InVisible Freedom Fighter:
A Critical Analysis of Portrayals of Women in Archival Photographs, Independence Monuments and Contemporary Art in Zambia (Northern Rhodesia) and Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia)

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for Doctor of Philosophy
Rhodes University
February 2023

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Abstract

This doctoral dissertation in art history develops a notion of invisibility by critically analysing processes in which narratives about women are either concealed or uncovered in visual portrayals relating to the independence of Zambia (former Northern Rhodesia) and Zimbabwe (previously Southern Rhodesia). This study concentrates on three main visual categories that include archival photographs, national monuments, and visual art. It critically engages with concepts of memory and history through a framework of gender. The concept of invisibility developed in this thesis articulates a dynamic process in which independence narratives evolve over time, sometimes revealing memories associated with women and at other times rendering women invisible.

National liberation in many African states is dominantly accredited to the political parties that were in power at the time of independence. In Zambia, the United National Independence Party (UNIP) is acknowledged for spearheading efforts to overthrow the colonial administration, while in Zimbabwe it is the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU – PF). Both political parties were headed by men, and the majority of their memberships was also comprised of men; as such, the dominant narratives largely illuminate the stories of men associated with these political parties. The overarching argument of this doctoral dissertation is that there is a gender bias inherent in dominant independence struggles narratives that are communicated through cultural heritage sites such as monuments and archives.

In this study, art and art making inform theory as the methodological approach takes the direction in which selected artworks and visual materials are employed as a starting point of considering concepts that relate to the visibilities of stories about women. This approach cogitates the function of art, visual culture, and art history in the production of knowledges that foster in-depth understandings of concepts that explain social phenomena such as historical erasure. This doctoral dissertation in art history is divided into two parts, A and B, that conceptually complement each other. In section A which comprises of chapters one and two, the study develops an alternative visual archive that surveys the involvements of six specific women in the attainment of national independence in their respective countries, and critically analyses the Freedom Statue in Zambia and the National Heroes Acre in Zimbabwe

as monuments dedicated to commemorating the independence struggle in the two countries. In Chapters three to five which form the second section of this dissertation, the emphasis of the discussion is on how selected visual artworks of three selected artists disrupt, counter or engage with dominant historical accounts that either exclude or marginalise narratives about women. The three artists include myself, Gladys Kalichini, and Zimbabwean born artists Kudzanai Chiurai and Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude. This thesis offers a culturally rich conversation about visual representations of social, political and cultural roles women performed in the colonial times in Northern and Southern Rhodesia and gives insight into the evolution of the luminosity of contemporary performances of women's social collectives in Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Declaration

This thesis is my own original work and has not been submitted in part, or in full, for any degree or examination at any other university. It contains no material previously published or written by other individuals, except where due reference is made and/or acknowledgements are provided in the text. This thesis is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in art history at Rhodes University, South Africa.

Signature:

Date: September 2023

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Acknowledgments

The submission of this PhD thesis has been a long spiritual and physical journey in which I have received support in many ways from individuals and institutions that are way too many to list here. To do this study, I have physically worked and travelled multiple times across three countries, South Africa which is where Rhodes University is located, as well as Zimbabwe and Zambia which are the focus countries of this study. I would firstly like to thank God whom I believe I have gone through this journey with, and the Mellon AART programme for funding this degree at Rhodes University.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Professor Ruth Simbao who has graciously worked with me since I began my Master of Fine Art (MFA) at Rhodes University in 2016 and throughout this doctoral study in art history. I also thank my family and friends who have contributed to this thesis in both small and big ways. Special mention goes to Leonard Kalichini, Grace Kabungwe-Kalichini, Betina Nyalugwe, Patukani Nyalugwe, Nkaka Chipopola-Nyalugwe, Monica Kalichini, Mutale Charity Musadabwe, Philiswa Lila, Binjun Hu, Stary Mwaba, Deana Brandon, Bathandwa Makehle and Fadzai Muchemwa.

My access to the historical materials discussed in my thesis was facilitated by employees at various institutions, as such I would like to acknowledge the National Archives of Zambia (NAZ-1), the National Archives Zimbabwe (NAZ-2), the United National Independence Party (UNIP) Archives, the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU – PF) Archives and the Zambia National Information Services (ZANIS) Archives.

List of Abbreviations

AFP - African Feminist Forum

ANC - African National Congress

ANIP - African National Independence Party

AP - Associated Press

BBC - British Broadcasting Cooperation (BBC)

EAP - Endangered Archives Programme

MCP - Malawi Congress Party

MDC - Movement for Democratic Change

MK - uMkhonto we Sizwe

MMD - Movement for Multi-Party Democracy

NAC - Nyasaland African Congress

NAZ-1 - National Archives of Zambia

NAZ-2 - National Archives of Zimbabwe

(NAZ-1 and NAZ-2 are not the official abbreviations the National Archives of Zambia and the National Archives of Zimbabwe, the numbers are added to their identical abbreviations to differentiate them).

NHA - National Heroes Acre

NRC - Northern Rhodesia Congress

NRAC - Northern Rhodesia African Congress

NPP - National People's Party

NRANC - Northern Rhodesian African National Congress

PRC - People's Rainbow Coalition

SABC - South African Broadcasting Corporation SOC Limited

UFP - United Federal Party

UNIP - United National Independence Party

ZBC - Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation

ZANCO - Zambia African National Congress

ZANIS - Zambia News and Information Services

ZANLA - Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army

ZANU - Zimbabwe African National Union

ZANU-PF –Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front

ZAPU - Zimbabwe African People's Union

ZIPRA - Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army

ZNBC - Zambia National Broadcasting Cooperation

ZPF - Zimbabwe People First

ZUD - Zimbabwe Union of Democrats

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Preface

Looking at a Personal Entry Point

This preface offers a personal entry point into this doctoral dissertation titled, '*InVisible Freedom Fighter: A Critical Analysis of Portrayals of Women in Archival Photographs, Independence Monuments and Contemporary Art in Zambia and Zimbabwe*' (2023). It gives insight into the inspiration behind my engagement with the concept of invisibility and outlines the motivation of my critical investigation and analysis of perceptible gendered biases in visual representations of national resistance histories in Zambia and Zimbabwe (previously known as Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia respectively). Furthermore, this preface underscores my personal interest in topics relating to resistance histories and visual representations of social and political narratives about women.

I begin with four images, which I present as text, and which also serve as loci of key moments in the journey of my study of analysing visibilities and absences of visual stories of women freedom fighters within the collective memory of independence in Zambia and Zimbabwe. This journey began unconsciously when I was much younger, and gradually developed into a more sentient pursuit as I grew older. Throughout this journey, I navigate various spaces along with the spirit of a woman who reveals herself to me through intimate and fragmented encounters over a time spectrum. The character of this woman, whose steps I sometimes walk beside and at other times trace and follow behind, is based on the character of a Zambian woman freedom fighter known as Julia Chikamoneka. The name of the spirit, which takes several forms, relates to Julia's last name, Chikamoneka. Sometimes her spirit reveals herself as *Ndemoneka*, occasionally she is *Ndamoneka*, while at other times she manifests as *Shilemoneka*. The word *chikamoneka* in *iciBemba* means 'it will become visible', while *ndemoneka* and *ndamoneka* translate as 'I am visible'. *Ndemoneka* is used in the present tense, while *ndamoneka* is in the continuous present tense of being visible. *Shilemoneka* translates as 'I am invisible' but does not mean 'I am absent'. It points to a failure to see or to be unseen, or more precisely it means to be in a disposition where one's presence is perceptible.

This preface takes the form of a diary to narrate the journey of my study, which is formed out of intricately interwoven moments where I am sometimes able to see or perceive the presence

of Chikamoneka or her related spirits, as well as times when my ability to see either of them or be aware of their presence falls short. As I set up this entry path, it is important that I recognise that I am not in a position to state whether Chikamoneka, Ndemoneka, Ndamoneka and Shilemoneka always see me back, however, there have been moments in which I have felt like we all looked each other eye to eye in such a manner that it is inconceivable to deny each other's presence in that moment.

Figure i. A photograph of Julia Chikamoneka and the UNIP's Women's Brigade protesting in 1960 (1960). Photograph by L. A. Titchener. Photograph courtesy of the National Archives of Zambia.

Figure ii. A display cabinet labelled 'Notable Leaders' and 'Women in the independence struggle' in the foyer of the National Archives of Zambia (2018). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure iii. My hand holding a negative of photograph illustrated inside the Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) Archives (2021). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure iv. A photograph of a picture of Julia Chikamoneka inside a cabinet labelled 'Cha Cha Cha' inside the National Museum in Livingstone (2022). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

My Inspiration

Julia Chikamoneka is the main inspiration of this PhD thesis; the four images I begin with represent four of my personal encounters with photographic representations of Chikamoneka inside public spaces such as archives and museums in Zambia. Figure (i) represents the fifth day of July in the year 2016. This is the day that I acquired a digital copy of an image of Chikamoneka from the National Archives of Zambia (NAZ-1) that are located along Government Road in Lusaka. In 2016, I was in my first year of a Master of Fine Art degree at Rhodes University and was searching for visual representations of women stored inside two key Zambian archives: The NAZ-1 and the United National Independence Party (UNIP) Archives. I photographed figure (ii) in January of 2018, just before I began working on the research proposal for this doctorate. Prior to 2018, I had last been inside the NAZ-1 in 2016, at a time when the photograph in Figure (i) was displayed in the library foyer of the archives. In 2018, I went back to the same spot to initiate a conversation with Chikamoneka about continuing on an adventure of going back and forward in time to seek out visual stories about different women. The purpose of this conversation was also to present an opportunity and a proposal for the two of us to collaborate in constructing an alternative archive that reimagines narratives about women: an archive that would be dynamic in nature and one that would retain memories of women who are not only being forgotten over time, but also a plethora of stories of women that have never been curated into the history that is presented inside the national archives.

I photographed figure (iii) with my Samsung phone in 2021, and it represents a moment of hope in this journey. In the earlier stages of this study, I focused on searching for photographic and visual representations of women inside national archives and in records belonging to independence political parties in Zambia and Zimbabwe, and I had only managed to access a few images and scanty information about women's involvement in the liberation struggles in both countries. In December of 2021, I accompanied my PhD supervisor, Professor Ruth Simbao, to the pictorial and video library of the Zambia News and Information Services offices at the corner of Alick Nkhata and Thabo Mbeki roads in Lusaka. Inside the pictorial and video library is where I first saw and touched the original negative of the photograph labelled Figure. i. as well as negatives of other photographs of a protest that happened in 1960 at the old airport in Lusaka. This was a sentimental moment for me as this protest is what Chikamoneka is most prominently remembered for. Subsequently, more

photographs and negatives of women began to reveal themselves. I found photographs and envelopes with negatives of images of women such as Betty Kaunda, who was the first lady of Zambia at independence, and many of women whose names are unknown. Figure (iv) is about death; it represents both a culmination of a part of a journey as well as a beginning of another. Perhaps, it epitomises a junction, or a point to continue on to different aspects of the same journey. I photographed this image inside the national museum in Livingstone in April 2022, inside a cabinet labelled 'Cha Cha Cha'. I focused the lens of my camera on an image of Chikamoneka lying on a grave and labelled, '*United National Independence Party's Women Organiser, Mrs Julia Chikamoneka at demonstration of mourning, Government House, 1961'*.

My Interest

I was born in Chingola in the Copperbelt province of Zambia to Grace Kabungwe-Kalichini and Leonard Kalichini. My father is a son of a Zambian freedom fighter known as Paul James Kalichini, or PJ as he is referred to within our family. All my siblings and I are either named after elderly family members for the sake of posterity or were given names that express gratitude. My two elder brothers, Paul and James, are both named after PJ, my sister Monica is named after my mother's mother, who was a member of the women's league at the Anglican church when she was alive. My late and youngest brother Leonard was named after my father. Natasha, who is my younger sister, is named after an aunt. My name, Gladys which translates as *Chimwemwe* in *chiNyanja,* means happiness and was also the name of one of my grandparents' siblings. While Natasha's name appears to be English, it is in fact an *iciBemba* expression *'na tasha'* which translates to English as 'thank you'. Natasha's and I's names express appreciation and gratitude.

