‘revolutionaries’ who formed small talk clubs in Johannesburg – the sort of people Doris Lessing mixed with in Southern Rhodesia. Julia Manstead from London says:

Before the war, anti-Semitism in South Africa had been largely restricted to negative stereotypes. However, there was an upsurge of anti-Semitism in the 1930s, resulting in the ‘Jewish Question’ becoming prominent in public debates. Stimulated by Nazi racial theories, right-wing movements such as the South African Greyshirts adopted Nazi symbols, and developed propaganda arguing against Jewish immigration. The Quota Act of 1930, intended to limit the immigration of Jews from Eastern Europe, did not apply to German refugees. With correct documentation and financial guarantee, Jewish refugees from Germany could enter South Africa. [then] the governing United Party, worried about losing support ... introduced legislation to restrict immigration in 1937. (*Writing in Exile: Displacement and Identity in Ruth Weiss’ Work*, 2020)

It is estimated that between 1933 and 1939, 6,500 Jews emigrated from Germany to South Africa.

### **An extraordinary life**

Only a few of the highlights of Ruth Weiss’s extraordinary life can be mentioned here.

She went on to represent the prestigious *Financial Mail* in Rhodesia but she didn’t stay long in the then Salisbury (Harare). She was PI’d (declared a Prohibited Immigrant) for annoying the authorities by writing about the effectiveness of sanctions against Ian Smith’s rebel regime. She was also unwelcome in South Africa because of her loathing of apartheid.

She moved to *The Guardian* in London but returned to Central Africa where she was business editor of *The Times of Zambia* and also the Zambia correspondent for the *Financial Times* and the BBC’s *Focus on Africa*, run by the legendary Ugandan journalist, Israel Wamala.

In 1974, she went to work in Bonn for *Deutsche Welle*, – surprising many that she was back in a country where horrendous memories were her companions.

In 1978, Ruth turned freelance and, after completing the training course for young Zimbabwean reporters, returned to England and became a novelist. *My Sister Sara*, her best-known work, is about a blonde orphan adopted by an Afrikaner parliamentarian whose sympathies were with Hitler and the Nazis. When papers arrive from Germany, it is discovered that Sara’s roots are ‘tainted’ and hatred rips through the family. The child could take one of two paths – depression or rebellion: Ruth knew both.

One of her best-known non-fiction works is a biography of the late Sir Garfield Todd, the New Zealand missionary who became Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia in 1953 but who was removed by his own white cabinet five years later.

Ruth Weiss also wrote about the roles of women in the ‘new’ Africa, and one of her most courageous works was *Zimbabwe and the New Elite*, which examined the dashed hopes of millions as Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe turned from liberator to dictator.



*Ruth Weiss speaking in Harare in the early 1980s. Picture © Trevor Grundy*

In 2020 Ruth Weiss was elected as Honorary President of the PEN Centre of German-speaking Writers Abroad.

The PEN website explained that the award was in recognition of her work fighting racism, anti-Semitism and, in particular, her work in German schools.

### **Always in exile**

In a letter, Ruth told me that in September this year, she will be given the PEN Centre’s Ovid Prize for her writing. That will be held at the Frankfurt National Library and the last recipient was Wolf Biermann, the singer and songwriter and former East German ‘dissident.’

For many reasons, Ruth Weiss was, is and always will be an exile. She wrote in *The Rift*: ‘I’ve convinced myself over the last ten years, perhaps twenty years, that I would never ever belong to any country any more. And when people have asked me what I feel, I always say I feel a Southern African.’

But her story is important to her and it needs to be told and listened to by more than young people in Africa and Germany. It touches on the greatness and the horror in all of us. It is important because Ruth Weiss was in the arena and not some comfortable viewing area when the bull was let loose.

The stories about Nazis and apartheid must never be forgotten. Yet even now, a cloud of mist rolls over both of them. Soon, there will be no-one left who was there.

Ruth Weiss says : ‘It is important for young people to be able to speak to those who witnessed all this. That is why I am prepared to take on the role of talking to German audiences as long as I can.’

On that, Julia Manstead sums things up neatly:

It is evident that being a displaced person has had a profound influence on Weiss’s life and sense of identity, and this influence is reflected in her political views and her writing. She has personal experience of being the target of discrimination and has also seen what it is like for other groups to be discriminated against. Her balance and her readiness to understand those who hold views contrary to her own are reflected in her writing. (*Writing in Exile*)

Ageless and ever active, Ruth Weiss is one of the most remarkable women of her age. We are fortunate to have her.

