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A Decade of Zimbabwe's Land Revolution: The Politics of the War Veteran Vanguard

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Introduction

The Zimbabwe state, governed since 1980 by a nationalist elite with origins in the liberation movement, has experienced complex dynamics and changes regarding class relations and power in a post-colonial settler economy. The state reached a climax of political polarisation during this last decade, from 2000 to 2010. In the first two decades of independence, the ruling nationalist class had enjoyed an alliance with settler capital forged during peace negotiations in 1979 at Lancaster House (see Horne 2001¹ and Selby 2006). The alliance antagonised and negated the aspirations of the liberation struggle expressed symbolically and concretely in terms of reversing a century old grievance over unequal colonial land ownership structures. War veterans were an 'embodiment' of this anti-colonial demand (Kriger 1995), although a scattered peasant movement had dominated land struggles until 1996 (see Moyo 2001). These war veterans, as a social category, were constituted by a movement of former military youth and so-called former refugees, whose nucleus were fighters of the Zimbabwe's liberation war². The conflict between the neocolonial state on the one hand and peasants and war veterans, on the other, intensified during the 1990s. The state had successfully managed to suppress the organisation of war veterans during the 1980s. However, in 1997, it conceded to provide for their welfare and financial demands and,

as part of the conditions of a truce entered between war veterans and President Robert Mugabe, promised to redistribute land. The state did not honour this promise. Under war veteran leadership, the land movement then became more militant, challenging settler capital, the state, ZANU-PF elites and President Mugabe from 1998, generating an unfolding drama of sharp class conflicts in the polarisation of land politics and state/society relations.

The post-independence era has largely exhibited the inherent contradictions of the state/society relations found in neocolonial and settler dominated capitalist settings (Sadomba 2008). Many scholars of Zimbabwe's crisis have not identified this contradiction due to the failure to understand the class position of the state itself, a critical point which Borras (2001) observes in the case of the Philippines. This omission leads to an erroneous assumption that 'the state is autonomous in making policy choices...even when these run counter to the interests of the dominant classes or groups in society' (Borras 2001: 545). The Zimbabwean state, being essentially a bourgeois neocolonial establishment, promoted interests and values that were opposed to those of the peasants, rural and urban workers and marginalised war veterans who comprised the land movement. War veterans led the land movement, culminating in intense political and social conflicts based on divergent class interests, challenging settler capital, the emerging black bourgeoisie and the ruling elite, transforming it into a powerful revolution. Analogously in Latin America, the state mediated land conflicts with a bias towards the elites and capitalists, against the poor and marginalised. The 'state apparatus' became a 'source of accumulation' for both 'state actors who are also businesspersons/landowners and for capitalists who are not formally part of the state', but are nevertheless favoured by the state through 'subsidies and protective trade policies' (Das 2007:5). The Zimbabwean state is no different and the land revolutionaries continued to challenge it at different levels and with varied intensity. Whether 'a revolutionary rupture with the capitalist system is on the cards' and under whose leadership remains, an intriguing question which this chapter partly explores (Moyo and Yeros 2007: 105).

Historical background

The 1970s guerrilla war that ended with the Lancaster House negotiations in 1979 was led by veteran nationalists, except for a brief two year period from 1975-77 when guerrillas disowned nationalist parties and fought as a united movement of the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) and the Zimbabwe National Liberation Army (ZANLA), under the Zimbabwe People's

Army (ZIPA). Owing to partisan cleavages of its leaders, ZIPA fractured (Sadomba 2011), giving way to nationalist control of the guerrilla movement again. A decisive military intervention by the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO), led to the incarceration of ZIPA leaders in Mozambique and a simultaneous rise by Robert Mugabe to the helm in 1977³. The political myopia of ZIPA leaders and their failure to cope with the internal power dynamics of the liberation movement is a weakness that has pervaded and sustained itself in the war veterans' movement, with disastrous consequences to the general liberation movement. ZIPA's demise lay in its failure to transcend partisan cleavages and the self-centred nature of some of its leadership like Mhanda himself, which led to continued division between the foundational liberation armies of ZANLA and ZIPRA (Sadomba 2011). Worse than ZIPA's lack of vision, war veterans have not put their whole weight into internally transforming the ZANU-PF movement into a revolutionary party and state power has remained, therefore, in the hands of an elite bourgeois leadership.

Peasant occupation movements, which had gained momentum during the liberation war, intensified after independence, with the state reaction continuously changing. Between 1980 and 1984, the state appeased the peasants through 'accelerated' regularisation of land occupations. The short-lived resettlement programme (mainly confined to marginal agricultural land) was later followed by the brutal suppression of land movement actors, now labelled squatters (Moyo 2001). From 1985, government resettlement policy tilted towards allocating land to what it considered capable small farmers and by 1990 towards the black elite and state functionaries who were allocated large commercial farms at the expense of the land movement and marginalised war veterans (see Moyo 1995).

During the 1980s, war veterans' (particularly the nucleus of former guerrillas) attempts at forming an organisation to protect their interests and those of the liberation war were systematically repressed by the state and, in particular, the dissenting former ZIPRA guerrillas, who unfortunately were backed by Apartheid South Africa⁴, were thwarted. After the Unity Accord was signed between ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU in 1987, war veterans reorganised themselves and formed the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA) in 1989, leading to various episodes of rebellion against the state, President Mugabe and ZANU-PF during the 1990s. They put forward demands to President Mugabe at an inaugural meeting held at Chinhoyi, which can be summarised as a return to the liberation agenda and pressure for their recognition and benefits. The President did not honour

any of those demands and war veterans started to stage street demonstrations demanding to meet him, but President Mugabe turned his back on them. Towards the end of 1997, a truce between President Mugabe – representing ZANU-PF and the state – and war veterans was negotiated, signalling a new political era of war veteran dominance in politics. War veterans were each awarded Z\$50,000.00 as disbursement for unpaid demobilisation backdated to 1980. This agreement for payment has been seen wrongly by scholars and analysts such as Raftopoulos and Mlambo (2009), Amanda Hammar (2009) and Geoffrey Feltoe (2004) as a process of cooptation of war veterans.

It is this victory by the war veterans over ZANU-PF, the state and President Mugabe that undermined the 1979 Lancaster House compromise and ‘accelerated the deteriorating relationship between [white] farmers and the state’, eventually leading to the demise of the ‘alliance’ between settler farmers and the ZANU-PF elites (Selby 2006: 257). White commercial farmers ‘resolved to “internationalise” the issue’ ‘in the hope that external awareness would arbitrate the process’ (Selby 2006: 257), but the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) was much ahead of them in this strategy, for:

A month before the New Labour Party was voted into power in Britain ... European Trade Unions ... [through] the Danish Trade Union Council posted Georg Limke in late 1996 to ... turn the trade union movement in Zimbabwe into a political party. Therein lay the evolutionary roots of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) (Mudenge 2004a: 10).

The ZCTU had been fighting for autonomy from the state from the beginning of the 1990s and, by aligning with international donors, they plunged Zimbabwe’s politics into the neoliberal regime change agendas designed by western powers. This tendency of civil society is described by Masunungure as:

... shackled[,] ... characterised by a debilitating irony: it agitated for autonomy vis-à-vis the state but did not enjoy such autonomy vis-à-vis international donors and partners. Because of the financial and material umbilical cord between the two unequal partners and the asymmetrical relationships attendant thereof, the Zimbabwean civil society community absorbed the international donor agenda hook, line and sinker (2008: 64).

In this context, I have argued that the MDC emerged to replace ZANU-PF elites as surrogates to the Lancaster House ‘alliance’ (Sadomba 2008: 165; Sadomba 2008a: 165; Sadomba 2008: 8; Sadomba 2011: 279). Rather than ending, the Lancaster House alliance went through a metamorphosis. This was the beginning of a new alliance and new mix of players to serve the same

purpose, though that of rescuing the interests of settler and international capital that was now threatened by rebellious veterans and, later, by a tsunami of the land hungry and a reserve army of the unemployed. The nationalist elites had outlived their usefulness as they could not manage to hold back these revolutionaries. This reconfiguration of political forces involved the MDC, white farmers and settler capital. These players chose to internationalise the issues and drifted away from domestic mediation, thereby undermining state autonomy and compromising on national sovereignty, resulting in adversarial relations that led to complex political diplomacy. The MDC was appealing to former colonial powers, rather than regional powers such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) or the African Union (AU) and it sharpened conflicts between African states and the white world of Europe, the USA and Australia. The mobilisation of European states, international donors and financial institutions and the western media in defence of international and settler capital, against the Zimbabwe state, the ZANU-PF ruling party and President Robert Mugabe, was another turning point in the country's politics. Conflict between the two groups has led to a theatrical diplomatic antagonism attracting worldwide attention and polarisation.⁵

Two decades of President Mugabe's leadership had therefore reversed the ideological gains of the liberation war and effectively protected the interests of white capital. Simultaneously, it suppressed all voices of dissent with appeasement of the peasants through a cosmetic resettlement programme. Power became more concentrated and centralised, crushing PF-ZAPU, which was a potential alternative to the leadership of the liberation movement. With this, a de facto one-party state under President Robert Mugabe reigned and the Lancaster House alliance consolidated. Major internal opposition to the ruling elite developed in the 1990s. Coupled with an economic downturn and social strife, the stage was set for a war veteran-led land occupations revolution, which took shape in 1998 and spearheaded occupations up to and beyond the eruption of 2000. From this period, the position of the state in relation to the land movement shifted many times, as did the position of President Mugabe and ZANU-PF, with the MDC alliance⁶ acting as a catalytic agent (Andrew and Sadomba 2006; Sadomba 2011; McCandless 2011).

The land occupations revolution of 1998-2002

Most scholars of Zimbabwe's land conflicts (e.g., Hammar 2009) do not distinguish the various phases and salient points concerning the unfolding land struggle from 1998, except Moyo (2001) who identified four phases of

land occupations from 1980, including a variety of policy shifts from 2001 and 2003 (Moyo 2005). This paper argues that there were two distinct land occupation periods, which were 1998 to 2002⁷ and thereafter.

When war veterans forced the state and President Mugabe to the negotiation table in 1997, they agreed that white commercial farms would be 'seized' and distributed to the land hungry, with 20 per cent of the land for the war veterans. Government reacted by immediately designating 1,471 commercial farms for compulsory acquisition (Moyo 2001). This was contested legally by white commercial farmers and no land redistribution materialised (Moyo 1999). War veterans reacted in isolated group initiatives by mobilising traditional leaders across the country (Interview K 2004⁸), leading to more than 30 war veteran-led occupations (Sadomba 2004; Marongwe 2003; Moyo 2001), including the most outspoken Svosve occupations in mid-1998.