My earliest encounter with Chikamoneka was through sound – through listening to stories about the 'Cha Cha Cha' era in Zambia as my grandfather told my siblings, cousins and myself. PJ had a compilation of newspaper clippings that were circulated in Zambia before and shortly after independence, he also kept a collection of notebooks and journals which he filled with notes about his own participation in politics. PJ, along with Frank Chitambala, co-founded a political party known as the African National Independence Party (ANIP), which later merged with the United Federal Party (UFP) to become what is today known as the

UNIP (the independence political party of Zambia). Occasionally his notes reflected on some of the events he witnessed or heard about, stories such as that of a woman known as Mama Chikamoneka who had undressed in public during a protest in 1960. When I first heard the name Chikamoneka, I did not think too much about who she was and what she might have represented in my grandfather's recollections because I had not earlier encountered her name in school or in any public memorial marker. In school we were taught that a man named Kenneth Kaunda led the fight for Zambian independence. Kaunda's face is on the money used in Zambia; his name features in the lyrics of liberation songs that we sang in school as part of commemorative celebrations for independence. Despite hearing about life in Zambia before independence from my grandfather as a child, the picture of the struggle for liberation that was embedded in my subconscious was that of one man who fearlessly led the nation to freedom. Everyone else who had participated in the struggles for independence, including my own grandfather, were rendered only as silhouettes or as shadows in my consciousness.

After my initial encounter with Chikamoneka, I continued to hear her name again from time to time, usually in passing. In 2011, I heard her name again, but unlike the previous times, I was more curious about who she was beyond the story my grandfather had told me. When I became curious about who Chikamoneka was, I simultaneously became aware of her hiddenness in the public space or my lack of sight of a visual narrative that related to her. I realised that I did not even know what she looked like. At the same time, I noticed that there was neither a public monument erected in her honour, and that monuments that memorialise stories of women in Zambia within the landscape of Lusaka were invisible. *Icibukisho ica ku tuibukisha ifyo ba mayo ba lwile mu bulwi bwa cine tacimoneka pantu ta ca bako, awe ta cila pangwa* (A monument that commemorates women's participation in the struggle for independence is invisible because it does not exist, because it has not yet been constructed).

As my awareness of the absence of public monuments to women grew, I also understood that I had continually engaged both unintentionally and consciously with memorial sites constructed mostly in honour of men, such as the House 394 in the neighbourhood known as Chilenje – it is the former house of the first republican president. Every time I walked past the Freedom Statue, which is the national monument for independence in Zambia, I engaged with the portrayals of Kaunda on the bronze relief sculptures located on the statue's pedestal of a statue of a man breaking himself free of chains. I think about watching presidents laying wreaths of flowers at the foot of the Freedom Statue on Independence Day and I remember

singing the national anthem at school along with other pupils. I remember standing still with my face looking up in reverence for fallen and living heroes of this land. I remember singing the lyrics '*Let us all her people join as one, Brothers under the sun, All one, strong and free'*. I particularly remember singing these words at the girls' school I attended.

The reality of absence and inconspicuousness has grown vividly in my subconscious over the years, I am often confronted with an awareness that there are also few or no roads or public structures named after women within the city of Lusaka where I currently reside. The awareness of the lack of visual portrayals of Chikamoneka within the Zambian landscape is what led to an emergence of questions that relate to visibilities of visual representations and public recognitions of women who engaged in political and social activities during the era of the Rhodesian empire.

In 2016 I registered for my Master of Fine Art (MFA) at Rhodes University and embarked on a journey to (re)construct visual narratives about women's participation in the Zambian independence struggle by unearthing traces of memories that relate to Chikamoneka, and another woman known as prophetess Alice Lenshina who is popularly known for leading the Lumpa Church in the 1950s. My MFA project comprises of an exhibition titled *Chamoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (2017) supervised by Tanya Poole and Heidi Sicumba, and a written component titled *Fyamoneka: Exploring the Erasure of Women Within Zambian History* (2017), which was supervised by Ruth Simbao. Together the two components envision the archive as a space of enunciation of different histories, they conceptualise a notion of erasure through critically exploring [mis/under-] representations of women inside the NAZ-1 and the UNIP Archives.

It was in 2016 as I was conducting the field work for my MFA that I first encountered a printed photograph of Chikamoneka inside the NAZ-1. The photograph was displayed on in the foyer of the NAZ-1 in a section labelled *Women in the Struggle for Independence* next to the section labelled *Notable Leaders*. The description Notable Leaders raises questions around the concept of notability – what notability within the context of archival photographic collections might mean and who decides what is notable. In 2016 the *Notable Leaders* section only had printed photographs of men, while *Women in the Struggle for Independence* had five images, all which had captions that identified the events portrayed as roles of the UNIP Women's League. The UNIP Women's League was a branch for the independence

political party that was designated for women from the 1950s until the early 1990s[1]. Although they were very few photographs of women displayed in the foyer, these images were powerful and magnetic, at least to me. The printed photographs of women differed from the images of men in the *Notable Leaders* section. While the *Notable Leaders* consisted of portraits of men dressed in suits and ties, the photographs of women, such as in figure (i), were portrayals of women confronting officials of the British colonial government while demonstrating, or by laying on the ground. In some of the pictures the women were undressed and singing.

Inside the NAZ-1, I looked through the library in the archive and found that there was very little information pertaining to women and their involvement in the liberation of Zambia, and even less knowledge that was specifically about Chikamoneka and Lenshina. There were fewer than ten digital photographs depicting Chikamoneka or Lenshina. On the shelves in the library of the NAZ-1. I noticed a book in which Lenshina had been written about, titled *Blood on Their Hands* (1998) by Kampamba Mulenga. The book essentially argues that UNIP and the colonial government killed thousands of people in the Lumpa Uprising, which was a group of people who subscribed to the religious sect known as the Lumpa church, formed by prophetess Lenshina. Mulenga (2019) continues to state that UNIP government committed a crime against memory by obliterating visual evidence of the Lumpa church and rewriting history to defame the Lumpa movement by suggesting that they were a cult that engaged in practices such as drinking urine and eating human faeces. This book intrigued me; in a way, it attempted to explain why I was unable to find images of Lenshina in any folder that relates to independence inside the national archives.

At an initial glance, the archives seemingly presented an absence, mainly for the particular reason that visual depictions of women in liberation movements were minimal. Beyond an absence, the archives offered memories entangled in myth and truth, but also histories that have been changing and disappearing over time. My experience inside the NAZ-1 in some ways responded to the question of where stories about women were hidden. It highlighted

[1] The UNIP Women's league was formed in the 1950s, although it was not officially dissolved, its activities occurred less frequently in the late 1980s. By the time of transition from the one-party state into a multi-party system in Zambia in the early 1990s, the UNIP Women's Brigade could be argued to have been inactive in the politics of the state (Geisler 2004; Kikamba 2012; Ghodsee 2015).

that they were entangled and existed as lingering traces inside the archives. Although the silence and dearth of traces of portrayals of specific women in these nationally significant archives was blinding and deafening, to me this absence inside the archives was like an illusion. I could hear lingering voices echoing within and beyond the space of the archive. This experience highlighted that there was a need to listen intently to what seemed like silences and to see beyond what is presented. Memories of women are embedded in the consciousness of people and in spaces beyond the national archives.

In 2018, I returned to the archives after completing my MFA and at the time I was conceptualising this art history PhD project. I went in through the same door into the same foyer to stand at the same place that I had stood when I first encountered the photograph of Chikamoneka in 2016. There were two specific changes that I noticed immediately: first, the date on the caption of the photograph that appears in figure (i) had changed to 1960 from 1961. And second, there was now a full body portrait of Chikamoneka clothed in a *chitambala* (head wrap), *chitenge* and a shirt, with what appears to be a medal around her neck. I must admit that it was heart-warming for me to see a printed photograph of Chikamoneka. As I stood there, I realised that the archive is not static, and that memory is in fact fluid. Previously I had imagined the archive as space riddled with blind spots and I had focused on its capacity to sometimes forget. In this moment the archive showed me that it sometimes reveals and remembers.

My third encounter with Chikamoneka was in 2021, through the sense of touch, when I accompanied Professor Simbao to the ZANIS Archives in Lusaka. The ZANIS Archives are a repository of video and audio recording as well as photographic collections that document Zambia's past. Inside these archives we were allowed to touch materials such as negatives that are stored inside envelopes and then placed inside old filing cabinets. The collection is overwhelmingly extensive, with over five million negatives and printed photographs stored in three rooms. While some of the negatives are in good condition, others have collected dust and developed spots.

My fourth encounter took place at the Livingstone Museum in 2022, just as I was beginning to write this preface. By this time, I had been consciously tracing remembrances of Chikamoneka for a little over five years. I went to the museum to photograph the image of my grandfather as a way of paying him a visit and to tell him about my journey with a

character he introduced me to. Next to the collection of where his photograph is displayed is the *Cha Cha Cha* collection in which there are some images of Chikamoneka that are not part of the photographic documentation inside the NAZ-1. In one of these, Chikamoneka lies on graves while crying and in others she appears with her mouth open, almost as if she is speaking with a projected tone or singing. I am not quite sure how to put my feelings in this moment into words. This was not the first time I had seen these images; I had stood at that spot several times before and was aware that there were images of her in the selection of photographs labelled *Cha Cha Cha* inside the museum in Livingstone. Perhaps in the previous periods I had only seen with my physical eyes, and now – because I had developed a relationship with her character through this journey of looking for traces of women – this time I was attempting to see her beyond just a sense of sight.

My Motivation

In 2022, PJ's sister, Eunice Sebele Kalichini (Mama Sebele), was awarded an honorary doctorate for her service to the nation by Vision International University. Similar to many women I have encountered in my search for visual representations of women freedom fighters, her involvement in the struggle for liberation is for the most part invisible. Mama Sebele keeps journals, pictures, souvenirs, and tells stories of her encounters as a means of self-archiving, and to remain visible in the minds of the people close to her. *InVisible Freedom Fighter: A Critical Analysis of Portrayals of Women in Archival Photographs, Independence Monuments and Contemporary Art in Zambia (Northern Rhodesia) and Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia)* (2023). draws its motivation from Mama Sebele. This art history dissertation attempts to redress a gender gap in visual representations of independence and liberation movements. It listens intently and sees beyond what is presented inside national archives and public monuments to not only complexify the official narration of independence but also to engage with archives of absence. It re/assembles smaller pieces of the independence puzzle through considering non-glorified, alternative and hidden stories about women.

This research does not attempt to recreate heroic stories of women. Rather, it seeks to engage with information about the conservation of visual narratives and memories about women and to further complicate a notion about erasure and invisibility in connection with visual

portrayals of women freedom fighters in Zambia and Zimbabwe. The dissertation is about looking into the abyss to see, to hear and to interact with what is hidden, with that which resides in grey areas and blind spots. It is concerned with engaging with stories that might be visibly absent or excluded from the bigger picture of independence in these two African states.

Introduction

Defining a Concept of InVisibility: The Art of Seeing Women in Visual Representations of Liberation Struggles

> Images shape our lives in various ways. Mental images are part of ourselves, material images [are] a basis of ourselves and our relationship to the past and present … images influence our perception of [the] world and our place in it (Knauss and Pezzoli-Olgiati, 2015: 2).

This art history PhD dissertation critically engages with complex perceptions and constructions of liberation heroes to provide an in-depth analysis about visibilities of women in visual representations and practices that commemorate independence and liberation movements in the geographical location of Northern Rhodesia/ Zambia, and Southern Rhodesia/ Zimbabwe. The enquiry of this study focusses on portrayals, or the lack of representations of women in three forms of visual categories – (i) archival photographs, (ii) national monuments and public commemorative performances, and (iii) visual art practices and selected artworks by Zimbabwean artists Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude and Kudzanai Chiurai as well as myself, Gladys Kalichini as an artist of Zambian descent. This dissertation challenges simplistic perceptions that define a freedom fighter as one who participated in the independence struggle only by means of going to war or by being a member of a political party during a given period of time. I complicate this conventional definition of a liberation fighter by expanding it to consider women's various involvements in resistance movements against colonialism in Northern and Southern Rhodesia and in Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The three main objectives of this study are,

i. to provide a visual context of women's involvement in liberation movements in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Southern Rhodesia as an art historian and to grapple with the gendered biases therein.

ii. develop a new visual archive of women freedom fighters as a means of challenging the dominant perception that it was predominantly men who participated in the liberation struggles in Northern and Southern Rhodesia. This alternative archive focuses on stories of six women including Julia Chikamoneka, Joice Mujuru, Alice

Lenshina, Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa, Margaret Dongo and Nehanda Charwe Nyakasikana.

iii. critically analyse the ways in which the contemporary arts of Africa engage with notions of gender and political liberation movements. Specifically, I examine select artistic works and projects by Zimbabwean artists Gresham Nyaude and Kudzanai Chiurai, as well as myself, Gladys Kalichini, as an artist of Zambian descent.