*Trevor Grundy is an English journalist who lived and worked in Central, Eastern and Southern Africa from 1966-1996*

# Research Day 2022

A report of the virtual event on 18 June

## *Theme: Education and Development in Zimbabwe and the Diaspora*

### Background and objectives

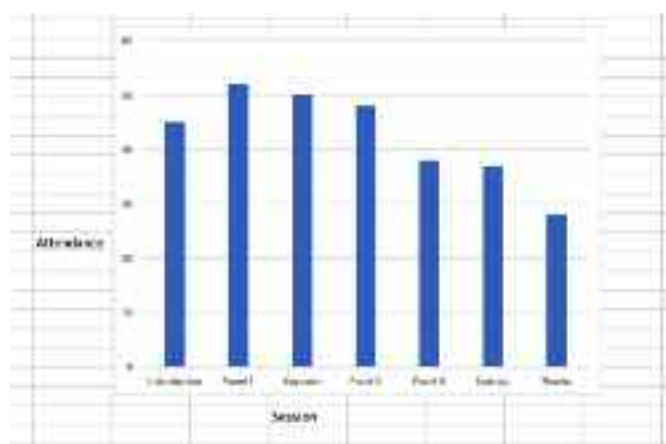
*Against the backdrop of the unrelenting COVID 19 pandemic, the focus on health issues has been a primary concern in the UK, Zimbabwe and the rest of the world.*

The direct and indirect impacts of the pandemic continue to unravel, with both physical and mental well-being issues poised to remain a global priority for the foreseeable future. In the backdrop of the new and persistent fragilities exposed in other sectors by the pandemic, the BZS Research Day 2022 sought to focus on the evolving context and role of education – particularly higher education in Zimbabwe and the diaspora, looking at its contribution to and influence in national and global development trajectories.

### Attendance

A total of 99 people registered through Eventbrite to attend the conference, mainly from Zimbabwe and the UK. They represented academic, policy and practitioner communities.

The chart below shows attendance levels in the different sessions of the event.



### Keynote address and conference panels

A keynote address was given by Professor Norman Maphosa (former Vice Chancellor, Solusi University and former Chair, ZIMSEC – Zimbabwe School Examinations Council) under the title *Perspectives on Zimbabwe's education primary, secondary and higher education: past, present and future*.

He unpacked and examined the historical and contemporary terrain of Zimbabwe's education system, its contribution to the shaping of the country's economic, social and political fabric, and the need for continuous adjustments to, and modernisation of, the system to make sure it is relevant, resilient and inclusive.

In addition to the keynote address, there was an overview presentation which highlighted that Zimbabwe's

education had a global footprint, historical and in the present, due to physical migration of people to different parts of the world, as well as knowledge migration through other channels.

Zimbabweans generally still receive recognition as 'highly educated' and keen learners, but this is a narrative that needs nuance and constant rethinking.

The overview presentation was followed by three panels which focused on specific thematic areas as follows:

- **Panel 1** – *Inclusiveness of the Zimbabwean Education System: Case Studies on Historical, Current and Future Research*
- **Panel 2** – *Relevance and Quality of the Zimbabwean Education System: Research and Lived Experience*
- **Panel 3** – *Resilience and future development of education in Zimbabwe.*

### Overarching narrative

The Zimbabwean education system is a going concern, deeply embedded in historical and contemporary realities, with the diaspora as a key element.

Among the questions for the Research Day was, how do we make or keep the system relevant, inclusive and resilient? Issues raised in the conference presentations and discussions included the following:

#### **A: Relevance, inclusiveness and resilience are multi-faceted concepts**

- *Relevance* – individual, systemic and societal in terms of opportunity and notions of belonging
- *Inclusiveness* – not just a question of demography and geography – but of choices, pedagogy and language too
- *Resilience* – temporal, spatial and tools dimensions, including timeliness, trust and incentives.

#### **B: The notion of relevance raised a number of questions and observations with respect to Zimbabwe's education system:**

- What is education, where does it happen?
- Does education create opportunities?
- Does education translate to national development?
- The importance of lived experiences
- Avoiding monolithic or linear relationships
- Creating opportunities between formal (mainstream) and non-formal education
- Exploring opportunities from/at different exit levels
- The need for financial support.
- Recognising that indigenous education is key
- Learning environments matter.