The veterans-led land occupations were qualitatively different from previous peasant led land occupations in a number of ways, but mainly because this new leadership intensified the land struggles to a level of deep class antagonism and strategized its organisation. First, the occupations were militant – being confrontational where white farmers resisted – clearly borrowing 'aggressive' and surprise attack tactics from the guerrilla experiences of the armed struggle. Second, the land occupation movement became potentially more socially inclusive, by destroying the rural/urban divide that characterised previous land occupations and by incorporating state organs where war veterans were concentrated, such as the uniformed forces. In this sense, the 'local orientation' of the peasant land movement was 'transcended and peasants entered national politics', developing an 'alliance with the workers' (Das 2007:10). Thirdly, war veteran leadership introduced new ideologies, liberation war metaphors and symbolism and guerrilla tactics. These tactics included operating in small independent units that were autonomous, politicising the masses and establishing bases as command centres. Fourthly, war veteran leadership was vital in challenging the monopolisation of the cultural capital of the liberation war and history by nationalist politicians and ZANU-PF. All in all, the war veteran leadership of the land movement radically shifted 'grassroots agency' from being merely 'confined to and aimed at a power structure within its own immediate vicinity' to challenging the 'state at the national level' where class 'power is concentrated' (Das 2007:8).

The land occupations of 1998 were targeted at farms which the government of Zimbabwe had designated for acquisition, but could not acquire due to both litigation commenced by white farmers and to lack of will, according to war

veterans (Interviews P 2000, DTM 2000-2012, DM 2000-2008, Muchaneta 2004⁹). War veterans mobilised peasants and occupied the farms, challenging the state laxity regarding solving inherited racial imbalances in land ownership. It is important to remember that these land occupations constituted a building up of successful confrontation with the state, having pinned President Robert Mugabe¹⁰ to negotiate and agree a truce. As such, land occupations were a continuation of the war veterans' challenge to the state, which had started at the end of the previous decade and sharpened at Chinhoyi in 1992 (Sadomba 2008). Few scholars have noticed this linkage (e.g., Moyo 2001; Sadomba 2008, 2011). The land occupations were, therefore, a manifestation of class struggle and war veterans were quite conscious of this aspect.¹¹

The state reaction to the 1998 land occupations was draconian. The Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP), the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) and the white-dominated judiciary attacked the land revolutionary actors by torching their shelters, scattering them in nearby mountains and bushes and finally arresting and slamming them with all sorts of judicial punishments (Sadomba 2008). White farmers naturally aligned with the state to suppress the occupations. Some ZANU-PF elites, the state and President Robert Mugabe, were at this stage in the middle of the road and therefore were protecting their class interests and not necessarily serving the Lancaster House alliance.

The activism of war veterans up to the 1997 truce had created scepticism within ZANU-PF 'elites' and President Mugabe and their relationship remained strained throughout the early occupation period of 1998-2000 (Sadomba 2008). However, the entry of war veterans into the farms revealed political strategies by the white commercial farmers, particularly their 'internationalisation of the issue', which was seen as an affront by war veterans.¹²

The labour movement represented by the ZCTU evolved into a constitutional movement, the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) led by ZCTU President, Morgan Tsvangirai and some University of Zimbabwe activists such as Lovemore Madhuku. The NCA was vocal about the need to have a new Zimbabwean drafted constitution, citing weaknesses in the Lancaster Constitution of 1979. It forced government to institute a Constitutional Commission in April 1999, chaired by Justice Chidyausiku. The greater part of 1999 was therefore spent working on the new constitution and land occupations were carried out with limited media publicity. However, war veterans believed that the new constitution would have clauses that would

allow land to be expropriated from the white farmers to resettle the land hungry. As such, war veterans had particular interest in the constitution for this purpose.

On September 11, the MDC was finally formed, evolving from the labour and later, constitutional movements, led by Morgan Tsvangirai.¹³ The formation of the MDC had catalytic effects on the unfolding revolution led by war veterans. It seems that throughout 1998 and the first three quarters of 1999, neither the opposition nor the constitution preoccupied the state or President Mugabe. Considering that the NCA and other civil society movements had remained just pressure groups without a political party formation, it could be safely concluded that the main focus of the elite and the state was the land revolution that was spreading. On the one hand, the white farmers took government to court and resisted compulsory acquisition; on the other, war veterans started mobilising peasants to occupy land nationwide (Marongwe 2003). In 1998, a donor conference on land was held in Harare at a time when the occupations were raging and the state was fire-fighting them. It is also important to note that, during this period, war veterans were antagonistic to President Mugabe, threatening to disown him as the patron of their association (Sadomba 2008). Dr Hunzvi, then Chairman of the ZNLWVA, was arrested on charges of embezzlement, but also implicated on forming a hit squad to assassinate some senior ZANU-PF members and government ministers. Relations between them had continued to sour even after the truce. ZANU-PF elites had become more and more isolated, with forces from within (e.g., war veterans and peasants) and from without (e.g., opposition civil society movements) converging to attack the ruling oligarchy.

The situation was, however, more complex in that the new alliance of civil society, settler and international capital also competed with war veterans because the ideologies of the two sides were in direct conflict (i.e., with that of capital, domestic or international). In fact, ZANU-PF elites and the new alliance had common class interests which differed from those of marginalised war veterans and the land-hungry. It is, therefore, important to note that the difference between ZANU-PF elites and the MDC was a power and not an ideological struggle. Both of them were desperate for an opinion poll for the pending elections.¹⁴

The government hurriedly prepared for a referendum, despite the absence of statutory instruments for it (Madhuku 2000: 55). Section 57 (Sub-section 2 (1) of the draft contained a clause on the land issue that effectively

maintained the spirit and content of the Lancaster House constitution, proposing compensation for agricultural land acquired for resettlement by the government. It said:

where agricultural land is acquired compulsorily for the resettlement of people in accordance with a programme of land reform, any compensation payable must reflect an equitable balance between the public interest and the interest of those from whom the land is acquired.

This section angered the war veterans, 300 of whom organised a demonstration against the draft constitution, threatening to mobilise the electorate to vote against it (Participant observation 2000¹⁵). They petitioned the British High Commissioner and Emmerson Munangagwa, the Minister of Justice:

... demanding amendments in the draft constitution section dealing with land redistribution. The section [said] government [would] compensate farmers whose lands [would] have been acquired but the war vets demanded that no compensation be paid. ZNLWVA Harare branch Chairman, Douglas Mahiya [said], 'We are saying the price of the land has been paid by the blood of the people who died during the war' (*Daily News*, 12 January 2000).

President Mugabe then changed the clause of the draft constitution, using powers conferred by the Act.¹⁶ This clause triggered various counteractions from the white community, both inside and outside Zimbabwe, now campaigning to vote against the draft constitution. The mobilisation intensified and the heightened participation of the white constituency was unparalleled since independence, illustrating the gravity of issues at stake.

Climax of the revolution 2000-2002

When the referendum was finally held on 11 and 12 February 2000, the 'no' vote prevailed and the land issue exploded, with nationwide occupations spreading at an unprecedented speed. This new level of occupations was signified by the occupation of a derelict farm in Masvingo Province by war veterans, followed by nationwide occupations activity. What was the state reaction to these nationwide occupations? What was the position of civil society and the opposition movement? And, finally, what was the position of ZANU-PF and President Mugabe?

The defeat of the draft constitution, which was largely about the land, but also about preparing for President Mugabe's exit, was widely interpreted as indicating ZANU-PF's impending defeat in the next elections. In this sense, the referendum had served its purpose for both ZANU-PF and the MDC.

Owing to isolation from the liberation movement, settler and international capital and weakened by war veterans' attacks and the opposition coalition now led by the MDC, the ZANU-PF ruling class was desperate. President Mugabe realised that war veterans and the surging land revolution were an asset in manoeuvring this new development. Tactically, he decided to 'hijack' the land movement in a bid to use its cultural capital against the MDC and particularly against white commercial farmers. He started to work towards what many thought was a genuine alliance with the land movement, particularly the war veterans who led it, from around February 2000 (Sadomba 2008).

Government enacted and amended various pieces of legislation protecting occupiers and breaking the resistance of white commercial farmers.¹⁷ These enactments should be viewed against the backdrop of heightened MDC activities against land occupations, such as the increased demonization of President Mugabe, the intensified diplomatic onslaught and sanctions, all of which catalysed the situation. It prompted both war veterans and the ruling elite to increase mobilisation against settler farmland and capital. President Mugabe hardened his stance against the white farmers progressively as Masunungure (2004: 176-7) and Feltoe (2004: 200) observe:

In early April 2000, the president said no white commercial farmer would be chased away from Zimbabwe ... But as time went on the anti-white rhetoric intensified and ... in December 2001, the president was really on a *warpath*.

The organisation of the land movement did not have a conventional hierarchical formation, having been rooted in the structures, ethos and practices of guerrilla strategies and tactics and in the local traditional agro-religious formations. These two forms of movement and social organisation resulted in horizontally-structured, locally-organised units of occupation with no centralised command. As such, the attempt to hijack the movement by co-opting the leaders of the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA) was futile (Sadomba 2008). This is because the structures of the ZNLWVA did not initiate the nationwide occupations, nor did they control them. MT, a war veteran who coordinated occupation in Mazowe and Matepatepa, was clear that, 'The whole thing was spontaneous [with] no central organising platform that gave any direction ... nobody told us to do anything' (Interview MT 2001)¹⁸.

The horizontal organisation of the land occupations revolution also explains the nationwide spontaneity in relation to land grievances and the antagonistic level it had reached. The land revolution assumed its organisational structure from the guerrilla war which operates in small units and isolated activities, the

mosaic of which aggregates into a complete pattern of struggle. The structure made cooptation by the state difficult, as well as impossible to confront by the Commercial Farmers Union. It was elusive to potential enemies, flexible and efficacious as it suited local conditions and atmosphere. In short, the horizontal and dispersed nature of the land movement was ideal for land occupations, but, later, this proved a limitation for state attacks during the Murambatsvina period when the ZNLWVA was also weak and partially co-opted.

The land movement also engulfed the urban landless, who occupied land for urban housing and agriculture. According to Masuko,

The fast track housing cooperatives were born out of structures of the War Veterans Association that led the land occupations in both urban and rural areas. From the year 2000 they moved into open space belonging to councils within the urban areas and onto privately-owned White capitalist farms around urban areas. Housing cooperatives were formed on all occupied land. Members were drawn from the community and were [the] homeless poor ... Thirty nine co-operatives [were] formed between 2000 and 2003 (Masuko 2008: 191).