I begin the discussion in this art history dissertation by posing the question 'Am I setting a table for a dinner party or laying a foundation of a building?'. I am a Zambian woman, more specifically I belong to the social linguistic group of people known as the Lamba, and I subscribe to Christian religious views. Within the social context that I currently live in, which is that of Lusaka, I am more likely to be visualised by much of the society as setting a table for a dinner party because I identify as a Christian woman. This is not to say that there are no women builders in Lusaka, or to in anyway insinuate that setting a table is either a less important or more superior task than laying a foundation of building. I ask this question to highlight the gendered division of roles within the social setting that I reside in. Activities like cooking and taking care of the home are more associated to women, while practices such as construction and participating in armed struggles are framed more as masculine roles. The boundaries between what roles are performed by women and men have become blurred over time as various individuals across the world reimagine their genders and their functions within various societies. Although there are transformations occurring in how we see, perceive and understand the concept of gender, women in Zambia and Zimbabwe are still for the most part associated with roles that are performed within the home as a domestic space (Lyons 1999 and 2004; Evans 2014).

I ask again, 'Am I setting a table for a dinner party or laying a foundation of a building?'. This question leads to other questions that I raise in this study. I have a request for the reader of this doctoral dissertation in art history to construct two mental images. Firstly, could you kindly visualise an image of a woman in a home cooking a meal for her husband who is set to go to war the following day. After she is done with the cooking, she packs a bag for him, it cannot be too heavy lest it slows him down when he is running, but also it cannot be empty because at the very least he needs items to remind him of his family. Her husband goes off to battle, and unfortunately, he is killed just as the war begins. She receives the sad news by word of mouth, and it dawns on her that she must continue to raise her children and exist in a

world with the enemy of her husband still denying her country freedom. Kindly sit with this image in your mind for a few minutes, or however long is comfortable for you before we proceed.

Let us proceed to construct the second mental image. Picture the exact same woman from the first mental image, but rather than her husband, this time envision her going to war to fight for the independence of her country? She packs her own bag and bids her family farewell as she sets off. In the battle she fights with her fists, she shoots with her gun, she performs activities indictive of war including killing other humans. She stabs and inflicts bodily harm onto her opponents using weapons she has fashioned with objects she has found around her such as branches of trees or even objects left over from previous battles. The opposing soldiers advance towards her, and she runs into the bushes in a quest for safety. Her pursuit is futile as she gets captured by her opponents who shoot and kill her. Her corpse is found along with other fallen soldiers by her fellow combatants who pick them up and bury them in a mass grave. Because her family cannot see her corpse, there is no funeral for her. Years later, the mass grave where she was buried does not have a tombstone that bears any of the names of the people laid to rest there, only a marble plaque indicating that this grave is a sacred space were fallen heroes are laid to rest. Kindly sit with this image in your mind for a few minutes, or however long is comfortable for you before we proceed again.

Images are powerful, they are not merely just representations or objects, they are the foundational principle of visual studies and the basis on which the convention of seeing can be understood (Knauss and Pezzoli-Olgiati 2015: 8). I would like to thank you for participating in this exercise of constructing the two mental images. I recognise that both images are of a violent nature and can be uncomfortable to confront. As the final aspect of this exercise, I request you to put the two images side by side and to consider the following questions. Whom amongst the two women in the two images is likely to be perceived as a freedom fighter and to be celebrated for contributing to the liberation of her country? In what ways would you imagine either of the women's stories being commemorated by future generations, that is if they can remember who they are? These questions form the foundation of this doctoral study in art history titled *InVisible Freedom Fighter: A Critical Analysis of Portrayals of Women in Archival Photographs, Independence Monuments and Contemporary Art in Zambia (Northern Rhodesia) and Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia)* (2023).

The quote that opens this introduction is extracted from a text titled *The Normative Power of Images: Religion, Gender, Visuality* (2015) that discusses how images influence the construction and communication of gendered societal norms – it argues that particular beliefs can either be reaffirmed or contested based on our engagements with what we are able to see both corporeally using the senses of our bodies and inanely or subconsciously in our minds (Knauss and Pezzoli-Olgiati 2015). In the exercise in the preceding paragraphs, I designed the exercise to construct two mental images of the same women in two different scenarios that occur at the same historical time as an experiment to explore how the idea of a freedom fighter can be translated into an image, or in other words the experiment endeavours to understand how a freedom fighter may be visualised depending on the actions one performs. The English dictionary defines a freedom fighter as an individual who participates in efforts to liberate a country. This definition is broad because it does not specify how one ought to participate in order for them to considered as a freedom fighter of a nation - there is a wide spectrum of possible actions that could be associated to the freedom fighter. However, despite the limitless possibilities offered by its definition, the title of freedom fighter tends to be associated to fewer actions and roles such as members of political parties or soldiers or guerrilla fighters like the woman in the second image in the visual exercise in the earlier paragraphs of this introduction. Actually, individuals who experience or participate in wars outside of political and military affiliations are hardly ever recognised as freedom fighters.

Different individuals participated in liberation movements in many various ways such as participating in protests, negotiations and even cooking for soldiers who went to battle. In her doctoral dissertation in Political Studies, Tanya Julie Lyons (1999) investigates experiences and roles performed by women guerrillas within the context the Zimbabwean war for national liberation. Lyons (1999) highlights that women guerrilla fighters performed various roles in the military camps such as carrying guns and fighting in the war, cooking and cleaning, nursing and even by being wives to men army personnel. According to Zimbabwean curators Tandazani Dhlakama (2022) and Fadzai Muchemwa (2023) there are some women who were referred to as *chimbwidos* which is a local term used to describe women whose role in the Southern Rhodesian army camps was to have sex with men guerrilla fighters. In the words of Muchemwa (2023), the role of *chimbwidos* was 'to play wife' – 'to play wife' is a polite way of saying that some women guerrilla fighters were expected to have sexual intercourse with men guerrillas and not to perform other duties like cooking and cleaning because they were in the war. The cooking was primarily done by the people in the villages who then sent it to

soldiers by means of *vana mujibha* (men messengers) (Muchemwa 2023). Lyons (1999) proceeds to explain that some activities that occurred during the war are not included in the conventional definition of a freedom fighter. This is roles such as those performed by *chimbwidos, vana mujibha* and even the women who did the cooking. The theoretical assumption in this doctoral dissertation is that because roles performed by some women during the liberation struggle in Northern and Southern Rhodesia are seldom constituted within the confines of the conventional definition of a freedom fighter, it follows that women are then likely to be less represented as freedom fighters in visual portrayals of independence movements. My theoretical assumption draws on Lyons (1997) argument and elucidates it within the academic field of visual culture and art history.

The marginalisation and invisibility of women in history is not an issue that is unique to the context of Zambia, Zimbabwe Northern and Southern Rhodesia as scholars such as Oyèrónké Oyěwùmí (1997), Sabine Marschall (2009 and 2010) and Saidiya Hartman (2019) have also argued that there is a gender bias that is embedded in the landscape of the national and political memory of many countries such that women's stories are often excluded from larger national narratives. In this thesis, I too agree with this assertion to a large extent and contribute to epistemologies relating to visibilities of women in national memory by arguing that narratives that relate to women's involvement in independence movements in Northern Rhodesia/ Zambia, and Southern Rhodesia/ Zimbabwe exist between two points of a visibility spectrum in which on one end there is absolute invisibility, and on the other end there is hyper-visibility (Ghorashi 2010; Mowatt, French and Malebranche 2013; Van Veeren 2018). I suggest that majority, if not all historic narratives are not stagnant or fixed at any one point of the visibility continuum, but that memories oscillate between the two points of visibility such that at times they appear more partially obscured while at other times they appear to be more perceptible in representations of history. Essentially, I present the concept of invisibility as a perpetual and complex process of either transmuting into a state of becoming seen (moving towards hyper-visibility) or as a progression of becoming unseen (manoeuvring in the direction of absolute invisibility which can be understood as the process of erasure) (Burnham 2009; Kalichini 2017).

The concept of invisibility developed in this doctoral dissertation does not assume that stories and memories of women are non-existent within the broader context of Zambian and Zimbabwean national histories. It rather argues that narratives about women are intertwined

within various sections of both national and personal memory where their visibility is either compromised or enhanced particularly in relation to the historicization of independence. As such this dissertation engages with stories about women both within and beyond grander narratives of independence that are often presented in spaces such as national archives and public monuments where remembrance is largely facilitated by the state.

i. Shaping a Concept of InVisibility

The concept of invisibility developed in this doctoral dissertation in art history is a combination of two words that have opposite meanings but are defined the same. Both words, visible and invisible, correlate to the sense of sight and are often used in reference to the capability to see or to be seen and signify the prominence and extent to which someone, an object or an occurrence attracts attention. To be visible means to be in a disposition to be seen, while to be invisible implies being imperceptible to sight. The concept of in-visibility as explained in the preceding subsection also refers to a dynamic and continuous process of becoming visible and vice versa of losing visibility. The notion of invisibility that I develop in this doctoral dissertation is multifaceted and can be understood through the consideration of three terms that relate to seeing. The terms are (i) vision, (ii) visibility and (iii) visuality. Vision is described as the ability or inability to see in Bence Nanay's article titled *The History of Vision* (2015: 259-271) and published in The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism. The way images are formed, and how we see them changes and evolves over time. Visibility can be understood as the conditions of being seen or unseen (Elkins 1997) while visuality relates to the distribution of power that determines who and what can be seen or can perform the act of seeing (Mirzoeff 2011).

To develop the concept of invisibility I draw and make theoretical connections to visual culture theorist Nicholas Mirzoeff's *The Right to Look: A Counterhistory of Visuality* (2011), art historian Ruth Simbao's *Blind Spots: Trickery and the 'Opaque Stickiness' of Seeing* (2015a) and *Cleansing via the Senses as Eyesight Follows the Soul: Igshaan Adams' "Bismillah" Performance* (2015b) and art historian James Elkins' *The Object Stares Back: On the Nature of Seeing* (1997). All these listed literary works critically engage with concepts of vision, visibility and visuality that I employ in framing the notion of invisibility in this thesis. Elkins is an art historian and art critique (https://jameselkins.com) and Simbao is a

professor of Art History and Visual Culture in the department of Fine Art at Rhodes University in South Africa (https://www.ru.ac.za/ruthsimbao). Mirzoeff describes himself as a visual activist who professes in the subjects of media, culture, and communication. Mirzoeff's research interests are situated at the intersection of politics and visual culture (https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/people/nicholas-mirzoeff).

The potency of seeing and being seen, or blindness and appearing invisible, lays in the juncture of the purviews of relations between a subject (or an object) of sight and an observer. In a utopian world, the power dynamics of seeing are evenly spread across an observer as one who looks and a subject of sight not just as one or something that is looked at, but also as a one or something that can stare back (Elkins 1996). In such an equilibrium an object of sight has the power to become visible or imperceptible and the observer reserves the right to see or to turn a blind eye. In reality such a state of balance is rarely achieved, it arguably does not exist as more often than not, power is complexly negotiated such that it interchanges between an object of sight and an observer to cause either clearer or obstructed vision. There are of course internal and external factors that influence both an observer and subject of sight's potency to form vision. For instance, it is possible for an observer to have more authority than an object of sight, in the process of seeing. An observer may choose to stare directly at a subject or close their eyes or even decide to look the other way. Also, an observer can be distracted. The reverse is also possible, a subject can hide or present itself in plain sight, or its presence can be so over-powering to such an extent that it becomes impossible to be unaware of its existence. A quintessential example is that of a spectacle because by nature it is an extravagant or remarkable display that is difficult to overlook. For example, an enormous sculpture in the public space can stand out against its background, sometimes to the point of simultaneously rendering other structures in its proximity blurred or indiscernible. That is, it can obscure and hide other materials around it. In this example the large sculpture as an object of sight retains more power in the conditions of seeing and being seen.