#### **C: Inclusiveness is a moving target which needs constant evaluation, for example:**

- Education as a basic human right

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*Research Day: continued from previous page*

- The importance of agency and choices of actors
- There are tensions between different qualifications and forms of training (e.g. vocational v mainstream training).
- Language, narratives and framings matter (they empower or disempower).
- Lifelong learning – how does it figure in national policy and programming?
- The inadequacy of information ecosystems
- The diversity and utility of assessment methods
- As in any system, there are tensions between incumbents and new entrants (e.g. providers of education)

#### **D: Building and sustaining a resilient education system depends on harnessing capabilities of diverse stakeholders**

- The education system has many ‘moving parts’ – a source of challenges, and opportunities for resilience.
- We should think of education holistically – and enable actors to flourish.
- We should think about learner-teacher workload issues

## **News**

### **Dorcas Gwata: Street Clinic**

Spring 2024 is due to see the UK publication of Dorcas Gwata’s first book, *Street Clinic*. UK publisher Picador acquired the rights last spring. Describing Ms Gwata as an ‘award-winning mental health nurse Dorcas Gwata [who] works with vulnerable young people involved in gangs and the associated knife crime, sexual exploitation, drug use and abuse’ it goes on to say ‘Dorcas offers a bird’s-eye view of London ... its tireless healthcare workers, and an NHS that doesn’t always work for everyone’ and that ‘*Street Clinic* is an eye-opening exploration of what youth violence means for the mental wellbeing of our young people. It is a story of vulnerability, resilience, strength and hope for the future.’  
<http://www.northbanktalent.com/2022/04/19/picador-to-publish-street-clinic-by-dorcas-gwata/>

### **Return of the Africa Centre**

The new Centre – replacing the long-closed and fondly remembered Centre in Covent Garden – opened on 9 June in a specially designed building in Great Suffolk Street in Southwark. Its new pan-African restaurant, Tatale at The Africa Centre, opened on 14

July 2022 with a limited service and is scheduled to be expanded later in September. At the opening, the guest of honour was Sonia Boyce OBE RA who cut the ribbon alongside Lord Boateng. opening times are Mondays to Saturdays 10 am – 6 pm and Sundays 10 am – 4 pm.

The Centre’s website contains information about proposed activities and says: ‘We believe in the power of working together, sharing ideas, and supporting each other. So we welcome opportunities for new partnerships and building lasting relationships that are mutually beneficial.’

If you want to find out more about The Africa Centre or you have a proposal or suggestion for us, please get in touch’. The address for this is in nearby Union Street.

*Email:* [info@afriacentre.org.uk](mailto:info@afriacentre.org.uk)

*Phone:* 0208 004 6436

*Address:* Arch 28, Old Union Yard Arches, 229 Union Street, London, SE1 0LR

<https://www.afriacentre.org.uk/#>

### **News from the Budiro Trust**

The Budiro Trust has contacted the Society to say:

‘We are delighted to let you know that we survived the last two years,

in adjustments; draw on internal and external resources through partnerships; and embed collective will, trust and incentives.

- Systemic shocks such as COVID 19 are an opportunities to recalibrate the system.

#### **Some overarching messages from the Research Day**

- Current and disaggregated data is key for accurate narratives on Zimbabwe’s education.
- The health of the economy, history and political ideologies matter for education.
- Good governance, *ubuntu* and civic education are crucial.
- Decolonisation and other ways of decentering privileged ways of knowing and doing are key.
- There is a need to be intentional about dealing with asymmetric and disproportionate effects of a non-inclusive system.
- Education is about knowing, doing and being.

*This draft report is by the conference organising team: Julius Mugwagwa, Roselyne Masamha and Knox Chitiyo*

despite the enormous difficulties presented here in the U.K. and even more so in Zimbabwe, where school closures have been much more than an inconvenience for our students.

Despite everything they have been through they have managed to sit their exams, and some of them have done extremely well. We have recently made the selections for this year’s bursaries, and are able to support the same number of students to take A Levels.’



### **Glory shortlisted**

NoViolet Bulawayo’s satirical novel *Glory* has been shortlisted for the prestigious literary award – the Booker Prize.

In a review for *All Africa* website Dr Tinashe Mushakavanhu, explains how, using a cast of animal characters, ‘she explores what happens when an authoritarian regime implodes, using characters who are horses, pigs, dogs, cows, cats, chickens, crocodiles, birds and butterflies.’

The book was reviewed in our June edition.

<https://allafrica.com/stories/202209100233.html>



## BZS Young Researchers' Award 2022 – online event

**Saturday 19 November 2022 GMT 14.00-15.00 (CAT 16.00-17.00)**

The Young Researcher's Prize (YRP) is a Britain Zimbabwe Society initiative which identifies, encourages and supports talented young researchers and academics in Zimbabwe and the diaspora.

The YRP Winner, who is selected by a Nominations Panel, will receive a BZS Certificate and an honorarium.