These housing cooperatives were also characteristically different from the preceding ones that started in mid 1980s. In Harare, war veterans formed a union in 2001 called the Greater Harare Housing Cooperative. Before they were smashed by Operation Murambatsvina in 2005, the union in Harare alone had achieved various stages of housing construction and development on allocated stands: 1,712 completed houses, 734 houses at roof level, 473 at window level, 1,332 at slab level and 2,026 foundations. In Harare alone and for projects registered with the Greater Harare Housing Union, there was a total of 10,097 houses in construction progress, on land distributed through the war veteran land movement. In comparison, nationally, actual houses constructed annually between 1985 and 2000 ranged from 15,000 to 20,000 (Masuko 2008: 186). The construction of about 10,097 houses in two years without state assistance was phenomenal. This figure can be juxtaposed with progressively dwindling numbers from 1,500 stands officially allocated in Harare in 1999 to 220 stands in 2004. The progress in housing provision in Harare alone was at least two-thirds of the national annual output and more than 1,000 times of official land allocations in Harare.

With this, the war veteran-led occupation movement had done away with the political rural and urban divide along ZANU-PF/MDC partisan lines. It became a movement that united the poor classes of the peasantry, farm workers, urban workers and the reserve army of the unemployed, thereby raising the

land question and struggles to their true national character. It is this factor that is fundamental in explaining the class conflicts of Murambatsvina which scholars have not debated. They have put their whole weight on humanitarian statistics, but have failed to use the data to explain the class antagonisms at the core of the clean-up. In cases such as the UN report by Tibaijuka (2005), figures are exaggerated (Moyo and Yeros 2005), as figures seemed to be an end in themselves rather than a means to unravelling a more complex interplay of forces. The picture is even better illuminated when Murambatsvina is viewed from its attack on indigenous industrialisation, which was threatening international capital and rising national capitalists (Sadomba 2011).

This class alliance, forged through the land revolution (Sadomba 2008; Masuko 2008), has escaped the analysis of many scholars and researchers. The majority of this poor urban working class comprised workers retrenched in the 1990s as formal industry shrank¹⁹ under ESAP and later under European and American sanctions. These retrenchments, coupled with a severe housing shortage, had caused congestion, owing to illegal construction and extension of outbuildings on high and low density properties. By the time Murambatsvina struck in 2005, more than 80 per cent of housing stands in Harare had such illegal constructions (Masuko 2008; Toriro 2006), illustrating the extent of the social base for mobilisation at the disposal of the land movement.

This was the situation at the height of urbanisation. Lynch (2000) pointed out the characteristic paradox of the inverse relation of urban influx and shrinkage of resources or means of livelihood in Third World cities. The situation of Zimbabwe during the ESAP and especially during the occupation and Fast Track periods seems quite different and this might explain how the country has managed to sustain its economy even under sanctions and mismanagement at the national level, especially before Operation Murambatsvina in 2005. The Zimbabwean working class is highly skilled, disciplined and educated. As a result, the shrinkage of industry gave birth to a vibrant informal sector of small-scale manufacturers in different fields with trained artisans and technicians producing high quality products (Sadomba and Mujeyi forthcoming). More than 60 per cent of the urban working class in Harare were in the informal sector, absorbing labour from the rural areas (Masuko 2003: 186). Almost all the different sectors of industry were duplicated, albeit at a lower scale, in the informal sector, competing now with the established capitalist large-scale industries (Spencer was a qualified artisan, manufacturing agricultural equipment and supplying the SADC region, Interview 2009²⁰).

This economic condition swiftly changed at the commencement of the occupations in 2000. There was sudden capital flight resulting from the imposition of sanctions and as a backlash to expropriation of settler capital. The working class structure also, as suddenly, transformed from formal to informal self-employment. The power of trade unions on the working class withered with this changing environment. Land occupations in the urban and rural areas were a major turning point since the formation of the MDC in 1999 and they eroded its base, which heavily relied on trade union politics. Regimentation of the workers was no longer possible for both the state and for the MDC. Structural changes of and within the working class explain the failures of stay-aways called for by the MDC after 2000 that had succeeded earlier.

The land movement had developed far-reaching objectives beyond redistribution and these included 'restoration of dignity of Zimbabweans', 'equitable distribution of land', 'restoration of cultural values', 'urban health' and demonstrating the potential of 'self-help' (Masuko 2008: 200). The formation of housing cooperatives and unions by war veterans in urban areas, the reconfiguration of industry that ensued and the resuscitation of war time base committees, show that the war veteran leadership and the land movement broadly was not 'based on a single issue' as Moyo and Yeros (2005: 190) have argued, but, in fact, a broader ideological struggle with evolving 'democratic peasant worker organisational structures'.

Differences in ideology between the state, ZANU-PF elites and the land movement caused antagonistic clashes at the district level, proving that co-optation of ZNLWVA leadership at the national level was not automatic; in fact, it was resisted at the base of the pyramid owing to divergent objectives and the conflicting ideology of the FTLRP. The objective of war veterans was for land to be given to the land-hungry people as outlined by DTM (a former ZIPA commander and leader of land occupations in Mazowe):

Some people have been saying the land issue has been on the agenda because ZANU-PF wants to use it to gain some political mileage. But I, as well as my colleagues, War Veterans, we have a genuine desire to have the land issue resolved once and for all now. Political mileage would be a downstream benefit rather than the main objective. What we want to do is actually to give land to the people. If ZANU-PF as a party is going to benefit by that, well, there is nothing wrong with that. But it will be wrong for anybody to assume that we are doing this so as to bolster the position of ZANU-PF. That is not the case. We genuinely want to resettle people. The poverty that is quite abundant among our people can only be ameliorated... rectified... corrected, if people get land. There are no jobs in town, there are no jobs in industry and most of our people are on the land (Interview DTM 2000).

However, war veterans were also aware that ZANU-PF elites were opposed to them and the final objectives of the land movement. According to a war veteran leader of occupations holding a political science degree, they knew that ZANU-PF elites and government officials 'dislike', 'fear' and feel 'unease' about war veterans, preferring to 'keep' them at a 'distance' as a result (Interview DTM 2000). At Shiro Farm in Goromonzi in 1998, war veterans threatened the ZANU-PF senior ministers and politburo members that after repossessing land they would return to overhaul the party leadership and allow the marginalised peasants and war veterans to take over (Interviews DM 2000; K 2004; Muchaneta 2004). However, the intriguing question is, if war veterans saw the need to change the leadership of the party and government since the Chinhoyi meeting of 1992, why did they not take it as a priority? Why did war veterans not take over the party machinery first as a prelude to taking over state power? What exactly did they mean about their return? This could be attributed to limited theoretical understanding of revolution, especially from a Marxist viewpoint. Failure to prioritise seizure of state power with a view to establishing one that protected the interests of the working masses reflected considerable myopia and theoretical immaturity on the part of the veterans.

This was the leadership dilemma that the war veterans were grappling with during the revolution. As Mudenge later confirmed, President Mugabe had decided to unleash the state machinery – specifically the army – to silence war veterans (2004a). So war veterans 'knew that they risked becoming targets of state violence', which they had to avoid. At the same time, they sought to win the ZANU-PF elites away from the Lancaster alliance, resulting in the 'interaction between the needs of politicians for a constituency, [and] of people for land' (Alexander 2003: 97). War veterans faced the threat of ZANU-PF elites going back into the Lancaster House alliance. Strategic compromise seemed inevitable and ZANU-PF's gain of 'downstream benefits' was certainly one of them.

The MDC, the Commercial Farmers Union (CFU), private and international media and anti-revolution scholars of neoliberal traditions painted the occupations as chaotic. They claimed that occupiers were murdering, raping and torturing people on the farms. They depicted war veterans as rogue elements sent into the farms by a beleaguered ZANU-PF, an aged president and a desperate state to suppress the opposition party. Evidence on the ground suggests otherwise. Land occupations were far from being chaotic; they were orderly, principled, with a few violent clashes of

mainly minor assaults. Interviews with many white commercial farmers, a white lawyer who represented farmers and farm workers, not to mention the occupiers themselves, show this. During the occupation period, war veterans had specific rules of operation that they followed, which included not to take any farm property, not to destroy produce or kill animals, to request from the owner anything they needed, etc (Interviews, P 2000; Bota 2004; Personal communication with white farmer H 2000-2003²¹; Interview, white farmer BT 2004).²² War veterans were given more rules by the spirit mediums before they went to occupy land. These included prohibition of any type of sex during occupations and in the occupied areas (Participant observation at Nyabira, Mazowe and Matepatepa, 2000-2004).²³

However criminal elements took advantage of the situation as a white farmer clarified:

War veterans would not fall in the criminal element [group] who I know took advantage of the whole situation to... gain from what was going on at the time ... those people can't be war veterans. So they were abusing the name of war veterans ... Genuine war veterans were after the land. This was pretty much as straight forward as that (Interview, B 2004).

For politically strategic reasons, the new alliance of the MDC, settlers and international capital on the one hand and, ZANU-PF elites on the other, portrayed war veterans as barbaric, unintelligent and incapable of ruling the country or leading the people. White commercial farmers themselves confirmed that war veterans were not violent and did not loot the farms; they were clearly after the land.

During the occupation period, white commercial farmers failed to respond positively to the pragmatic proposals of war veterans to share excess land. War veterans actually approached the farmers with the idea of not driving them off the land, but to share land that was in excess and was underutilised or applied the one household-one-farm principle.

We first negotiated with the farmers [to share land] and entered into written agreements before even occupying. However when we now made a follow-up to implement the agreements at the time of elections, the farmers started to change their mind and they were now saying they signed under duress. We then realized that these people were dishonest and they were not serious; we were just wasting our time (Interview, P 2000).