On the first page of *The Right to Look: A Counterhistory of Visuality* (2011), Mirzoeff defines the point of equilibrium on the visibility spectrum with the phrase 'the right to look is the right to the real'. This phrase can be interpreted as meaning a point in which autonomy and power are negotiated by both observer and subject of sight such that both their existences are mutually recognised. Mirzoeff (1997) postulates that disequilibrium occurs when there

are unbalanced negotiations of visuality - the uneven distribution and regulation of power – is what produces blindness and the loss of vision or the inability to see. It is important to understand that blindness is not defined as the opposite of seeing or the inoperability of the eyes. Elkins (1996) confirms that blindness is not an inability to see with eyes, but that it is rather the failure to imagine or form images in one's consciousness. He argues that it is actually possible for an observer to look with their eyes and to even be convinced of seeing when one is actually blind (Elkins 1996).

What is blindness if it is not the opposite of seeing? In the poem *On His Blindness* (1673: 91) written by John Milton who lost his sense of sight in 1652 (Slakey 1960: 122-130), blindness is described as the absence of light. Milton's poem opens with the sentence 'when I consider how my light is spent' to set a tone of a contemplation about the loss of the functioning of his own eyes. The poem expresses Milton's frustrations with the loss of his sight because he was a writer in the1600s who felt that his eyes were vital for him to fulfil his calling. Milton's texts largely engaged with ideas of Christian spirituality, and he perceived that he served God using his talent of writing. In the early scenes of his poem, Milton (1673: 91) fears that because he is blind, he is wasting away as he writes 'that one Talent which is death to hide'. The word talent here references the biblical parable written by one of the twelve disciples of Jesus. In Matthew 25: 14-30, the provision of rewards in the kingdom of heaven is illustrated through a tale that follows three individuals who were each given talents by their master. The first two invested their talents and gained more, while the third hid his and it neither grew nor diminished. When their master returned, he awarded the first two and banished the third servant who hid his talents. In the first paragraph of his poem, Milton (1673: 91) associates himself with the third servant and laments and insinuates that his blindness in some ways prevents him from serving God as his master. As the poem transitions from beginning to middle, Milton begins to cope with his blindness in a manner that he imagines serving God with his talent in other ways as he writes 'Though my Soul more bent, To serve therewith my Maker, and present My true account'. By the end of his poem, Milton (1673) presents an internal resolution and acceptance of his condition and finds peace in knowing that he can continue to serve God, his master, in other ways. He writes,

> I fondly ask. But patience, to prevent
> That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
> Either man's work or his own gifts; who best

> Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
> Is Kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed
> And post o'er Land and Ocean without rest:
> They also serve who only stand and wait
> (Milton 1673; 91).

The last paragraph of On His Blindness (1673) translates as,

> But my internal sense of patience, in an effort to stop that bad thought, quickly replies: "God doesn't need man's work or his gifts. Whoever best obeys God's commands serves Him best. He is like a king. Thousands of people rush around at his bidding, crossing land and sea without rest. And those who simply wait for his commands also serve him (John Milton's Sonnet, number 19, https://www.litcharts.com/poetry/john-milton/sonnet-19-when-i-consider-how-my-light-is-spent-on-his-blindness).

In *The Object Stares Back: On the Nature of Seeing* (1996), Elkins provides a definition of blindness that is similar to that provided in Milton's (1673) poem. Elkins (1996) speaks about blindness in terms of an observer's inability to construct images beyond their physical sense of sight and extends it by considering blindness that may occur due to a subjects' inability to appear visible. Elkins (1996) argues that if an object or subject is invisible (whether because it is hidden or absent) there is nothing for an observer to see. Blindness in the words of Elkins (1996:170) is described as 'an invisible absence … whose invisibility is itself invisible'. This point of disequilibrium is known as a blind spot, a condition in which there is invisibility. In *Blind Spots: Trickery and the 'Opaque Stickiness' of Seeing* (2015a), Simbao draws from Elkins' (1996) conceptualisation of a blind spot to offer an additional perspective about the inability to form vision and explains a condition she terms as 'double blindness' and defines as a predicament in which a blindness is unaware of its own blindness. Cautioning about double blindness, Simbao writes,

> … the most hazardous condition is double blindness in which a person has no idea that she or he is partially blind… the failure of seeing (literally or figuratively) creates an absence of vision… in terms of ways of seeing (or not seeing) … ignorance and prejudice create cultural or cognitive biases that rely on farcical information and skewed perspectives (Simbao 2015a: 175-176).

In *Cleansing via the Senses as Eyesight Follows the Soul: Igshaan Adams' "Bismillah" Performance* (2015b), Simbao discusses seeing as a spiritual experience that transcends the materiality of a body and asserts the importance of employing physical senses of sight, sound, taste, touch, and smell in the process of forming vision. In this text Simbao (2015b) writes from the context of an observer's experience in perceiving a deeper dimension of life which she describes as a spiritual practice of seeing. The formation of vision as a spiritual practice requires awareness and sensitivity of the existence of what our physical eyes cannot perceive, at least not by themselves. An important aspect of spiritually seeing is perceiving a deeper dimension in life, it is seeing beyond flesh and bone, creed, and religion, and might I add, it is also seeing beyond gender. To see, to hear, to touch, to taste and to smell are all important qualities that allow humans to visualise, to imagine or to form pictures in our minds.

Interestingly, Mirzoeff's (2011) critical engagement with the concept of visuality, Simbao's (2015b) notion of 'double blindness' and Elkins' (1996) definition of a blind spot could be read in a manner that they affirm Milton's (1673) perceptions on what the lack of vision is and is not. *On His Blindness* (1673) is a poem about a blindness aware of its own blindness. Mirzoeff (2011), Simbao (2015a and 2015b) and Elkins (1996) show that not only is it conceivable to be able to see without eyes like in the case of Milton (1673), but that it is actually very important to be able to construct images beyond our sense of sight just as the reader of this thesis did in the exercise of constructing two mental images in the beginning of this introduction. In the visualisation exercise I positioned you, the reader, as an observer while I acted as an external force that mediated your interaction with the two stories as the subjects for you to see. I directed what sort of images your conscious developed by carefully highlighting specific aspects of the stories and concealing details such as the height of the woman, her name and the colour of her eyes. I posed the questions at the end of the exercise using terms such as 'freedom fighter' and 'women', to subtly provoke your imagination to see an image of a woman. Essentially, the exercise shifts images of two women between the two points of the visibility spectrum that I describe in this introduction. Throughout this thesis the concept of invisibility is complexly navigated to explain how specific archival collections, monuments, and visual artists' works draw attention to historical narratives by either shifting focus onto or away from particular aspects.

ii. InVisibility and the Politics of Looking

> I am a woman of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids - and I might even be said to possess a mind. I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me ... it is as though I have been surrounded by mirrors of hard, distorting glass. When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination - indeed, everything and anything except me.
>
> … my invisibility is not exactly a matter of a biochemical accident to my epidermis. That invisibility to which I refer occurs because of a peculiar disposition of the eyes of those with whom I come in contact [with]. A matter of the construction of their inner eyes, those eyes with which they look through their physical eyes upon reality.
>
> … to be unseen … being bumped against … poor vision … (you) often doubt if you really exist… [and you feel] the need to convince yourself that you do exist in the real world, that you're a part of all the sound and anguish, and you strike out with your fists, you curse and you swear to make them recognized you. And, alas, it's seldom successful.
>
> … so overtly violent … I am invisible
> (Ellison 1952, 1).

The capability to see and/ or to be seen appear to be an innate aspect of existing in the world. Although seeing and being seen seem to be universal characteristics, they are not. Actually, not even the other four senses of hearing, feeling, smelling or tasting are guaranteed for every human being. John Milton lost his ability to see with his eyes in the latter part of his life, the composer Ludwig van Beethoven lost his hearing and percussionist Dame Evelyn Elizabeth Ann Glennie has been deaf since she was eight years old. Cited in the preceding quote, is an unnamed black male protagonist in Ralph Ellison's (1952) only novel lamenting about being in a disposition in which he feels unseen. *Invisible Man* (1952) is a story about social inequalities faced by African American men in the early twentieth century, it explores concepts of black nationalism, and the relationship between black identity and personal identity.

In this novel, Ellison (1952) writes about a protagonist's invisibility that is violent and arises from a refusal by his oppressor to see him. The observer (or the one who does the seeing) in

Ellison's 1952 novel is the institutions and white men, and the subject of sight is the protagonist who is in search of his own identity. In the South, which is the setting of *Invisible Man* (1952), white men refuse to acknowledge the black man who resorts to going to New York where he is also unfortunately unrecognised by many institutions. The black man then decides to reside inside a hole which he makes his home, he furnishes and lights it up with stolen electricity to make a space for himself in which he is then able to see himself and explore his own identity (Ellison 1952). When the lead character in *Invisible Man* (1952) illuminates his living space, he puts himself in a position of power that is echoed in the opening of a book titled *Black Orpheus* (1976) and written by a philosopher interested in existentialism known as Jean-Paul Charles Aymard Sartre, or simply as Jean-Paul Sartre. The first paragraph of Black Orpheus (1964) states that,

> … black men [are] standing, [and] looking … the white man has enjoyed the privilege of seeing without being seen … Today these black men are looking at us, and our gaze comes back to our own eyes.

The ability to see and to be seen can be advantaged within given social groups as suggested in Sartre's *Black Orpheus* (1976), Ellison's *Invisible Man* (1952), and even Mirzoeff's *The Right to Look: A Counterhistory of Visuality* (2011) which is discussed in the preceding subsection. Ellison (1952) as well as Sartre (1976), explain that white men have historically been in the position of power in looking, particularly in the time period of black slavery and during the civil rights movements in the United States of America. Feminist art historian Griselda Pollock (1988, 14) argues that men are more advantaged in being visible (in a position to be seen) than women because history presents more of their historical accounts and perspectives. In *The Right to Look: A Counterhistory of Visuality* (2011), Mirzoeff essentially criticises the hegemonic process of historicisation which he argues is often practiced by the west. He argues that looking into history from such a one-sided position creates blindness or the formation of skewed perspectives as Simba has warned in *Blind Spots: Trickery and the 'Opaque Stickiness' of Seeing* (2015a: 176). Images that provide skewed perspectives of history tend to render alternative perspectives both silent and invisible.

The concept of invisibility developed in this dissertation encapsulates more than the physical ability to see or be seen, it describes a process of oscillating between illusion and reality,

absence and presence, and visible and obscured. In *Fyamoneka: Exploring the Erasure of Women in Zambian History* (2017) I define erasure similarly to death and describe it as a process of moving towards the point of indiscernibility to the physical eye on the visibility spectrum. The process of becoming invisible can be subtle or violent, for instance a memory that is rooted in the subconscious of an elderly person can disappear when they forget, or it can be lost when they die (not to say that the dead do not speak). Historical erasure can be violent and abrasive when it is enforced, or when some perspectives are overlooked or removed. When erasure is achieved through a process of violence, it affects the production of memory and forms images of the past that marginalise and deny visibility to some groups (Oyěwùmí 1997; Marschall 2009 and 2010; Saidiya Hartman 2019).

This doctoral thesis in art history does not suggest that women's stories are non-existent but rather argues that they are accorded less priveledge in the process of being seen. There exists an epitomised image of a woman freedom fighter in Africa during the colonial era which often depicts a woman holding a weapon such as a rifle and a baby on her back (Loken 2021; Lyons 2004). Such an image provides a focal point to discuss the politics of visual representations of women in relation to their roles in independence struggles. This image can be read two-fold; firstly, the image can be understood as a visual of a woman guerrilla fighter who is also a mother and who has to care for her offspring. Secondly, the image can be read as a picture of a woman existing within a context of conflict because of the gun that she is presented holding. Because often roles such as bathing and feeding children are not largely associated with armed battle (Oyěwùmí 1997; Lyons 2004), we see the woman as a freedom fighter largely through the gun that she holds in the image. Without the gun, the epitomised visual of a woman freedom fighter can be connected to the first mental image of the woman in the visualisation exercise presented in the beginning of this introduction. However, it is important to note that even if a gun was absent in an image of woman at a time of conflict, it does not negate the fact that the woman represented in such imagery does not exist within a context of violence and conflict.