Previous YRP Winners have gone on to achieve renown in academia and beyond. They include Dr Roselyne Masamha, now Lecturer in Learning Disabilities Nursing at the University of Hull and Staff Development Consultant for Kingston upon Hull Metropolitan Area, and Simukai Chigudu, now Associate Professor of African Politics at the University of Oxford.

This year, we will be presenting the Award to a Zimbabwe-based researcher. The winner will be announced

in due course. The online event on 19 November will be a celebratory event which will host the YRP winner and a guest speaker.

### Programme

**Welcome and Introduction:** Dr Pauline Dodgson-Katiyo, BZS Executive

**Speaker:** Winner of the Young Researcher's Prize 2022  
**Guest Speaker**

**Prize Presenter:** Dr Knox Chitiyo, President, BZS  
**Event chaired by** Professor Diana Jeater, University of Liverpool and BZS Executive

*Free online event – all welcome.*

Register on Eventbrite at: [www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/bzs-young-researchers-prize-2022-online-event-tickets-415876446647](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/bzs-young-researchers-prize-2022-online-event-tickets-415876446647)

## 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

Victor de Waal

Pelagia Nyamayaro

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 at [zimgekko@aol.com](mailto:zimgekko@aol.com).*

## 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 WhatsApp network membership, 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, via our website:

[www.britainzimbabwe.org.uk/join-bzs-today](http://www.britainzimbabwe.org.uk/join-bzs-today))

### Rates

<b>Ordinary</b>	£21	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Unwaged/student</b>	£10	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Joint</b> (two at one address)	£25	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Institution</b>	£50	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

NAME

TELEPHONE:

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

EMAIL



## Community Development Organisations (CDO) webinar

Saturday 15 October 2022 BST 14.30–16.00 (CAT 15.30-17.00)

*BZS Distinguished Speaker series*

Free online event – all welcome. Register on Eventbrite at  
[www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/community-development-organisations-webinar-and-bzs-agm-tickets-409410476757](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/community-development-organisations-webinar-and-bzs-agm-tickets-409410476757)

The webinar will spotlight the important work being done by CDOs in Zimbabwe, the region and the wider diaspora in supporting Zimbabwean communities. Community Development Organisations operate in diverse sectors and countries, but have in common a real-world, positive community impact.

**Welcome and introduction – Dr KATHY MANSFIELD HIGGINS, Chair, BZS**

**Event chaired by NA NCUBE, CEO, The Global Native, Zimbabwe**

### *Speakers include*

**SAMANTHA MUROZOKI**, CEO of Kuchenetana Trust, Zimbabwe – feeding the vulnerable in Chitungwiza and Harare

**WELLINGTON MADUMIRA**, Co-ordinator for Climate Action Network (CAN) Zimbabwe – part of a global network of organisations driving national and global awareness and initiatives on climate change and the environment

**MUNJODZI MUTANDIRI**, Senior Programme Advisor with the Southern African Liaison Office (SALO), South Africa – research, advocacy, community and policy engagement on key national and transnational issues

**LUCY VAMBE**, CEO, Zimbabwe Life Project (ZLP) and Vice-Chair, Zimbabwe Midwifery and Nurses Association-UK (ZIMNA-UK), with **JESCA GUDZA**, Chair, ZIMNA – supporting Zimbabwean medical professionals in the UK and the health sector in Zimbabwe

### **AGM 2022**

**The CDO Webinar will be preceded from 12.00 BST (13.00 CAT) by the 41st BZS Annual General Meeting – to which all BZS members and friends are welcome – register on Eventbrite to attend both, or either event**

[www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/community-development-organisations-webinar-and-bzs-agm-tickets-409410476757](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/community-development-organisations-webinar-and-bzs-agm-tickets-409410476757)

### **Agenda**

#### **Welcome and introduction**

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of AGM 16th October 2021
3. Matters arising
4. Chair's report
5. Treasurer's report and accounts
6. Secretaries' reports
7. Reports from other officers, national committees and regions
8. Amendments to BZS Constitution
9. Motions for debate
10. Election of officers and executive committee member
11. 2023 Programme
12. Any other business



### **Statement from Knox Chitiyo, President of the Britain Society**

The Britain Zimbabwe Society shares the global sorrow on the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

As has been said by many, she leaves behind a remarkable legacy of public service and dedication.

Her Majesty visited Zimbabwe twice. In 1947, as Princess Elizabeth, she visited the then Southern Rhodesia. In 1991, as Queen, she opened the 15th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Harare. In April 1980, the then Prince Charles attended Zimbabwe's Independence ceremony.

Our condolences to the Royal Family and we wish His Majesty King Charles III every success as he begins his new role.