Another reason why commercial farmers kept vacillating was that farmers expected the MDC and Morgan Tsvangirai to win the 2002 elections, hoping

that he would then reverse the land reform. This expectation destroyed chances of negotiation and dialogue, giving the ZANU-PF elites the opportunity to start fresh occupations that were not based on the criteria that the war veterans had used. The ruling party elites were punishing the white settler farmers for aligning with the MDC and therefore sharing land with them was out of question. In some cases, war veterans went ahead to mobilise the land movement actors in defence of some white commercial farmers against the state and ZANU-PF wave of occupations on occupied farms. In one situation, armed police squads in riot gear came from Harare to disperse demonstrators who had locked up the settled war veteran who had driven the farmer out against the wishes of the land revolution actors. According to revolutionaries, this war veteran, a medical practitioner and herbalist, was being sponsored by the highest offices of the land as a gesture of appreciation for treating HIV in one of the relatives, whereas the white commercial farmers (husband and wife) were understood to have been supportive of the marginalised through sponsoring health programmes and the district hospital (personal communication with the demonstrators, personal observation G Farm Concession 2004).²⁴

The state, as an actor, intensified occupations and targeted critical white commercial farmers to break the backbone of the MDC. Both the MDC and ZANU-PF engaged in violent political clashes during the electoral period and this clouded the land occupations. The MDC, in alliance with white commercial farmers, actively organised gangs to attack occupiers in their bases and even at their homes. The first deployment of occupiers was attacked such that in many areas occupations were postponed until reinforcement was mobilised from elsewhere (Interview, DTM 2000). However, some MDC members supported land occupations.²⁵ For example, Munyaradzi Gwisai openly and publicly supported them and he was removed from the party for his utterances. Another person was Learnmore Jongwe, then spokesman for the MDC, who went with a group of MDC supporters to join occupiers in Nyabira (Interview, DM 2001).

Although the FTLRP was started in mid-2000, it took time for it to be felt on the ground and even more time for the state to ultimately control the land movement. By the end of the year, the state had failed to penetrate the movement and bring it under control. Instead, it met with stiff resistance from the land movement, prompting the state to convene a high-powered meeting between some war veterans and the state on 18 December 2000. The meeting was aimed at disempowering war veterans and reinforcing the authority of the task

force structures driving the Fast Track. Nevertheless, the land movement actors continued to resist state manoeuvres. With imminent presidential elections (in 2002) the state and ZANU-PF proceeded cautiously in relation to the FTLRP, fearing that war veterans would mobilise voters against President Mugabe.

After the presidential elections of 2002, which were won by President Mugabe, the state now implemented its Fast Track Programme in full throttle, drastically changing the situation in the farms in order to control the movement. ZANU-PF leadership at the local level, chiefs and civil servants were mobilised by the state against the war veteran leadership. Civil servants and local leaders started to target war veterans for removal from the farms. The Presidential Land Review Committee observed that although war veterans were happy that the government at last 'had heeded the call for land redistribution ... [however] their members had not benefited as promised ... [and] land was allocated on regional lines...' (Utete 2003: 35). From 2002/3, the state managed to usurp the leadership of the land movement from the war veterans, marking the end of the occupation period.²⁶

The Fast Track Land Reform Programme

The FTLRP was an immediate strategy formulated by government and the ruling ZANU-PF to deal with the revolution. At this time, the state shifted its role from one of the actors of the land movement to that of a power above the movement, exercising the authority of 'legalizing and regulating the occupations' (van der Haar 2005: 5). However, latently its objective was to usurp control of the land revolution from the war veteran leadership and sway it from its original objective of land redistribution to the land hungry. Through the FTLRP, the state regained legitimacy and assumed authority to take charge of and structure the land occupations. Implementation focused on attacking and weakening the land revolution leadership. Organisationally, the FTLRP had a national task force to study the movement, create structures and re-establish state control. A National Task Force, led by the controversial Minister of Local Government Ignatius Chombo,²⁷ decentralised its operations forming Provincial and District Lands Committees. District committees and lower-tier structures (called Committees of Seven) were frontline structures of the FTLRP, created specifically to negate war veteran leadership of the movement at the grassroots level of the revolution.

The first manifest clash between the state and the land revolutionaries was based on the new structures imposed by the state. At the national level, there was neither representation of war veterans nor any actors of the

revolution. At provincial levels, war veterans employed by government were used to represent land occupiers, despite the fact that these, in many cases, had nothing to do with the occupations. At district level, the most senior civil servant – District Administrator (DA) – and the District Lands Committee sidelined the actual war veterans who were leaders of the land movement and replaced them with hand-picked individuals who they preferred to represent the land movement constituency. Even these hand-picked individuals became a minority in a committee of about fifteen people. Many such tactics were used, but the land revolutionaries resisted, resulting in serious clashes, which, at times, degenerated into physical assaults (Sadomba 2008).

Overtly, the FTLRP involved land assessment to determine carrying capacity, demarcation into plots, settler selection and finally land allocation. Three tier tenure systems resulted where A1 plots were based on a communitarian policy and A2 was for commercial farming; communal lands remained unchanged. The objective of the land revolution was in line with the A1 model where as many peasant farmers as possible would be resettled through the scheme. The A2 model became very controversial as it was distributed for patrimonial reasons, handled directly by the Minister of Lands and Agriculture, then Joseph Made.

Scholars have failed to analyse the particular development of the war veteran- led revolution from 1997. This is erroneous in that failure to distinguish the various phases conceals many factors that help us understand the dynamic metamorphosis from a 'single issue' movement to a revolution. The land occupations differed markedly between the nature, approach, objective and motive of war veteran-led occupations and state and ZANU-PF- led occupations during the Fast Track period. The ZANU-PF and state-orchestrated occupations were mainly invasions of land already occupied by revolutionaries, aimed at dispossessing occupiers in order to give it to ZANU-PF elites, senior civil servants, or relatives of those in the system. War veterans dubbed this wave of occupations *jambanja on jambanja*²⁸, meaning that they were occupations of already occupied land by revolutionaries. The Fast Track was not about bringing order to a disorderly operation, as claimed, but on the contrary, it started to introduce disorder and new waves of occupations.

The process of the FTLRP was summarised in a document presented to the Provincial Stakeholder Dialogue held from 23 to 24 August 2004, organised by the African Institute of Agrarian Studies. War veterans wrote:

Arrests of land occupiers has been orchestrated and well planned so much that strategies are made to create crimes where war veterans [are] fast-tracked to cells,

court and jail. It's a well organized syndicate of officials from the mass that is used ... police details who arrest, magistrates and his public prosecutor who make sure you [go] to jail. When others [occupiers] realize this humiliation, they ... go back to [their] towns of origin and the so-called politicians become happy and celebrate. But can we say they will have solved the problem? No! ... Already there is political discontent and distortion in the Agrarian Revolution (Mashonaland West War Veterans Association 2004).

As soon as the Fast Track Programme took hold, its implementers started to weed out war veterans and other revolutionaries, opening commercial farms for elite settlement. These elites were mainly senior government officials, senior members of the uniformed forces, party loyalists, relatives and the ruling oligarchy, who were given whole farms to themselves measuring hundreds or even thousands of hectares. These 'chefs', as the elite are commonly called, chose prime land with good infrastructure and farm houses, chasing away the revolutionaries. In contrast, revolutionaries were allocated A1 plots that were several subdivisions of a farm (as small as six hectares per household) according to official government policy. Moreover, the government input scheme favoured these large- scale commercial A2 farmers more than the small A1 farmers. For example, A1 farmers, occupying 98 per cent of the resettled land, got less of the funds, with the balance going to A2 farms. In 2006, government budgeted a paltry Z\$1 trillion for '2005-6 season crop input finance to support A1 and communal farmers', comprising more than a million household farmers, to be conservative. In comparison, A2 farmers got, through the Central Bank programme called the Agricultural Sector Productivity Enhancement Fund (ASPEF), 'ZW \$7 trillion and other private financing schemes' (Gono 2008).

Many no longer had the energy to fight and they simply returned to their houses in towns or to their rural homes. The Fast Track was marked by many violent clashes between the state and the land revolutionaries. Moreover, many of those who were given the land for large- scale A2 commercial farming, where land movement actors had been removed, were not capitalist farmers and were accused of asset stripping²⁹ (Mashonaland West War Veterans Association 2004).

Murambatsvina period

This chapter argues that the decade of Zimbabwe's revolution spearheaded by war veterans is a tale of class conflict within the liberation movement and without. Class antagonisms reached their climax during the Murambatsvina³⁰ phase.

In this section, we examine the revolution during the Murambatsvina period from mid 2004 to 2008. Many scholars and analysts have looked at Murambatsvina in partisan terms, arguing that it was retribution against MDC supporters. This chapter disagrees with this analysis and argues that Murambatsvina was an attack on the revolution. It further argues that Murambatsvina occurred both in rural as well as urban areas and it started before 2005. Murambatsvina was imbedded in an overall strategy to deal systematically with the revolution – in which war veterans were the vanguard – that had been fully developed by the state from the rupture in 2000 (Sadomba 2011).

The state designed a strategy comprising three options for formal intervention into the land revolution. The first option was simple cooptation of the movement through ZNLWVA leadership structures aimed to diffuse the movement's autonomy and to subdue it. This strategy was embarked on soon after the February referendum in 2000, when President Mugabe invited Hunzvi to spearhead the electoral campaign at the ZANU-PF Politburo post-mortem meeting that was held a week after the referendum.³¹ The second option was to create parallel state structures that would antagonise those of the land revolution in the hope that the later would succumb. The third and last resort was to smash the revolution violently and dissipate it. The Fast Track was a process of executing these three options in that order and Operation Murambatsvina was a culmination of that long-term strategy. During execution, the options overlapped and backdated, although they remain distinguishable and severable.

The attempt by the ruling clique to co-opt the revolution for its purposes failed for a number of reasons, including, but not limited to, the complex horizontality of the revolution's organisation, localisation, divisions within state organs,³² and effective negation of land revolution structures that continuously made war veterans suspicious about the actual agenda of the state and ZANU-PF elites. Although parallel structures were created in the form of Task Force Committees, land committees, village Committees of Seven and rejuvenation of traditional leadership, the land revolution under war veteran leadership did not succumb. This left the state with no option but to implement the third alternative, then code-named Murabatsvina.

Operation Murambatsvina/Restore Order began much earlier than 2005, as a continuation of clashes between state organs and the anti-settler revolutionaries, particularly war veteran leaders. In Mashonaland West and Central, for example, there were continuous brutal evictions of occupiers by the state in Zvimba, Mazowe and Shamva districts, implicating provincial

governors such as Elliot Manyika and ministers such as Ignatius Chombo. The onslaught on Roger Boka by the ruling oligarchy is also seen as part of the Murambatsvina strategy (Sadomba 2011). Tactically, government postponed the widespread violent onslaught on the land revolution until the general elections of 2005.³³ It is notable that ZANU-PF won the elections overwhelmingly, reflecting the 'downstream benefits' of the revolution, both in rural and urban areas (Masuko 2008; Sadomba 2008). It is illustrative that ZANU-PF regained the only seat in the traditional stronghold city of Harare, both in the 2005 and 2008 parliamentary elections and that the seat was won by a war veteran candidate, Nyanhongo, who clearly rose from being councillor because of his articulation of the land revolution objectives.