An image of a woman with a baby and a riffle can be perceived both as a domesticated version of women soldiers and symbolically as a powerful image of a woman active in battle, however it is not representative of all women of African descent who participated in independence protests, rallies and even wars. This is not to say that there is a zero proportion of women with similar experiences, there is indeed actually a plethora of shared experiences

by women both literally and by association, even so, I insist that it is important to be able to see nuance and acknowledge the differences in the ways in which women were involved and how they are visually portrayed in visual materials such as photographs, monuments and visual art works. Difference, as Stuart Hall puts it in Constituting an Archive (2001), is essential to meaning (2001: 90). Differences do not create binaries nor separate, they rather enhance the fecundity of knowledge production by enriching meanings and experiences that are both positional and relational (Ibid). That is to say that seeing difference allows for the emergence of various meanings and different alternative views from different perspectives and contexts that can be relatable across eons and various groups of people.

iii. Historical and Political Context of Study

The former Rhodesian colonies currently known as Zambia and Zimbabwe are geographically situated in the centre of southern Africa. The two countries are naturally connected by the Zambezi River which stretches across a distance of over 2,500 kilometres. In the eastern direction, the Zambezi flows into the largest man-made water reservoir in southern Africa known as the Kariba dam, which is about 128 metres deep, and has a concave wall that is 617 meters long and has a capacity to hold 180 billion litres of water (Tischler 2013). In the west, the Zambezi River attaches to the world's most unique quadric point connecting Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia, and also hosting the Victoria Falls. This particular quadripoint is exceptional because beyond connecting four countries, its waterfall is formed out of water from two large rivers which are the Chobe River flowing in from Botswana and of course the Zambezi River (Ibid).

Zambia and Zimbabwe have a special historical and political connection as they were both colonised by the English government through the British South Africa Company (BSAC) formed by John Cecil Rhodes (Macola 2007; Mawerera 2014). Both countries also formed part of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (now Malawi) (also known as the Central African Federation) and are also members of the Front-Line States which is a cluster of countries that collaborated their efforts towards the ending of colonialism in southern region of Africa and the abolishing of the apartheid regime in South Africa. The Front-Line States as listed on the pillars of the Matola Raid Monument which is located in the outskirts of Maputo include Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia

and Zimbabwe (Thompson 2019; Macola 2007; Mawerera 2014). The Matola Raid Monument and Interpretive Centre commemorates the 1981 event in which the South African apartheid government attacked and bombed the African National Congress (ANC) safe houses in Matola. The safe houses functioned as a harbours and transit points for the uMkhonto Wesizwe[2] (MK) members (http://www.dmv.gov.za/news/matola-raid.htm). In the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, majority of politicians and guerrillas in colonial territories in southern Africa found refuge and trained in camps and military bases in member countries of the Front-Line States which was formed based on the principles of African nationalism (the process of removing colonial authority for the specific purpose to create independent states on the African continent).

The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was formed in 1953 as an economic and geopolitical amalgamation of the British colony of Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and the British protectorates of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland[3]. The federation was established largely to provide more black labour in copper mines in Northern Rhodesia and in industries that white settlers in Southern Rhodesia had constructed (Rotberg 1965). The administrative capital of the Central African Federation was set up in Salisbury (now Harare) in Southern Rhodesia. By the time the Federation was formed in the 1950s, there was already an emergence of nationalist movements in all the three colonies. Political parties such as the Nyasaland African Congress (NAC) and the Northern Rhodesia Congress (NRC) (or Northern Rhodesia African Congress (NRAC)) (Cohen 2009: 114-115) in the two protectorates were in their formative years.

The nationalist parties along with many black people in the two protectorates opposed the amalgamation of the three colonial territories based on the argument that the making of such

[22] uMkhonto Wesizwe (MK) (spear of the nation) was the military wing African National Congress that was formed by Nelson Mandela in the 1960s (Seidman 2018). The main function of the MK was to fight against the South African apartheid government (Ibid). For further reading on the history of the MK refer to the article *Moms with Guns: Women's Political Agency in Anti-Apartheid Visual Culture* (2009) by Kim Miller and published in the African Arts journal.

[3] A colony is a geographic territory under partial or total political authority of a foreign government, while a protectorate is a nation that retains political sovereignty and is protected by a foreign country. The colony of Southern Rhodesia was governed through political administration and structured that was different from that of the protectorates of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland (Macola 2007; Mawerera 2014).

an economic bloc largely benefited white settlers. Black people in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland began to protest against injustices such as the low wages they were paid for their work in the mines and industries, as well as the unequal opportunities that were presented. Because of laws such as the colour bar in the protectorates, black people were not allowed to professionally hold specific job titles such as mining manager. The protests evolved, and black people began to demand for free and fair elections in the hopes of overthrowing the imperialist government (Cohen 2009; Macola 2007). In the British protectorate of Nyasaland, the political party the NAC developed into the Malawi Congress Party (MCP) which eventually won the first universal suffrage elections in the protectorate in 1961, and consequently led the nation to independence with the name Malawi on 6th July 1964 (Cohen 2009).

In the book *One Zambia, Many Histories: Towards a History of Post-Polonial Zambia* (2007), historian Giacomo Macola outlines the progression of the NRAC from the 1940s when it was formed until it became the United National Independence Party (UNIP) in the early 1960s preceding their victory in the 1964 elections and the consequent granting of independence on the 24th of October 1964 shortly after Malawi became an independent state. The NRAC became the Northern Rhodesian African National Congress (NRANC) in 1951. Seven years later, the political party members separated, and some went on to form the Zambia African National Congress (ZANC). In the following year the ZANC was banned by the British colonial government and the political party reinvited itself as the United Federal Party (UFP) and then eventually as the UNIP with Kenneth Kaunda as president. Because of his role in the independence political parties, Kaunda is recognised as the father of the nation and the most epitomised freedom fighter in the country (Macola 2007).

When Zambia and Malawi gained independence in 1964 this essentially meant the end of the Central African Federation. The struggle for independence in Southern Rhodesia continued until 1979 and there are two political parties that are largely acknowledging the nationalist movement in the post-independence state of Zimbabwe. They are the Zimbabwe Africa People's Union (ZAPU) established in 1961 and the Zimbabwe Africa National Union (ZANU) which was formed in 1963 as a breakaway political party (Chimhanda 2003; Mawerera 2014). Following the dissolution of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1964, a white settler known as Ian Smith signed a Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) and formed an autonomous white minority government that was separate from the

British government (Chimhanda 2003). The black nationalist movement opposed Smith's government and the armed war of liberation which is popularly referred to as the second chimurenga commenced. The ZAPU formed the military wing known as the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) and had training camps in Zambia which had already been liberated and Bechuanaland (now Botswana) which was also in the process of attaining its independence at the time. The ZANU's defence force was known as the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA), some of its soldiers were trained in bases in Zambia along with some of the ZIPRA combatants, and also across the eastern border in África Oriental Portuguesa (also known as Portuguese East Africa or Portuguese Mozambique) which became Mozambique in 1975 (Lyons 1999; Israel, Lyons and Mason 2002).

The Rhodesian bush war (the armed war of liberation) lasted for fifteen years, it began in 1964 at the fall of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland and ended in 1979 after the signing of the agreement to ceasefire in 1979 at the Lancaster House in London (Lyons 199). The agreement not only declared the ending of the war, but also transferred the instruments of power from Smith's government and back to the British government (Chimhanda 2003; Mawerera 2014). Thereafter, the country was renamed Zimbabwe and Robert Mugabe on the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) ticket was elected president of the country the following year in 1980 (Ibid). The official date of Zimbabwe's independence is 18th April 2018.

The liberation stories of Zambia and Zimbabwe are complex and are commemorated in various ways and spaces such as national archives and public monuments. There are of course some aspects of independence narratives that are more dominantly visible and some that are less visible in memory structures depending on the curation of a specific angle one views it. After independence, the liberation struggle in Northern and Southern Rhodesia (Zambia and Zimbabwe) was largely articulated by the political parties that were voted into power; the UNIP in Zambia and the ZANU-PF in Zimbabwe. The new governments were largely dominated and mainly offered independence accounts that focussed on the evolution of their political parties and the participations and contributions of their leaders who are Kaunda and Mugabe, as well as other members who are today identified as freedom fighters. The stories of many women remain minimally existent in the telling of such dominant

historical narratives. This doctoral dissertation engages with narrative about specific women and to make visible their contributions to the liberation of their respective nations.

iv. Literature Review

InVisible Freedom Fighter: A Critical Analysis of Portrayals of Women in Archival Photographs, Independence Monuments and Contemporary Art in Zambia (Northern Rhodesia) and Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia) (2023) critically analyses visual representations of women in relation to the broader context of national liberation narratives in Zambia (then Northern Rhodesia) and Zimbabwe (then Southern Rhodesia). This literature review provides an overview of what projects have been done on the visibility of women in African independence narratives within the broader scope of visual studies. As there is little to no studies that specifically focuses on analysing visibilities of Zambian and Zimbabwean women in relation to liberation narratives within the fields of Art History, Visual Culture and Cultural Heritage, this literature review considers two visual projects and three texts that provide insights into complexities of political and national memory as well as gender and the memorialisation of independence epochs in Africa. The two visual projects include the exhibition *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994* (2001) and *Women On Aeroplanes*. The three texts are *Commemorating 'Struggle Heroes': Constructing a Genealogy for the New South Africa* (2006), *Landscape of Memory: Commemorative Monuments, Memorials and Public Statuary in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (2009) and *How to Honour a Woman: Gendered Memorialisation in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (2010).

This literature review survey the five projects outlined in the above paragraph as a means to reference and draw on the methodological strategies that were employed in the visual exploration of political independence in Africa. The visual projects and texts are also referenced as a means of raising question about visibilities of women within political narratives which is the focus of this doctoral dissertation. *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994* (2001) is an exhibition project curated by Okwui Enwenzor and a curatorial team that includes Mark Nash, Lauri Firstenberg, Rory Bester, and Chika Okeke-Agulu. *Women on Aeroplanes* is an ongoing research project

initiated by Annett Busch, Marie-Hélène Gutberlet and Magda Lipska. All the three texts are written by Sabine Marschall who is a professor of cultural heritage.

Definition of Key Concepts

The key concepts of this study are independence and liberation movements, and political and national memory. Independence and liberation movements are concepts that are generally categorised as part of the field of political studies and are defined as nationalist and anti-imperialist efforts that aimed to overthrow colonial rule or white oppressive governments in order to obtain political freedom often by black people (Southall 2019). They are a crucial feature of the political, social and cultural histories of many African states, particularly in connection to notions that relate to constructions of the state and national identity, and patriotism as well as liberation heroes. Both political and national memory are a form of collective memory, which can be defined as information that is shared in the conscious of more than one individual (Nora 1989). National memory is the collective memory that is shared by individuals with a similar national identity. Political memory is very similar to national memory in that it is also associated with national identity, however it is important to note that political memory refers more to information that relates to political movements within a given country or state (Enwenzor 2001).

Visual Arts and Remembrance: Memorialising Independence Movements in Africa

The projects outlined in this literature review explore some of the ways in which visual arts or visual materials are sometimes used in commemorating liberation movements in Africa. *Women on Aeroplanes* is an ongoing research project that explores marginalised stories of women. The title of the project comes from Kojo Laing's 1988 novel titled *Woman of the Aeroplanes* (see chapter one). According to the *Women on Aeroplanes* website (https://woa.kein.org/about), the project,

> … [looks closely] at the long history of transatlantic networks and the struggles for liberation, predating the process of independence on the African continent (and elsewhere), it explores how women were always central to such networks and struggles, in which they played multiple

roles. Their stories are however hardly told and their faces remain widely invisible. We aim to not only frame their various and heterogeneous contributions, politically and artistically, but also create new parameters and premises of storytelling. To recall the notion of independence today necessarily means to address the gap between formal independence and a process of decolonisation that was simultaneously national and intranational, transnational and international and which remains, in many ways, incomplete (https://woa.kein.org/about).

The Women on Aeroplanes project comprises of exhibitions, artist residencies, workshops, seminars and a publication titled Inflight Magazine that is produced twice or three times annually. Contributors to the project include several scholars, curators, artists and thinkers including Nigerian architect Ayò Akínwándé, Namibian historian and artist Memory Biwa, Egyptian film maker Jihan El-Tahri, Berlin-based curator Natasha Ginwala, South African artist Lungiswa Gqunta, and even myself, Gladys Kalichini as a Zambian artist and researcher among others. All contributors are referred to as passengers on board a flight that travels to various destinations in search of narratives about women. The first workshop (stopover) that was part of the broader project was in 2017 at Ifa Galerie in Berlin. It was themed Editing Room and focused on '*cutting, assembling, juxtaposing, of rearranging ideas, images, concerns, misunderstandings, fragments of storytelling and histories*' (https://woa.kein.org/stopovers#berlin). The second stopover took place in 2018 at the Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA) in Lagos and was themed as *Search Research: Looking for Colette Omogbai*. The second iteration employed an analysis of Nigerian artist Colette Omogbai's disappearance from the mainstream art market in Lagos, as a starting point into exploring narratives of women that are invisible in public memory institutions such as archives.

The third stopover, *Resonate*, took place during the latter half of 2018 (June to December) at Iwalewahaus at Bayreuth University. Here the project considered questions relating to the archive as a memory structure and politics associated with the collection of historical materials. In October of the same year 2018, an exhibition dubbed a title the same as the project, Women On Aeroplanes, was opened at the Showroom in London. The exhibition included the works of three women artists Lungiswa Gqunta, Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum and Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa. The artworks that were exhibited as part of this stopover explored unrecognised roles performed by women in independence and liberation movements in African states. At the same time, October 2018, another exhibition with a similar

conceptual focus and titled *Niepodległe: Women, Independence and National Discourse* (2018) was opened at the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw.

In February of 2020, the *Women On Aeroplanes* project participated in the Lahore Biennale in Pakistan. Here the first four magazines of the project were displayed alongside a public event. In the early parts of 2020, there was a global pandemic due to the Corona Virus that saw many countries across the world closing their airports. During this time, the the Women On Aeroplanes shifted some of their programs onto a virtual platform. In June 2020 an online workshop themed *READINGS, CONVERSATIONS, FILM STREAMINGS, VISITS, MIXTAPES, ARCHIVAL MATERIAL* was hosted from Johannesburg. This virtual program focused on issues of law, rights, legislation, and legality. The program continues to develop various projects that primarily focus on memorialising stories of women.

The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994 (2001) explores the development of political and cultural consciousness from the mid-1940s through the 1990s (Enwenzor 2001). It includes works in film, photography, architecture, music, literature, theatre, graphics and the works of over fifty artists most of which can be argued to have contributed towards the discourse of modern and contemporary art in Africa such as South African artists Gerald Sekoto (b.1913 – d.1993), Dumile Feni (b.1942 – d.1991) and Jane Alexander (b.1956), Nigerian artists Oladélé Bamgboyé (b.1963) and Ben Enwonwu (b.1917 – d.1994) as well as Mozambican artist Malangatana Ngwenya (b.1936 – d.2011). Enwezor (2001) argues that the theoretical premise of *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994* (2001) was the notion that African histories are often presented as colonial constructs that exclude some voices; thus, the guiding principle behind this exhibition was to archive, recollect and reinterpret history.

The exhibition project provides a contemporary articulation of the history of independence in Africa by reflecting on the hundred years between 1945 and 1994 – it focusses on the decade of 1950s-1980s as the era in which majority of African states gained political independence from European colonial rule, and 1994 as the year in which the apartheid regime in South Africa was officially abolished. According to Kristina Van Dyke's (2002: 76) articled in the third issue of the 2002 African Arts journal, this exhibition project brings together multiple voices expressed by employing numerous mediums to offer stories of independence from the perspective of Africa in such a manner that the continent 'talks with its multiple selves' about

the ‘exuberances, promises, messiness and contradictions’ of liberation in relation to what institutes both the colonial and post-colonial epochs.

The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994 (2001) is a project conceptualised in collaboration with the Haus der Kulturen de Welt in Berlin and the Museum Villa Stuck in Munich. The first iteration of the exhibition was opened at the Museum Villa Stuck in Münich on 15th February in 2002 until the 22nd of April in the same year and then travelled to the Martin Gropius Bau Museum in Berlin where it was exhibited from the 18th of May until the end of July in 2001. The exhibition was then transported from Germany to the United States of America and installed inside the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago from the 8th of September until the end of 2021. The next year the exhibition was mounted in New York in two venues, the P.S.1 Contemporary Art Centre in Queens and the Museum for Modern Art (MoMA) in Manhattan, from the 10th of February until 5th May 2002 (https://universes.art/en/specials/2001/the-short-century/).

The exhibition The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945 – 1994 (2001) is accompanied by a four hundred paged catalogue of the same title which begins as follows,

> Fellow African Freedom Fighters still carrying the burden of imperialism, pull together. We who have won our freedom stand uncompromisingly behind you in your struggle. Take heart. Unite your forces. Organization and discipline shall command your victory. All Africa shall be free in this, our lifetime. For this mid-twentieth century is Africa's. This decade is the decade of African independence. Forward then to independence. To Independence Now. Tomorrow, the United States of Africa (Kwame Nkrumah in Enwenzor 2001: 10).

The opening quote of the catalogue is taken from the last paragraph of a speech given by the then Prime Minister of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah, at the opening session of the All-African People's Conference in Ghana in December of 1958 (http://www.columbia.edu/itc/history/mann/w3005/nkrumba.html). Nkrumah’s speech (Ibid) congratulates countries which had acquired independence by 1958 and encourages those that were still going through the process of overthrowing colonial rule to press on. Nkrumah’s speech (Op Cit) announces the dawn of a new era, … *the opening of a new epoch in [the] continent's history [that would] be recorded … in illuminations worthy of its significance*.

For the exhibition *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994* (2001), Nkrumah's words set a tone of a visual reflection of the complexities of the African independence from the vantage point of Africa. Throughout the catalogue, tales of various national liberation movements in African states including Zambia and Zimbabwe, are articulated through art, literature and music, political manifestos and photography among other mediums.

The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994 (2001) is thematically divided into seven visual categories that engage with the sub-themes of the project as a whole as Modernism and African art, Space and Colonial Power, and Culture After Independence among others. The seven categories include (i) art, (ii) cloth/ posters, (iii) photography, (iv) architecture, (v) music, (vi) theatre/ literature, and (vii) film. These categories are listed on the cover of the catalogue against a backdrop of a photograph of a woman wearing a hat and sash on the right-hand side, and a man talking into a microphone on the left-hand side. Some of the materials included in the exhibition such as archival photographs, liberation songs and political manifestos were sourced from various public and private archives across Africa, and the artworks were produced by artists who identified as African. As a whole, the project can be said to critically explore political and national liberation in Africa from the vantage point of Africa because it employs a methodological approach in which experiences in Africa by Africans speak to the themes explored in the exhibition. *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994* (2001) is structured in such a manner that one could say 'Africa looks back to critically explore multiple histories about Africa'. By considering various visual materials such as archival and documentary photographs, paintings, sculpture and so on, it provides multiple perspectives in which the eras of independence in Africa can be looked at.

This exhibition is monumental in its contribution to the discourse about liberation movements in Africa, specifically within the context of the visual arts. However, it is important to note that *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994* (2001) does not explicitly focus on gender or on individual contributions by women (or men) in liberation movements, but rather accentuates broader experiences in African states at the cusp of political independence. Although Enwenzor (2001) and the curatorial team do not primarily employ a framework of gender to analyse, explore and archive African independence, *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa1945 -*

1994 (2001) still provides a basis on which to critically analyse visual representations of women in portrayal relating to liberation.

The texts are *Commemorating 'Struggle Heroes': Constructing a Genealogy for the New South Africa* (2006), *Landscape of Memory: Commemorative Monuments, Memorials and Public Statuary in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (2009) and *How to Honour a Woman: Gendered Memorialisation in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (2010), are all written by Sabine Marschall. Each of the texts addresses issues of gender and public commemorative structures specifically within the context of South Africa. The essay *Commemorating 'Struggle Heroes': Constructing a Genealogy for the New South Africa* (2006) discusses the preservation of public monuments and heritage and critically analyses newly constructed commemorative monuments, memorials and statues in post-apartheid South Africa. It examines the role of public monuments of liberation heroes in the construction of national history and identities (Marshchall 2006).

The book *Landscape of Memory: Commemorative Monuments, Memorials and Public Statuary in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (2009) extends the essay *Commemorating 'Struggle Heroes': Constructing a Genealogy for the New South Africa* (2006) and expounds on the complex relationship between national memory and public commemorative structures such as monuments. The book includes ten meticulously curated chapters that engage with issues of heritage and address complex questions around nation building and, formations and preservations of historical narratives. The ten chapters are titled,

1. Cultural Heritage and Policy,
2. Paying Tribute: The First Public Memorials to the Victims of the Liberation Movements,
3. Coming to Terms with Trauma: The TRC And Memorials to the Victims of Apartheid Violence,
4. Imagining Community Through Bereavement: The Institutionalisation of Traumatic Memory,
5. Dealing with the Commemorative Legacy of the Past,
6. Defining National Identity with Heritage: The National Legacy Project,
7. Freedom Park as National Site of Identification,
8. Celebrating 'Mothers Of The Nation': The Monument to the Women Of South Africa In Pretoria,

9. Africanising the Symbolic Landscape: Post-Apartheid Monuments As 'Critical Response', and
10. Commodification, Tourism and The Need for Visual Markers.

The eighth chapter of *Landscape of Memory: Commemorative Monuments, Memorials and Public Statuary in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (2009) grapples specifically with public memory and gender and argues that narratives about women form part of the proportion of stories that tend to be marginalised from broader constructions of national history. The conversation in the eight chapter is continued in an article published online on Taylor & Francis Online and titled *How to Honour a Woman: Gendered Memorialisation in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (2010). This article critically examines monuments in South frica that were constructed specifically to honour women (see Chapter two).

v. Methodology of Study

This section outlines the approaches I employed in gathering and organising the information in this doctoral dissertation. The three main texts that inform my methodology in this study are *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Riotous Black Girls, Troublesome Women, and Queer Radicals* (2019) by writer Saidiya Hartman, *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide* (2015) by professor of Sociology Boaventura de Sousa Santos and *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (2021) by critic of colonial methodologies in academic teaching and learning Linda Tuhiwai Smith.

I am a Zambian woman, an art historian and practicing artist whose multi-media artworks engage with visibilities that pertain to historical stories about women in relation to the telling of national resistance histories. My artistic practice draws from concepts of history and memory, and stems from a nostalgic place to engage with lost, repressed and forgotten stories. In some of my exhibitions such as … *these gestures of memory* (2020), I draw from the historical and political narratives of specific women including all the six which chapter One of this thesis focuses on. … *these gestures of memory* (2020) is a body of work that comprises of three installations; … *these wreaths are laid in honour of her memories* (2020) which is an assemblage of black paper flowers placed on black tinted wooden blocks with names of Zambian and Zimbabwean women freedom fighters printed on them. … *these*

moments are spent listening to her silences and seeing her invisibility (2020) is an installation of the steel flag poles with bark cloths wrapped around them and … *these practices are done in sharing her stories* (2020) is a four-channel video that documents women cleansing their hands and feet to speak towards ideas of women sharing stories amongst each other.

As an individual who participates in art making through my professional practice as an artist and writes about visual work as an art historian, I am in a position where I am able to navigate and engage with knowledges generated from different angles. I can work engage with epistemologies from a position where theory informs art making, and vice versa. I am in a special position in which I am able to navigate between two disciplines (art making and theorizing about art) in order to generate in-depth and meaningful knowledge. I am both an outsider and insider in relation this study which has a particular focus on visual representations of women in portrayals of independence in Zambia, Zimbabwe and Northern and Southern Rhodesia. I am an insider in terms of national and gender identity – I am a black Zambian woman.

Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Riotous Black Girls, Troublesome Women, and Queer Radicals (2019) is a collection of stories about selected black women in two cities in the United States of America. The list of characters in this book include some historically popular figures such as Wells-Barnett who was an activist and journalist in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and much less known women such as Mattie Nelson. In her book, Hartman (2019) employs the art of storytelling as a way of filling in a historical gap caused through the absence of archival materials relating to black women in America. Hartman (2019) focuses on the stories of black women in a manner that she acknowledges their grand and not so grand contributions in the shaping of modern and contemporary life within the cities they occupied. The strategy to employ story telling in *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Riotous Black Girls, Troublesome Women, and Queer Radicals* (2019) eliminates the distance a reader and the histories of the black women characters in the book. Hartman (2019) uses the art of storytelling to construct the characters in her book in such a manner that a reader is able to visualise and see them. She describes their characteristics and attributes such as hair texture, eye colour, height and even dress style.

Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples (2021) critiques and challenges what Tuhiwai Smith (2021) terms as Western research and offers counter practices of knowledge making. She argues that the word 'research' can be perceived as dirty word to those on the suffering side of history because often the term 'research' assumes a hierarchical relationship between a researcher and the studied in such a manner that it disconnects the investigator from the context they are studying. Tuhiwai Smith (2021) calls for the disruption of such a model of learning and encourages investigative practices and protocols that arise from paying more attention to nuances and specificities that pertain to cultural contexts of studies (Tuck 2013; Malsbary 2008). Tuhiwai Smith (2021) insists that engaging with information from a place of within tends to produce studies that are culturally respectful and ethical. She advocates for the production and sharing of knowledge (flow of information) that occurs in a mutually respectful manner as opposed to a top to down approach in which a researcher takes on the role of a more educated individual (top) that only takes from the people who reside in the context of their study (bottom) (Tuhiwai Smith 2021).

Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide (2015) employs a similar logic to *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (2021) and argues that Western research often commits a crime de Sousa Santos (2015) refers to as 'cognitive injustice'. He defines this as the marginalisation of epistemologies that arises because of an inability to recognise different ways of knowing (de Sousa Santos 2015). Similar to Tuhiwai Smith (2021), de Sousa Santos (2015) calls for a disruption of the top to down model in engaging practices of knowledge production. He encourages knowledge seekers and makers to consider a down to top processing of information.

The three texts described in this methodology section collectively explain the importance of reimagining and rethinking strategies and methodologies employed in the production of knowledge, particularly in relation to individuals such as myself who belong to multiple spheres. The chapters in this doctoral thesis in art history are based on,

(i) a visual analysis of a focussed selection of archival photographs of six selected women freedom fighters that include Julia Chikamoneka, Joice Mujuru, Alice Lenshina, Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa, Margaret Dongo and Nehanda Charwe Nyakasikana.

(ii) a close visual reading of two independence monuments which are known as the Freedom Statue in Zambia and the National Heroes Acre in Zimbabwe

(iii) structured and semi-structured interviews (some in person and others via email correspondence) with visual artists Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude and Kudzanai Chiurai. The fifth chapter which focuses on my own artist practice is based on conversations (in the form of essays, interviews, supervision) with curators Fadzai Muchemwa and Annet Busch, art historian Ruth Simbao, and artists Tanya Poole and Heidi Sincumba. I also conduct a visual analysis of works by artists Nyaude, Chiurai and myself.

Looking Inside Archives

> … the system of discursivity … the enunciative possibilities and impossibilities that it lays down. The archive is first the law of what can be said, the system that governs the appearance of statements as unique events. But the archive is also that which determines that all these things … do not accumulate endlessly in an amorphous mass, nor are they inscribed in an unbroken linearity, nor do they disappear at the mercy of chance external accidents; but they are grouped together in distinct figures, composed together in accordance with multiple relations, maintained or blurred in accordance with specific regularities (Foucault 1972: 129).

The concept of an archive relates to the complex notions of cognition, memory and processes of capturing and interpreting information. In a more physical or tangible sense, an archive is defined as a collection of materials that provide information about the past, present as well as the future (Hamilton and Skotnes 2014). The function of the archive is often explained in terms of a need to preserve information and in relation to the negation of the loss of history as rationalised by Michel Foucault in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972). An etymological elucidation of the concept of the archive is provided in the early pages of *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (1996), where Jacques Derrida explains that it the word archive takes its root from the Greek work *arkhé* which means commencement and commandment.

Foucault's (1972) and Derrida's (1996) texts are essential in the understanding of the concept of an archive in relation to its role in the construction of history and memory. *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972) offers an analysis of the methodologies and procedures

that are employed in the production of knowledge about the past and *Archive fever: A Freudian Impression* (1996) traces the origin of the word archive to highlight the role of the state (those who rule) in the curation of the archive as a retainer of memory. Derrida (1996) argues that the state has authority over the archive archive such that it can privilege particular historical perspectives. The physical address of the archive or the *arkheon* – the domicile or the address of the magistrates or those who command (Derrida 1992:2) is an important aspect to consider in understanding Derrida's (1996) argument. He suggests that physically arranging historical materials has direct impact on maintaining memory, essentially, he argues that whoever directs what is collected and how its collected has the power to influence how history is written and read (Derrida 1996).

Archives are sites that are important for the preservation of memory. The book *Uncertain Curature: In and Out of the Archive* (2014) edited by Carolyn Hamilton and Pippa Skotnes, the archive is defined as a fluid space that not just stores historical documents, but as a space in which history can be reinterpreted, reconstructed and recurated by individuals such as archivists and researchers who engage with the materials stored within archives. Hamilton and Skotnes (2014: 3) support their definition of an archive as a space that is continuously in a state of flux by providing an illustration of a researcher who attempts to read or interpret some given archival materials by physically engaging with both the archive and the material stored within it. In the example, the researcher touches, lifts and returns the archival material back to a different position, they argue that the movements of the material in some ways alter the memory that is imbedded in the archive (Hamilton and Skotnes 2014). The book *Uncertain Curature: In and Out of the Archive* (2014) highlights the importance of imagining the archive beyond physical space because memory cannot be contained or limited to one particular physical space, object or document. Memory moves, and it exists both inside and outside of the archive as implied in the title of the book. The collection of essays and articles that collectively come together to form *Uncertain Curature: In and Out of the Archive* (2014) employ a practice termed as *anarchive* and described as engaging with the as a retainer of memory in a manner that allows for the creation of new and multiple interpretations of the past.

The focussed selection of archival photographs that are discussed and analysed in this doctoral dissertation were sourced in five key archives to uncover new perspectives about the liberation struggle of Zambia and Zimbabwe. The archives include the,

i. Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) Archives,
ii. National Archives of Zambia (NAZ-1),
iii. National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ-2),
iv. United National Independence Party (UNIP) Archives and
v. Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) Archives.

The NAZ-1, the NAZ-2, the UNIP Archives and the ZANU-PF Archives are linked in the sense that they have a similar genesis, and in the perspective that they are curated in a similar manner. The photographs in the national archives, that is the NAZ-1 and the NAZ-2, are largely sourced from the archives of the independence parties which are the UNIP Archives and the ZANU-PF Archives. The NAZ-1 and the NAZ-2 are parastatals and the stories they tell are heavily influenced by the state, while the two independence party archives are constructed through the telling of history from the perspective of the political parties that were voted into power at the time of independence, the UNIP in 1964 for Zambia and the ZANU-PF in 1980 in Zimbabwe. The ZANIS Archives contain video footage, audio recording, newspaper clippings and photographs (negatives and printed images) as documentation of the activities of the Zambia National Broadcasting Cooperation (ZNBC).

The independence photographic collections across the five archives are preserved and stored in the form of negatives, prints on paper, and as digital copies which were produced as part of efforts to preserve historical information within all four archives (Hamooya and Njobvu 2010; Sigauke and Chabikwa 2012). The acquisition processes are similar across the five archives, but there are some differences in archiving processes pertaining to management of the photographic archives both within the countries and across the border. There are variations mainly in relation to the display, storage facilities, quantity and quality of photographs. The style of captioning and labelling also differs.

All the five archives offer a differentiated experience because they are physically and conceptually structured differently, there are also varying degrees in what information is available and how it is availed. For instance, the NAZ-1, which were the starting point of tracing archival photographs of women within the context of this study, are stored on a computer in a large and rather spacious room with half-filled and dusty bookshelves and a couple of computers where digitalised files are stored. Access to physical documents and

photographs can only be granted on special request. When I was inside the NAZ-1 archives between 2016 and 2022, the archival materials had been boxed up because both the NAZ-1 and the UNIP Archives were in the process of digitalising and consolidating their materials. Because access to actual documents in the NAZ-1 is restricted, individuals can only access digital photographs that are organised by theme using digital folders. The individual digital copies of the photographs are labelled only numerically as 1, 2, 3, 4 and so on without any further captions.

The experience in the UNIP Archives was a rather heart breaking one. After the change of government in 1991, the political power and influence of the UNIP declined, and the offices of the party relocated several times. As the party had less funds it also meant that there were insufficient resources to manage and maintain the archives. As a result of the lack storage facilities some of the documents got destroyed while others were lost in the processes of moving from one location to another. By 2016, the surviving UNIP Archives had been boxed up and stored at their offices which are located in a small room inside an old and dilapidated building along Chachacha road in Lusaka's central business district. In 2022, Kenneth Kaunda who was the president of the UNIP at the time of independence, passed away and the archival materials became nearly inaccessible. Currently, there are ongoing conversations as to whether the documents and materials of the UNIP will continue to be managed by the state or the family of the late first republican president.

The NAZ-2 are housed inside a larger building in comparison to that of the NAZ-1 which have their headquarters at the same address as the offices of the ministry of home affairs. While the NAZ-2 are also part of the Zimbabwean ministry of home affairs, the headquarters of these archives are located in a structure comprising of different departments dedicated to various aspects of the archive. For instance, the NAZ-2 building has a department that manages historical documents such as letters and notes, and a separate department that administers pictorial collections. The collection of photographs relating to the melee for independence is situated in a large room with filling cabinets arranged in rows, and tables for researchers to use. At the far end of the room is two computers and scanners. Inside the filing cabinets are printed photographs that are individually placed inside brown envelops which are labelled with the title of the picture, the year the picture was taken, the photographer's name, the year when the photograph was acquired by the archives and from where or from whom the photograph was collected from or donated by. The labels on the filing cabinets are

also sorted by theme and year. It is important tthat I mention that while the system in place at the NAZ-2 seems quite comprehensively organised, there are some gaps. There is some incomplete information on the envelops and some photographs can be located inside mislabelled envelops or filling cabinets.

I went to the ZANU-PF Archives in 2019, after the death of Robert Mugabe Mugabe who was the first president of Zimbabwe. When I arrived in Harare, I found that there the internet had been shut down and that there was a curfew that had been imposed by the government. Further there was heavy presence of police and military personnel in the streets particularly in spaces where there are government offices. Due to this situation, the archives were heavily guarded by armed military personnel. The ZANU-PF Archives are located in a large concrete building that also functions as the headquarters of the political party. I was unable to scan any digital copies of photographs from these archives but accessed some information that aided in contextualising some of the photographs acquired from the NAZ-2.

The ZANIS Archives are situated at the ZNBC complex in Massmedia in Lusaka. The photographic, video and audio material are located inside three rooms of the ZANIS building – two of the rooms are on the ground floor and one room is upstairs. The two rooms on the ground floor also function as offices for some of the ZANIS staff, while the room upstairs functions solely as a storage space. The room upstairs has no electricity and part of the ceiling has rotted and fallen onto the concrete floor. The room is dark and dusty with the sound of rats moving around in the ceiling and behind the old filing cabinets which hold millions of negatives and printed images photographed by journalists. The room has the odour of old paper and dead rats. Inside one of the rooms on the ground floor, there are video tapes and cameras displayed on old wooden shelves on one side, and metal cabinets that have brown envelopes with negatives and photographs inside them on the other side of the room. The filing cabinets and the envelops are labelled using numeric codes which are recorded in handwritten notebooks. Some of the information was typed and printed using antique models of typewriters.

Visually Analysing Independence Monuments

Monuments, like archives are structures that commemorate the past or celebrate notable individuals or events. Independence is commemorated through various monuments and statues in Zambia and Zimbabwe, but there are two monuments that can be argued to be dominantly recognised for their commemoration of liberation struggles. In Zambia the independence monument is known as The Freedom Statue, and in Zimbabwe it is the National Heroes' Acre. These two monuments were erected as part of commemorative gestures for national independence, and to honour the lives lost during the epochs associated with struggles for liberation. The Freedom Statue situated at the government complex along Independence Avenue in Lusaka and the National Heroes' Acre is located in Harare about seven kilometres from the central business district in the direction of Norton. The Freedom was officially unveiled to the public in 1974 by the first president of the Republic of Zambia, Kenneth Kaunda while the National Heroes Ace was commissioned in 1981 by Robert Mugabe who was the first republican president of Zimbabwe post-independence.