As a long-term strategy to consolidate the land revolution, war veterans decided to take over the political leadership of ZANU-PF by mobilising support through the land revolution. Their first step was to strengthen the ZNLWVA. To do so, they had to identify a courageous leader for the association, after the death of Dr Hunzvi. Jabulani Sibanda, then chair of Matabeleland Province, had emerged as a fearless leader when he publicly denounced the 'old guard' politicians of Matabeleland, including stalwarts like Joseph Msika, then member of both the state and ZANU-PF Presidium. The state and the ZANU-PF ruling elite therefore backed Joseph Chinotimba, an outspoken land occupier during *Jambanja*, who received extensive television coverage by the state station, the Zimbabwe Television (ZTV). The Joint Operations Command tried to influence³⁴ the choice of war veterans, but to no avail and Sibanda became the new chair, unopposed (personal observation ZNLWVA national congress, 2004, Mutare). However, he also was later co-opted and he organised an attempt of a million- (wo)man march in Harare in 2007 to support President Mugabe's candidature for presidential elections in 2008. For this new role, he was rewarded with a brand new twin cab vehicle and a house in an up-market suburb of the capital, Harare. In addition, his farm was heavily equipped, according to information given at a ZNLWVA meeting held at the ZANU-PF provincial offices along Harare's Fourth Street (Personal observation, January 2008³⁵). This co-option of the ZNLWVA's national executive dashed the plans of the association and the revolutionaries.

The war veterans' second step was to get into Parliament in massive numbers. Many registered for ZANU-PF primary elections, but were removed from the list by the party elite and were replaced by counter revolutionaries. Ironically, war veterans campaigned for these imposed candidates: for example, they campaigned for a relative of President Mugabe's, young Patrick Zhuwao, in

the general elections who was preferred instead of the war veteran who had led occupations in Nyabira. He was given the post of Minister of Science and Technology. The vision of war veterans and their political tactics are in this sense, baffling. However, this reflects the complexity of the situation where a revolution confronts catalysing neocolonial tendencies and the imminent threat of international capital and military forces (displayed by the MDC as surrogates of European powers), nationalist bourgeois tendencies (among ZANU-PF elites), settler and international capital. Determining the priority enemy at any given time might be tricky and debatable. Why did war veterans not insist on getting into Parliament when ZANU-PF was at its lowest point and they (war veterans) were powerful, instead of accepting to back imposed and little-known candidates? Indeed, this weakened this revolution substantially. The criticism of Moyo and Yeros (2005) is relevant in this regard. War veterans, despite ideological clarity and long term-strategies, were tactically sterile. A retreat at this point was tantamount to bolstering the position of ZANU-PF elites, giving them the tactical advantage which they, led by the ingenious President Mugabe, were quick to exploit and they swiftly smashed the movement through Murambatsvina. This tactical error grossly and dearly cost Zimbabwe's revolution.

Soon after the general elections in 2005, the postponed 'violent retribution by the state', to borrow Jun Borrás' words (2001: 548), was commenced on the land revolution.³⁶ The operation started by demolishing houses of cooperatives in the urban areas.³⁷ The demolition was done by local authority operatives using earth-moving equipment accompanied by the police and army. 'Illegal' structures in high-density properties were also razed to the ground as were the established informal sector production sites and workshops. As there was not enough warning, property was lost and, worse still, the means of urban livelihood were destroyed as means of production for the small-scale manufacturers were crushed in the process. Above all, the operation was life-threatening as it left many families without housing, exposed in cold winter winds. The effect on the urban land movement was clear as Masuko writes:

... in doing so (government) dashed the hopes of the low income urban homeless and of one of the most radical housing developments ever initiated in Zimbabwe. However ... the occupiers remained on the occupied farms minus all the structures that they had built ... (Masuko 2008: 204).

The most intriguing question that scholars have glossed over or totally ignored is, what was the motive of the regime in carrying out the operation? ZANU-PF had clearly started to regain popularity through the land movement, winning

more than two-thirds majority in the 2005 general elections³⁸ (Masuko 2008). Why did President Robert Mugabe and ZANU-PF not forge genuine unity with war veterans and the land revolutionaries as opposed to a marriage of convenience? The answer seems to lie in the intrinsic class contradictions and class struggle. War veterans feel that Operation Murambatsvina was targeted at them specifically as the vanguard of the revolution. Operation Murambatsvina was not the only operation of this period. Another one was Operation Chikorokoza Chapera that was carried out in 2006. This was a rural operation that focused on specific occupied farms and mineral exploitation sites that had become the new source of livelihood for dispersed Murambatsvina victims and the rural masses under economic siege. Although Chikorokoza Chapera was countrywide, the most brutal attacks were in the Chimanimani gold and the Chiadzwa diamond mines, both in Manicaland, the war veteran strong-hold. These were seen as ethnic attacks on the constituency of war veterans that contributed between 75 and 85 per cent of people who joined the liberation war. War veterans led these mining operations (participant observation, Chiadzwa 2006³⁹, Sadomba 2011).

Structural reconfigurations also occurred during the Murambatsvina period. The state, ZANU-PF and President Mugabe, aware of the cruel attacks they had made on the revolutionaries, particularly war veterans, decided to forge a new alliance. This time they chose the traditional leaders – who had been sidelined since independence owing to co-optation of most of them by the colonial state during the liberation struggle – to replace the mobilisation role of the revolutionary actors in ZANU-PF. The countryside was not being democratised by going back to traditional authority. Rather, this structure was, as in the case of the Philippines, being elevated and entrenched into an elite 'to dominate the rural polity'. With state resources and delegated powers, this elite could 'use extensive patronage networks that combine (partial) provision of daily subsistence needs of rural poor households with the threat and/or actual use of violence' (Borras 2001: 550).

First, chiefs were allocated prime land with beautiful farm houses and infrastructure. In addition, they were given grants of seed and chemical fertilisers. They were also given double cab vehicles for personal transport and administrative personnel, including secretaries and messengers. The powers of traditional leaders were also increased and they were given more functions as commissioners of oaths. In 2006, new agricultural programmes were initiated by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ). These were the Productive Sector Finance Facility (PSF) in 2003 and the Agricultural Sector

Productivity Enhancement Facility (ASPEF) in June 2005 (Gono 2008: 148-150). The farm mechanisation programme under the ASPEF included many schemes for drought relief: food, seed, fuel, livestock, liquid money and farm equipment such as tractors and combine harvesters. These traditional leaders and elites were a bourgeois class under formation. Chiefs were not only direct beneficiaries of this project, but also distributors, giving them the extra advantage of consolidating their social networks. The Basic Commodity Supply Side Intervention Facility (BACOSSSI), 'under which primary, secondary and tertiary producers and suppliers in targeted key sectors of the economy were afforded concessional production-linked financial support for working capital requirements' (Gono 2008: 151), was also implemented. However, this exerted high inflationary pressures on the economy as it distorted prices and as some of the inputs were abused and were not channelled into production.⁴⁰

Much has been written and debated⁴¹ about the evil nature with which Operation Murambatsvina was carried out by the state (Tibaijuka 2005; Toriro 2005; Masuko 2008; Mhiripiri 2008; Mlambo 2008; Moore 2008; Vambe 2008), but little or no analysis has been offered on the class nature of the state operation. As a result, the analysis is, at best, shallow and, at worst, confused. For example, simple empirical facts are contested, like who was targeted by Murambatsvina. Vambe argues that 'both rural and urban areas; ZANU-PF supporters and MDC supporters and non-aligned, were targeted' (2008: 3). However, others see the operation as partisan, attacking MDC city strongholds as 'punishment' for 'voting for MDC' and the desire of the ruling party to reverse modernity - symbolised by the urban working class - attempting to unwind the time of the urbanites to 'year zero' rural homelands (Moore 2008: 28). In desperate defence of state action, Mahoso tried to separate Murambatsvina from the land revolution itself, saying 'the African land reclamation movement [was] rural and [had] little to do with urban slum clearance' (2008: 160). Vambe's view is correct and supported by empirical evidence. Moore's argument can be challenged on grounds of lack of empirical data based on fieldwork demanded by such a controversial study. It sounds more reasonable that urbanites who voted ZANU-PF in 2005 were influenced mainly by the land revolution and this signified a shift from the MDC, considering that the party's land policy and alliance with white commercial farmers were seen as negating the land occupation revolution. Moreover, Morgan Tsvangirai said that land occupiers were spreading in a slovenly fashion like sprouting mushrooms and warned against starvation under indigenous farmers, thereby enhancing this perception about the MDC.

This chapter argues that the land revolution of Zimbabwe for the decade 2000 - 2010 was the climax of class conflict. The politics of power at this juncture transcended partisan interests as the real bone of contention was protection of class interests and class domination by ZANU-PF elites and the petty-bourgeoisie against peasants, rural and urban working classes. Political power was under formidable threat from the land revolution that had now mobilised both urban workers and peasants. At no point in Zimbabwe's liberation struggle had such a powerful alliance of the urban working class and rural peasants been forged; moreover, never had such an alliance been seen at such a national scale. The ZANU-PF ruling elite, petty and rising national bourgeoisie were worried by the imminent power shifts threatening to take place in favour of the lower classes, comprising the land revolutionaries led by war veterans.

The myth that war veterans were incapable of leading the Zimbabwean society had been utterly dispelled and a revolutionary climate had developed. According to a war veteran leader of occupations in Mazowe District, 'The situation had presented itself' (Interview, DTM 2000). The leadership capabilities of war veterans had been demonstrated when they organised the land-hungry, homeless, informal-sector producers and farm workers, sending unequivocal signals that it was only a matter of time before the movement took over state power. This possibility, of course, sent shivers through the ruling elite, who immediately took the third option – the real 'hidden dimension of operation Murambatsvina' – a violent retributive class attack on the urban and rural poor revolutionaries. The impact of the housing cooperatives and unions are illustrative of this new and rising power of the peasants and workers with marginalised war veterans as the vanguard, against both capital and elitism.

A question that has been debated is whether or not the land revolution dissipated and disintegrated after Murambatsvina. What became of the land movement and what is its status today? This question can be answered by viewing the agency of the revolutionary actors from 2005. Many war veterans, who were interviewed in connection with Operation Murambatsvina were bitter. More than 10,000 properties at different stages of development were destroyed, including and especially those of the war veterans.⁴² Members of the land occupation revolution were scattered across the country as a result of Operation Murambatsvina and Operation Chikorokoza Chapera.⁴³ Counter strategies by war veterans included ousting ZANU-PF elites in the 2008 elections⁴⁴ (Interview, Muchaneta 2006). Dispersal of revolutionaries and Murambatsvina victims effectively also spread mobilising agents against the ruling ZANU-PF elite, President Mugabe and their bourgeois counterparts.

Strategically, war veterans mobilised the ZANU-PF electorate for the Parliamentary elections of 2008. However, the politburo sought ways of weeding out war veterans by applying unconstitutional qualifications, including that a ZANU-PF Parliamentary candidate had to have been in the provincial executive for at least five years. In 1980, at Zimbabwe's independence, ZANU-PF had issued a directive barring war veterans from participating in the leadership of the party at any level, which condition was only lifted during the occupation period, by default. This directive had been communicated by Witness Mangwende at 88 Manica Road, then ZANU-PF Headquarters (participant observation, 1980). It was therefore impossible that under normal circumstances one would have risen through the ranks to occupy a provincial level post, so this was clearly done to exclude war veterans.⁴⁵ Many war veterans lost their meagre income campaigning to be parliamentarians, only to be weeded out.⁴⁶ Das is correct in his observation that the sheer numbers of the land movement 'constitute[d] a political threat to [the] regime overlooking their interests, either through elections or through non-electoral agency' (Das 2007). Jabulani Sibanda, who tried to silence war veterans sidelined in the primary elections, was viciously snapped at in a meeting of war veterans (Personal observation, January 2008, Fourth Street Offices). The angry crowd threatened the doom of the party in the 2008 elections. Some war veteran candidates, for example in a Marondera constituency and in Mutasa, refused to step down with disastrous consequences to the ruling party. Others took the primary election irregularities to the High Court, but many others simply withdrew, including war veterans in Goromonzi, Zvimba, Domboshawa and Harare (Personal observation 2008).

The ballot became the new 'weapon of the weak', now mobilised by the scattered Murambatsvina victims, comprising urban informal sector producers, urban homeless and some dispossessed A1 settlers and marginalised war veterans. War veterans and revolutionaries were disgruntled by the process and the sidelining of their candidates. This anger, disillusionment and mobilisation by Murambatsvina victims changed the traditional voting behaviour in the rural areas, leading to ZANU-PF general defeat, losing parliamentary majority to the MDC. Numerically, President Mugabe was also defeated by Morgan Tsvangirai in the March 29th elections. With panic, the state reacted by unleashing retributive violence on both the rural and urban electorate in a military operation codenamed Operation Mavhotera Papi? (Operation whom did you vote for?). The army was engaged to 'mobilise' or is it to 'coerce' voters. A shift in the use of the army instead of war veterans clearly explains that the state had terminated its alliance with the latter. A

re-run of the presidential elections was marred by organised state violence, resulting in Morgan Tsvangirai's withdrawal from the race and seeking refuge in the Dutch Embassy in Zimbabwe. Murambatsvina had pushed partisan, but especially class, contradictions to their zenith.

War veterans heavily criticised regimentation, threats and violence against the electorate in the run up to the presidential run-off.⁴⁷ The elections that put President Mugabe back into power were widely condemned regionally and internationally. This situation forced ZANU-PF to concede to a power-sharing deal, forming a Government of National Unity with the two MDC parties.⁴⁸ Omission of the land movement and particularly of war veterans, in this GNU is conspicuous, raising questions regarding the future of both the GNU and the land revolution.

Rupture with the capitalist system?

Zimbabwe's decade-long experience raises a number of controversial questions regarding whether it represents a revolution and whether war veterans were a vanguard force or merely a ZANU-PF political instrument (see Moyo 2001; Moyo and Yeros 2007; Mamdani 2009; Sadomba 2008; Sadomba 2011). Moyo and Yeros argue that while a revolutionary situation had emerged, it was 'interrupted', ... '[leading] not to a revolution but a *radicalised* state [-] peripheral state which has rebelled against neo-colonialism' (2005, 2007). Interruption occurred for various reasons, largely because the process was co-opted by the state through the official FTLRP and its structures and its consistent attempts to normalise relations with capital (ibid). They also argue that it was possible to co-opt the process partly because of the war veteran leadership weaknesses, given their limited focus as a 'single issue' movement. I have differed with elements of their argument on the basis of their poor class characterisation of the political forces and weak analysis of state control (Sadomba 2011). I concluded that a revolution far beyond agrarian transformation did actually occur with ramifications on the totality of the economic, political and social life of Zimbabwe. It was an anti-settler revolution first and foremost, focusing on reversing racial resource distribution with its main leverage being a rupture of the elite-settler alliance. A century-old settler economy was reversed, democratised and de-racialised between 1997/98 and 2002/03. Nonetheless, while Moyo and Yeros concur with the idea that a wider social transformation occurred (Moyo and Yeros 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011), they consider this change to have fallen short of a revolution. They ask whether:

a revolutionary rupture with the capitalist system is on the cards. The latter would require disciplined and durable working class organisation, revolutionary leadership and not least the implosion of the state apparatus, either through war and/or through the dissent/disintegration of the armed forces – none of which occurred in Zimbabwe (Moyo and Yeros 2007: 105).

This raises a fundamental question regarding whether a ‘rupture with the capitalist system’ is the *sine qua non* of a revolution? Some war veteran ideologues have different theoretical interpretations of the outcome from that of Moyo and Yeros, as explained by DTM:

What many people would want to see, that’s the democratic stage of our revolution. This is where we are; it was left uncompleted at independence. All we achieved at independence was political independence, but the actual revolution was not completed. We are now completing this one. We took the political power, but without being backed by the economic base. This is now what we are trying to do – the involvement of the indigenous people [i.e.] the majority of the people in economic activities of the country and one of them is land redistribution, making funds available to indigenous people to open up business enterprises, in industry, commerce, mining and so forth. All this was not done; the national democratic revolution [NDR] was not completed. We are now in the process of realizing this stage. But in my case, I have ideals which go far beyond that. I would want a society that is free of exploitation of man by man. I would love to have a situation where classes within society are narrowed. The [gap between the] haves and the have nots should be narrowed as much as possible, if not completely done away with. The state should own the basic means of production on behalf of the majority of the people. These ideals go far beyond ideals of a national democratic revolution because it ends here. People share the land [access], the means to go into industry and commerce and this revolution is complete. But there would still be differences in terms of wealth with stratification of society. I would want to go a step further (Interview, DTM, 2000).

This perspective suggests that a socialist revolution is attained when class differences are addressed; that is going beyond de-racialisation of ownership of the means of production. Moyo and Yeros (2005, 2007) and Moyo (2011a, 2011b) provide empirical details of the new class relations that have emerged since the FTLRP and have argued that an NDR was on the cards, but they negate this by identifying an ‘interrupted’ revolution and ‘radicalised’ state. For war veterans, the revolution they spearheaded between 1998 and 2002 was a continuum of a phased revolution characterised by different class configurations, objectives and outcomes - a ‘completion’ of a ‘national democratic revolution’, entailing backing ‘political power’ with an ‘economic base’ through redistributive objectives.

Thus a national democratic revolution is just a prelude to a socialist transformation aimed at 'narrowing' the gap between the 'haves and the have nots' or 'completely done away with', by freeing society from 'exploitation of [wo]man by [wo]man' and the state owning the 'basic means of production on behalf of the majority of the people'. DTM recognises that there was no rupture with the 'capitalist system' between 1998 and 2002, but does not consider the outcome an aborted revolution, since a revolution does not only occur when the capitalist system is destroyed. Given the history of settler colonialism and imperialist domination, how practical was it to wage a socialist revolution without undertaking an NDR? Moyo and Yeros do not specifically debate this issue that the war veterans examine and clearly articulate, arguing that a socialist revolution can be phased. There is no doubt that the land revolution managed to successfully transform the settler property regimes, although scholars have mainly focused on rural land occupations, ignoring the urban process (Moyo 2001; Moyo and Yeros 2007; Moyo et al 2009; Scoones et al 2010; Sadomba 2011). These studies have shown that this was a successful agrarian revolution by debunking the myths about the FTLRP and how it changed livelihoods. I think there is need to be more open in the application of theory than Moyo and Yeros have been, since the idiosyncratic nature of society determines the unique character of a revolution, including the appropriateness of strategies and tactics adopted and the friends and foes of that revolution. DTM is correct in arguing that revolutions are not only socialist in character and that the theory of interruption would not stand sustained interrogation. Was the French Revolution not a revolution because it did not lead to socialism? Nonetheless, Moyo and Yeros' observation that a fundamental rupture with capital did not occur has to be understood within the theory of a socialist transformation, rather than as foreclosing the definition and phasing of a 'revolution'. I now turn to an attempt at theorising Zimbabwe's experiences up 2010, based on a Marxist interpretation of what the two sides are grappling with, to offer an explanation of the current situation and a prognosis of the future of this revolution.

Conclusion: towards a theory of Zimbabwe's revolution

Applying Marxist dialectical philosophy to Zimbabwe's socio-economic development (historical materialism) that culminated in the past decade's revolution, I begin from the colonial land grabs that transformed agrarian production relations into a race and class conflict. The new and received capitalist mode of production was characterised by rapid development of

scientific technology and increased labour productivity – the productive forces. With freehold tenure systems and private property protection, the country experienced unprecedented development of the agrarian economy as illustrated by large commercial farming.⁴⁹ State of the art technology and cheap African labour were in unison with the capitalist agrarian relations.

However, even under conditions of rapid technological advancement and high labour productivity, relations of production remained settler, colonial, capitalist and racist, leading to intensification of exploitation of indigenous Africans. This exploitation escalated racial tensions and conflict, eventually igniting a social revolution, the bloody liberation war of the 1960s and 1970s. The forces within this revolution, however, did not have common interests and objectives. Elite nationalists were content with removing settler, colonial and racial rule, but not capitalist relations, whereas the guerrilla combatants were mobilising peasants and workers for complete removal of colonialism and capitalism. Nationalists are class allies of capital, but war veterans and marginalised working classes are enemies of capital. Therein lay the ideological contradictions of nationalists and war veterans. The Lancaster House betrayal, the elite-settler alliance and the war veterans' economic and social disempowerment, relegation and systematic elimination⁵⁰ reflect class conflict. To the marginalised working classes and war veterans, racial dominance and oppression was replaced by elite dominance and oppression, thereby setting a perfect condition for neocolonialism. 'The actual revolution was not completed' but 'interrupted'; and the economy was not democratised, but remained governed by elite-settler capitalist relations.

These class relations did not improve in the post- independence period, but deteriorated. Adoption of ESAP in the early 1990s marked the apex of these class conflicts as international and settler capital was bolstered, strengthening the bond of the elite-settler alliance and increasing exploitation to unprecedented levels. To the marginalised war veterans and the struggling working classes, these neocolonial production relations became untenable and a social revolution was in the cards. The immutability of class and race production relations for over a century, juxtaposed with rapid technological advancement and productivity, reached a breaking point in the 1990s when war veterans started to challenge the state, ZANU-PF, President Mugabe and settler dominance in the economy. They mobilised the marginalised working classes towards the completion of Zimbabwe's 'unfinished business'.

When war veterans took over the leadership of the land occupations movement after the truce with President Mugabe, ZANU-PF and the state in

1997, this was no longer about a 'single issue' of their grievances, but a social grievance of a national nature. They then articulated, not only the land and agrarian question, but also the urban and industrial question, simultaneously attacking the landed settler bourgeoisie and organising urban housing co-operatives and informal sector establishments. Completion of this NDR raised questions far beyond the limits of removing colonial and settler systems of production. This revolution questioned elitism and nationalist garb, noting that this was a wolf in sheep's clothing, whereupon it became as much a target as settler and international capital, then breaking the tripartite alliance. International capital panicked and sought what it thought would be a better class ally than the nationalists and backed the opposition led by the MDC, isolating their former nationalist allies.

By 2000, the matrix of contradictions had reached its climax and an uncontrollable anti-state, anti-elite and anti-capital revolutionary tsunami raged. Race and class elitism were under challenge from below. However, the rupture of the Lancaster alliance called for a change in the strategy and tactics of the revolution as the elitism and nationalism on the one hand drifted from settler and international capital on the other. Nationalists sought an alliance with the revolutionaries to face their class allies of settler and international capital, the later of which had now groomed a formidable opposition MDC. This was a complex reconfiguration of political forces.

However, the alliance of nationalist elites with the revolutionaries was just a marriage of convenience since the two had antagonistic class interests. So when nationalists retained political power in the crucial 2005 elections, they unilaterally broke their alliance with the revolutionaries and mounted military style attacks on them, Operations Murambatsvina and Chikorokoza Chapera. Revolutionaries further mobilised and by 2008 the nationalist movement was isolated, suffering near defeat and they mounted the retributive violent Operation Mavhotera Papi. However, both sides of capital saw how dangerous was the game they were playing and decided to unite in the best interests of their class. They formed the GNU, an alliance against the working classes and marginalised war veterans.

Finally, what is the position and function of the state amidst this struggle? Is it a neutral arbiter of class forces and contradictions? To what extent can the state act against its class and under what specific conditions? What does radicalisation of the state denote? Moyo and Yeros do not specifically address these critical questions. How does the state radicalise and, if it does, what is the class position of the radicalised state? Is radicalisation a transformation of the

state or just a tactic of survival? It is difficult to understand how a neocolonial state can choose to act against its class and serve the revolutionaries. Das argues elsewhere:

Just as the neoliberal society is a class society, so the neoliberal state is a class state ... neoliberalism had made no difference to the fact that the state must protect capitalist property relations. Indeed, government policy is much rather about the restoration of class power and increasing capitalist control over society's material resources (Das 2007: 4).

It is this class contest and arbitration by the neoliberal and neocolonial state to which scholars need to pay particular attention in this unfolding drama. The future of this revolution beyond this stalemate seems to lie in how the ideologues of the vanguard will tackle it tactically and strategically. Only then could we hope for the total emancipation of an African state from capitalism and neocolonialism to express true liberation.

Notes

1. Although some authors reject the alliance argument, Gerald Horne, studying the role of the United States in delaying Zimbabwe's independence, exposes the foundational formula for the alliance as designed by Andrew Young being 'a settlement [that] would leave Africans in charge of government and the European minority in control of the economy – an unsteady alliance that continues to hold in Zimbabwe. This dispensation has been challenged ever more noisily in Zimbabwe since independence and, intermittently, in the United States' (2001: 22).
2. The term war veterans, in the context of Zimbabwe's revolution, has been defined in narrow militarist terms to mean only those cadres who wielded the gun (see Hammar and Raftopoulos 2003; Muzondidya; Vambe 2008). However, as a category of a social or political movement, they comprise a much broader group within the liberation movement, including former armed youth or militia in the former liberated and semi liberated zones at the height of the war (personal observation, 1978-79), recruits awaiting military training in so-called refugee camps when the war ended in 1979 and a growing body of youth continuously mobilized into the liberation movement then and after the war (for this characterization, see Sadomba 2008, 2011).

3. In his recent publication, Wilfred Mhanda (2011) gives details of the leadership conflicts during the ZIPA period between guerrilla leaders and nationalists up to the imprisonment of ZIPA in 1977. I have also held interviews with ZIPA commanders who were incarcerated. Mhanda's book confirms information from interviews. Mhanda adopted a self-centred and personalized approach to the leadership of ZIPA. There were no meetings held to design strategies and he sidelined senior cadres with both high levels of ideological consciousness and battlefield experience (interview, DTM 2000-2012). All interviews in this chapter were done by the author unless where specifically indicated otherwise.
4. Heidi Holland, in a documentary film ('Zimbabwe – Past the post ... on a dark horse', Kevin Harris Productions (directed by Kevin Harris, 2010), emphasises that the dissident conflict was fanned by Apartheid South Africa against the ZANU-PF Government.
5. Sanctions were imposed on the country disguised as 'smart', but affecting the whole economy.
6. This alliance was composed of employers, civil society organisations, white commercial farmers, student activists and workers and was considered an 'unholy' alliance by Masunungure (2004: 171).
7. This period is quite distinct in that it was a time of marked war veteran leadership of occupying groups, with weak or no state or ZANU-PF involvement in the movement. Although the state took part, it was specifically as one of the actors, but with war veterans controlling the movement. All actors, viz war veterans, commercial farmers, peasants and farm workers have clearly distinguished this period in the interviews.
8. Z.W. Sadomba, Interview, K., 2004, at African Institute of Agrarian Studies.
9. Z.W. Sadomba, Interview, P., 2000, at his farm in Mazowe; Interview, DTM, 2000-2012 (these are longitudinal interviews which are still continuing at the time of writing); Interview, DM, 2000-2006 (these are longitudinal interviews held each year at various locations in Harare and at the occupied farms); Interview, Muchaneta, 2004-2006, longitudinal interviews held at Nyabira/Mazowe War Veterans Offices and the occupied farms.
10. From the 1992 Chinhoyi inaugural meeting of ZNLWVA, where war veterans confronted Mugabe on his leadership style and bad governance, demanding the dismissal of his cabinet and a return to the objectives of the liberation struggle, President Mugabe refused to meet the war veterans again. Their street demonstrations during the 1990s - climaxing in 'besieging'

the State House - were aimed at seeking audience with President Mugabe, who adamantly refused.

11. Many interviews held with war veterans revealed this. Interviews included O, a woman war veteran who led occupations in Domboshawa area (2004, at her farm in Hatcliff; this interview was also attended by Nancy Andrew); DM, a self-employed war veteran leader of occupations from 1998 (2000-2006); DT, a war veteran leader in Mazowe, University of Zimbabwe graduate in Political Science and former senior ZIPA commander (2000-2001, held in Concession).
12. Through their intelligence services, war veterans intercepted various communications like e-mails and secret documents circulating within the white commercial farming community, some of which are in the author's possession.
13. The formation of the MDC coincided with the period during which the Constitutional Assembly was consulting the electorate provincially. The project of the new party was to prepare for the next elections, to be held the following June. As such, the main objective of the new party was to display itself by actively working against the Constitutional Assembly programme, disrupting constitutional assembly meetings and mobilising the electorate.
14. This was clearly expressed by H (2000), a founder member of MDC, in an e-mail dated 11 February 2000.
15. Z.W. Sadomba, Participant observation, 2000, Corner House, Samora Machel Avenue.
16. Participant observation (Sadomba, January 2000): 'I participated in the demonstrations at Corner House at the intersection of Samora Machel Avenue and Leopold Takawira Street in Harare. The offices of both the Ministry of Justice (handling the constitutional process) and the British High Commission were located in that building. Munangagwa announced to the demonstrating war veterans that he had phoned Mugabe about our demands and Mugabe had promised to change the clause of the draft constitution by about two o'clock that afternoon which he did'.
17. The Land Occupiers and Protection Act 2001 and the Land Settlement Act 2000 were amendments that included Section 8, giving a maximum period of 90 days to wind off operations and vacate a designated farm.
18. Z.W. Sadomba, Interview, MT, 2001, Harare. Dr Hunzvi's statement is very clear about the role played by the ZNLWVA (*The Standard*, 15-19 March 2000), '*I must categorically state that I am not and was not responsible for the occupation of farms.*' Many researchers have erroneously dressed the

ZNLWVA in borrowed robes, giving them credit for organising land occupations. For example, Moyo and Yeros (2005: 189) claim that, '*The land occupation movement was organised by the War Veterans' Association.*' This needs correction, as the association, in its official capacity did not organise occupations, but they were organised at the local level outside the structure of the association.

19. Although scholars have documented the shrinkage of industry and growing unemployment, no studies have been carried out about the corresponding expansion of growth of informal industry and its employment capacity. A study by Sadomba and Mujeyi (2009) reveals that industry did not actually shrink, nor did employment, but rather reconfigured, absorbing highly qualified managerial and technical labour and expanding employment, explaining Zimbabwe's economic resilience in the first years of the crisis. However, this initiative was crippled by Murambatsvina.
20. Z.W. Sadomba, Interview, Spencer, 2009, at Magaba informal industry complex.
21. Z.W. Sadomba, Interview, Bota, X, 2004 at Chinhoyi Institute of Technology during the AIAS Stakeholder Workshop; Personal communication with H, a founder member of MDC, in an e-mail dated 11 February 2000; Interview, white farmer BT, 2004, Lowdale Farm.
22. The doctoral research done in the same research area by Angus Selby (2006), a son of a white commercial farmer, is also quite illustrative. It is notable that Selby fails to cite any assault from the research area, let alone any death, but he relies on newspaper reports on cases that took place outside the research area, at a national level. This article is not suggesting that there was absolutely no act of violence in the research area, but this was quite minimal. For example, one farmer was not allowed to get out of his house when he refused to share his land and he was rescued by the police. At another farm, war veterans admitted clapping and forcing the white farmer to take off his shoes and sit on the ground while they addressed farm workers. However, these were a few isolated cases and, in most cases, based on the farmer's reaction. At Duncombe, for example, the farmer, after agreeing to subdivide land and occupiers had planted their maize crop, came and ploughed them under and this caused retaliation by occupiers. They stripped tobacco leaves with whips and a new agreement for compensation was signed, this time at the police station (Personal observation 2000).
23. See Sadomba 2008. In this doctoral thesis, I include correspondence (Appendix 3) between war veterans and white commercial farmers which

reveals the non-violent and organised nature of the occupations. For example, the Townsends open their letter dated 16 August 2000 to war veterans, saying, 'Mr B and ourselves do appreciate that up to this stage your requests have been peaceful and non confrontational'. See also Z.W. Sadomba, 2006, Personal observation, Nyabira; 2000-2004, Participant observation, Nyabira, Mazowe and Matepatepa areas.

24. See also Selby (2006: 299). However, Selby did not have accurate information. Removal of Ngwenya was organised by war veterans from Concession who mobilised youths and land occupiers for this purpose. The Gaisfords were particularly defended from the beginning of occupations because of their role in supporting community health and education. They sought donations for clinics, hospitals and schools and were sitting on the board of Concession Hospital (Interview DTM 2003, war veteran leader and former civil servant). Failure to acknowledge the role of war veterans does not show the dynamics of the movement. A similar defence, by the war veterans as well, was of Hawks, next to Collingwood Farm.
25. Some supporters of the MDC from the rural areas also participated in the land occupations, but they had to disguise themselves partly because of their party position and partly because they feared the reaction of ZANU-PF supporters. This shows that land demand and the propensity to occupy cut across the political divide.
26. To give more details, 2001 was the transition from occupation to full Fast Track operation.
27. Various press reports and court cases of his divorce have revealed that Minister of Local Government, Ignatius Chombo, is a large-scale landlord owning prime urban land and multiple rural farms. Another such landlord is business tycoon and relative of President Mugabe, Phillip Chiyangwa. This has been seen as primitive accumulation backed by powerful alliance of ethnic forces.
28. 'Jambanja' is a Shona word which connotes simultaneous use of force (in this case, expropriation) and disregard or suspension of the 'received' rule of law.
29. For example, these new A2 farmers started to remove parts like plumbing materials, fancy lamp shades etc. from the farm houses to sell or to use in their houses in town.
30. 'Murambatsvina' is a Shona word which literally means 'one who rejects dirt or garbage'. It was coined by environmental health technicians because of their message of refraining from dirt. *Mu* is class one noun prefix; *ramb* is a verb root meaning refuse or refrain from; *tsvina* is noun

meaning dirt or garbage. However, *tsvina* is also euphemistically used to mean human excrement, but, in this context, excrement, as Judith Todd interprets (2007: 102), is a misnomer.

31. Z.W. Sadomba, Personal communication with the late Washington Chipfunde, a consultant to ZEXCOM (a company of war veterans) and a personal advisor of Dr Chenjerai Hunzvi, 1999-2002.
32. Dumiso Dabengwa, former Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) intelligence supremo, then Minister of Home Affairs, sent police to evict occupiers in March and April 2000. Joseph Musika, acting as President while Mugabe was out of the country, did the same later. In August 2000, Minister of Lands, John Nkomo, announced that occupations had to stop. War veterans actually clarified their position, telling prospective members of parliament that '... if government was saying "land to the people" as a political gimmick, we were on our part, serious.' (Interview DM 2000). In March 2000, war veterans locked ZANU-PF provincial offices and demanded an audience with President Mugabe, complaining that the ruling party and government were not pushing government and ZANU-PF to unequivocally support their land occupation initiative. President Mugabe sent Didymus Mutasa and Joseph Musika for negotiations (Interview DM 2000).
33. Government is always tactical the closer to elections the timing is: e.g. they only intensely executed the Fast Track after the 2002 presidential elections.
34. A day before the congress, the outgoing executive and provincial leaders were addressed by the Joint Operations Command (commanders of the uniformed forces and the Central Intelligence Organisation) at King George VI (KG VI) Barracks. According to a report back by one of the attendants, C the meeting had two objectives (Z.W. Sadomba, Report back by C, 2007, re meeting with Joint Command, at Magaba informal industry complex). One was to advise the leadership not to wash their dirty linen in public, meaning that their contradictions had to be shelved in the light of the focus by the international community on the events taking place in the country. The second was trying to impress upon the organisation to elect members who would be acceptable to the political leaders. It is possible that C wanted to use the report back to gain mileage as he was clearly a candidate sponsored by the politicians. He was heavily de-campaigned in Mutare and he could not become the Chair of ZNLWVA, a post that went to Jabulani Sibanda. Sibanda was preferred by war veterans for demonstrating courage against the ZANU-PF old guard in Matabeleland,

but was, however, later co-opted and became an ally of President Mugabe in the campaign for ZANU-PF congress in 2007.

35. Z.W. Sadomba, January 2008, Personal observation, Proceedings of war veterans' meeting convened by Jabulani Sibanda held at Fourth Street Offices, Harare. I attended this meeting and recorded it. There, Sibanda argued that war veterans had to campaign for politburo imposed candidates who had blocked them (war veterans) in the primaries. War veterans protested that they would not back these candidates. In addition, Sibanda campaigned for Mugabe's presidential candidature, emphasising the need to follow blindly.
36. The main characteristic feature that distinguishes the Murambatsvina period is retributive violence, epitomised by state coined operations, namely: Operation Murambatsvina, Operation Chikorokoza Chapera (mainly rural) and Operation Mavhotera Papi?
37. One of the most widely publicized cases of Murambatsvina was the destruction by a bulldozer of Chinx Chingaira's house. Chingaira, a prominent singer, was a war veteran and had acquired a stand through the housing cooperatives. He tried to stop destruction of his house by standing on top of it, but was pulled down and severely beaten by the police, warning the rest that the state meant business.
38. Credit for this victory certainly goes to the propaganda and media policies of Professor Jonathan Moyo, who was Mugabe's Information Minister and member of the ZANU-PF Politburo. Moyo used perennial tactics, including jingles and counter attacks on international and private local media focusing on the land revolution.
39. Z.W. Sadomba, Interview, war veterans and traditional leaders of Marange and Chiadzwa, 2007. I went to Chiadzwa in 2006, carrying out anthropological research in the area and at the diamond fields. I visited local traditional leaders, bush camps of the informal miners and war veterans and actually went into the mined areas which were heavily guarded by the Zimbabwe Republic Police. War veterans and local chiefs and headmen were bitter about government draconian measures. This research was prompted by a war veteran from this area, who had been dispossessed of his farm which was given to a University of Zimbabwe lecturer in Mazowe on ethnic lines, during *jambanja on jambanja* elite operations. He decided to venture into illegal diamond mining in his home area and I followed him there. One war veteran rhetorically questioned, 'Is this the *socialism* that we preached about during the war?' (*Ndiyo here gutsaruzhinji yacho iyi iyo taitaurirana [kuhondo]?*) referring to possession of diamond

fields dubbed *mutaka waGrace newaMujuru* (the heaps of Grace and Mujuru the late general).

40. In many cases, fuel was resold on the parallel market and production vehicles like tractors were converted into taxis for desperate commuters (Personal observation 2005-2008).
41. Research in Zimbabwe has largely mimicked the political polarity, thereby clouded with non-academic pursuits by scholars.
42. Destruction of war veterans' houses, like that of Chinx Chingaira the popular musician of Chimurenga war songs and former member of ZANLA, was very conspicuous. Another war veteran leader of a housing cooperative in Malborough collapsed and died at the news of destruction of the houses.
43. The whereabouts of Murambatsvina victims and their impact wherever they went is yet to be studied. I carried out some research in 2006 in Zvimba, in 2007 in Marange (Chiadzwa diamond mines) and in 2008 in Uzumba, assessing Murambatsvina outcomes. It showed that Murambatsvina victims are spread in all social groups of the country and in all areas. In some cases, the victims were allocated land by local leaders, establishing whole communities (Personal observation, Nyabira, 2006; Personal communication with Murambatsvina victims, Uzumba, 2008; Interview, war veterans and traditional leaders of Marange and Chiadzwa, 2007).
44. In some interviews, war veterans revealed that they had started to prepare for military defence in the occupied rural lands, anticipating state attacks after the urban clean-up. War veterans had started to organise units according to their wartime specialisations such as military engineering and intelligence, to prepare for military counter-attacks. It is not clear whether the Central Intelligence Organisation did get this information and advised the state to change tactics by embarking on Operation Chikorokoza Chapera in the rural setting.
45. However, noting that there were other elites who had to be included but did not satisfy the condition, an exemption clause was put for such members as those who had been on diplomatic missions.
46. Personal observation, Goromonzi, Chinhamora, Mutasa and Harare South constituency, 2008.
47. Personal observation, Zanadu, Concession, April-May, 2008: At a rally organised by the Zimbabwe National Army, which I attended, as war veterans we challenged the members of the army, the local MP and CIO operatives in attendance. War Veterans challenged their counterparts in ZNA as to why they (ZNA) were now coercing the masses – assaulting

them – to vote, yet the same masses would come to bases where battles were raging, to feed the combatants during the war. ‘You have to ask yourself what has gone wrong with ZANU-PF instead of terming the people sell-outs’ demanded war veterans. This diffused violence in the area in 2008.

48. The MDC split into two, with one group led by Arthur Mutambara and the other by Morgan Tsvangirai. The Mutambara party is known as MDC while the Tsvangirai party is referred to as MDC-T.
49. Note that when settlers decided to opt for agriculture after becoming frustrated that there were not as abundant mineral resources as had been speculated, they established a land bank as early as 1894 to finance capitalist farming. From about the 1950s, when European capitalist agriculture had finally managed to dominate African agriculture, settler farmers were at the cutting edge of global capitalist agriculture pioneering and leading in hybrid maize production seed (following only the US) and scooping several international awards, dominating tobacco farming, producing high-quality cotton and beef for the international market using state-of-the-art machinery and infrastructure.
50. NB nationalists agreed with the Smith regime and the British that the Rhodesian Security Forces (RSF) would be the sole and official defence forces during the ceasefire period, despite the RSF defeat marked by the battle of Mavhonde dubbed the ‘Man-to-man Battle’ by Peter Walls in August 1979. The RSF killed and maimed many guerrilla combatants during the ceasefire period, dumping them in mass graves that are being exhumed even at the time of writing this chapter. Their injuries were not treated by the new state and many died of the war wounds and health conditions (Sadomba 2011).

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