The Freedom Statue in Lusaka and the National Heroes Acre in Harare are structurally different, but they both include visual materials such as text, figurative and relief sculptures made of bronze that come together to narrate the legacy of national liberation. Monuments and memorials across the globe take different forms and shapes. Monuments can be permanent or temporary; usually impermanent memorials disappear or pass over time, while permanent ones last for extended periods. An example of temporary memorials includes flowers and candles that are placed in churches, along the road and sometimes at the feet of public structures and buildings usually following a tragic event. After some time, the candles burn out, the flowers dry and the residues of these materials disappear. Permanent monuments are thought of as structures and sculptures that are made out of materials such as bronze, even a small piece of land with no structure on it that is dedicated to commemorating a specific individual or event can be argued to be a permanent monument.

The importance and specific function of any monument can be understood by reading and analysing its visual codes such as the type of sculptures included in its construction or the text that is sometimes incorporated as part of memorials. To study the representations, or more precisely the under-representations of women at The Freedom Statue and the National Heroes Acre, I make theoretical references to the work on cultural memory by professor of

cultural and heritage tourism Sabine Marschall's article titled *How to Honour a Woman: Gendered Memorialisation in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (2010), historian Pierre Nora's text titled *Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire* (1989) and professor of public history David Olusoga's series of lectures on the function of public statues in the production of memory and history (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFQYzXMKNSw&t=1379s).

In *Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire* (1989), Nora conceptualises the place of memory as a site in which traces about the past are entrenched. He critically explores the relationships and contestations between history which he defines as the representation of the past and social memory which he describes as concept used the connection between social identity and historical memory (Nora 1989: 7 – 10). The overall argument of *Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire* (1989) is that history is hardly ever objective because it is usually dominated by national narratives or memories that are politically motivated (that history is curated memory that focuses on selected perspectives of the past). *How to Honour a Woman: Gendered Memorialisation in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (2010) is an analysis of selected monuments, memorials and statues in South Africa that were constructed commemorate women. Marschall (2010) focusses her analysis on public memory spaces that were constructed between 1994 and 2006. The memorial spaces that Marschall (2010) analyses in her text were constructed by the South African post-apartheid government's efforts to redress the gendered disparity in the memorialisation of the past through monuments and public art. Marschall's (2010) article grapples with the politics of representation and gender, she argues that artists who have the task of constructing structures to commemorate women are faced with specific challenge in which they construct memorials that are either gender-blind or enunciate gender-differences. Gender blind monuments are those that do not visually portray any gender and are usually abstract in nature, and those that articulate gender differences tend to be specific in terms of highlighting what the ascribed gender of the individual it commemorates is.

Olusoga has several lectures, talks and texts such as *The Kaiser's Holocaust: Germany's Forgotten Genocide and the Colonial Roots of Nazism* (2010) which is a study that critically investigates the roles and functions of specific monuments that are situated within the public as a shared space and explores how historical and current day diversities are reflected in the public realm. In the lecture that is part of *Histories Stories and Voices* (2022) project

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFQYzXMKNSw&t=1379s), Olusoga explores how the commemoration of selected individuals through public monuments remains an important topic to consider in relation to concepts of public history and memory. He responds to the questions of why public statues matter in general, and what should be done to contested monuments such as the statue of Edward Colston in Bristol in the United Kingdom (Ibid). There are several monuments and memorials in contemporary Zambia and Zimbabwe that are linked to the memorialisation of the independence struggle, however, in this study that critically analyses the portrayals of women freedom fighters in narratives about independence I focus particularly on the National Heroes Acre and The Freedom Statue.

Analysing Political Visual Art Practices

> Africa is rising …arts and culture by our people from around the world is rising despite too many odds … we will celebrate that rise, we will celebrate our multiplicity, our differences, our becoming and our heritage philosophically and materially … we will negate the myth of the single identity, a single episteme, a single narrative, the myth of monoculture and of universality and instead advocate for and embrace plurality of knowledges, [and] the plurality of being (Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung 2022).

Quoted above is an extraction of the opening speech by Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung who is the artistic director of the thirteenth edition of the Bamako Encounters – African Biennale of Photography titled *Maa Ka Maaya Ka Ca A Yere Kono: On Multiplicity, Difference, Becoming, and Heritage* (2022 - 2023). The thirteenth edition of the Bamako African Biennale of Photography focussed on the theme of multiplicity and the state of existing in between multiple spheres. The exhibitions (in four chapters) of the biennale opened in December of 2022 following the 2021 Malian coup d'état (Korotayev and Khokhlova 2022). The phrase *Maa ka Maaya ka ca a yere kono* is taken from Malian writer Amadou Hampâté Bâ's 1972 book titled *Aspects de la Civilisation Africaine*. The phrase loosely translates from Bambara into English as 'the persons of the person are multiple in the person". According to independent curator Kwasi Ohene Ayeh (2023), the concept of the person as explored in Bâ's 1972 book, can be employed to understand the concept of multiplicity because '… a person is always … multiple from the vantage points of the

physical, psychological, and spiritual conditions that shape personhood' (https://iubeezy.wordpress.com/texts/pseudo-impossibilities/).

All art can be argued to be political because all art can be said to communicate a given message. In the first word of the 2017 special issue of African Arts, Ruth Simbao writes about the significance of understanding how Africa is situated – both physically and metaphorically – within the discourse of visual art. In these contemporary times there are several artists, exhibitions and projects that assert the need for more multiple and more radical forms of knowledge production that aids our understanding of the world (Simbao 2017). In this doctoral dissertation, I discuss and engage with selected artworks of three artists of Zambian and Zimbabwean descent who can be argued to explore complexities and multiplicities relating to the notion of national independence. The artists include myself, Gladys Kalichini as a Zambian born woman and Zimbabwean artists Gresham Nyaude and Kudzanai Chiurai. Our artworks come together to dialogue with one another about the multiple memories of independence – both state sanctioned memory and memory that is not controlled by the state.

As previously explained, my artistic practice is centred on reconnoitring complexities in connection to visibilities and representations of women within larger, dominant, and nationalist histories. My work manifests as text and as multimedia installations that draw from concepts of memory and history. Nyaude is Harare based painter whose brightly coloured paintings engage with critical socio-political matters in post-independence Zimbabwe (Nyaude 2019). Chiurai's artistic practice largely focusses on political, economic, and social strife in the context of southern African states in the post-colonial era (Chiurai 2022), and grapples with complexities that relate the formation of a new state such as the construction of national identity and memory.

All the artistic practices of the three artists, Nyaude, Chiurai and myself, are different and offer varied interpretations and engagements with political and national memory. I consider the work of three different artists as a way of challenging the universalism of epistemology by analysing artworks that give multiple, yet simultaneously specific insight into various … 'lived experiences guided from specific situations' (Simbao 2017; 1). To quote Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung's (2022) opening speech, 'Africa is rising … we will celebrate our multiplicity, our differences, our becoming and our heritage philosophically and materially

… we will negate the myth of the single identity, a single episteme, a single narrative'. It is within the same vein as Ndikung's (2022) speech that this doctoral dissertation critically engages with the work of these three selected artists who complexly navigate the concept of invisibility. In the discussion of paintings Nyaude, invisibility is discussed in relation to abstraction, disembodiment and distortion. The invisibility of stories about women is also considered is in relation to how absence can be countered, and invisibility can be subverted to create visibility through redirecting the gaze to focus on women in my and Chiurai's work.

vi. Structure of Study

This doctoral thesis in art history comprises of an introduction, five chapters and a conclusion. The introduction is made up of a section that describes the concept of invisibility that this thesis explores, a historical and political context of the geographical focus of this study, a literature review that explores projects with a similar theoretical focus of this study and a methodology section that describes the approaches employed in the collection and organisation of data. The main body of this thesis is divided into two sections; Part A which comprises chapters one and two, and Part B which is made up of chapters three to five. Part A critically explores how national memory is facilitated by the state through the curation of independence photographic archives and the construction of monuments in public space. Part B focusses on discussing how selected artists' work disrupt singular and dominant narratives about independence and visually analyses some of the artists' artworks through a framework of gender. My reading of the selected artworks in part B, focuses on the way in which the three selected artist explore how women are visually represented in portrayals relating to independence. One of the main differences between Part A and B is the classification of the visual material discussed, Part A focuses more on visual materials that are traditionally considered in relation to cultural heritage while the discussion in Part B is centred around visual art works. This dissertation ends with a conclusion titled *Peripheral View: Looking Back to See Marginalised Narratives About Women*.

Part A

Chapter one is titled *Seeing Beyond the Cracks of Archival Invisibility: A Visual Contextualisation of Women's Participation in National Independence Movements in Northern Rhodesia/ Zambia and Southern Rhodesia/ Zimbabwe.* In Chapter one, I visually contextualise women's involvement in liberation movements in Northern Rhodesia, Zambia and Southern Rhodesia, Zimbabwe through developing a visual archive that narrates stories of six women which include Julia Chikamoneka (b.1910 – d.1986), Alice Lenshina (b.1920 – d.1978), Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa (b.1936 - d.2018), Joice Mujuru (b.1955), Nehanda Charwe Nyakasikana (Mbuya Nehanda) (b.1840 - d.1898) and Margaret Dongo (b.1960). Each one of the six women were involved in anti-colonial movements in different ways in their respective nations, some of the women such as Chikamoneka, Chibesakunda Kankasa and Mujuru were members of the independence political parties, namely, the United National Independence Party (UNIP) in Northern Rhodesia and the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) in Southern Rhodesia. Lenshina and Nyakasikana can be argued to have participated in more individual capacities.

Chikamoneka and Chibesakunda Kankasa were members of the UNIP and were actively involved in the activities of its branch for women known as the Women's Brigade (Kalichini 2017; Chibesakunda Kankasa 2016; Gewald, Hinfelaar and Macola 2011; Geisler 2004). Mujuru fought in what is referred to as the second chimurenga (the second war of liberation) in the Rhodesian Bush War in the year 1974 and later served as vice president of Zimbabwe from 2004 to 2014 (Orwenjo 2016; Mubi 2006). Dongo is a Zimbabwean politician and an ex-combatant of the 1970s liberation war in which she participated as a member of the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA). Dongo played a critical role in the establishment of a political party referred to as the Zimbabwe Union of Democrats (ZUD) (Lyons 1999 and 2004; Chikuhwa 2004).

Lenshina founded a religious sect known as the Lumpa Church in the upper region of Northern Rhodesia after she professed to have died and met with God who she said instructed her to purge the land of all evil including colonialism (Kalichini 2017; Gordon 2012). Nyakasikana who is popularly referred to as Mbuya Nehanda is believed to have been a spirit medium known as svikiro in Shona. Nehanda is said to have stimulated the revolution against the colonialization of Mashonaland and Matebeleland in the first chimurenga (the first war of

liberation) (Samupindi 1990; Charumbira 2008; Chigumadzi 2018) between 1896 and 1897 in Southern Rhodesia.

Chapter two is titled *Looking Up: A Critical Investigation of the Veneration of Masculine Led Narratives in Independence Monuments and Memorials in Zambia and Zimbabwe,* it visually analyses artworks (statues and relief sculptures) that form part of the independence monuments in Zambia and Zimbabwe. The main sites of discussion in this chapter are the National Heroes Acre in Harare and The Freedom Statue in Lusaka. This chapter argues that the two monuments exalt historical accounts that are associated to men leaders of independence political parties and reaffirm dominant liberation narratives that are centred around performances of the UNIP as the Zambian independence political party and the ZANU – PF as the political party that was in power after liberation. Additionally, this chapter insists the dominant narrative is maintained through state presided annual commemorations.

The National Heroes Acre and The Freedom Statue are located within the public space and are funded and maintained by the state as cultural heritage sites. They were constructed to commemorate national independence and to honour individuals who participated in the struggles for liberation. The Freedom Statue was first unveiled in Lusaka in 1974 by the Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda, while the National Heroes Acre was commissioned by Robert Mugabe in 1981 a year after independence. The two sites also function as venues for state commemorative performances during Independence Day which falls on the 24th of October in Zambia and the 18th of April in Zimbabwe, and Heroes Day every first Monday of July in Zambia and second Monday of August in Zimbabwe respectively.

Part B

Chapter three is titled *Looking Eye to Eye and Looking Down: Protesting National Memory in Selected Paintings by Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude.* In this chapter I critically explore the role of the state in the construction and maintenance of dominant national memory by discussing a focussed selection of Zimbabwean artist Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude's paintings. In this chapter looking down and looking eye to eye are conceptualised through Nyaude's artistic practices as forms of protest against the politicisation of national memory. Nyaude's artworks are produced within the context of post-independence Zimbabwe where the country has been

ruled the ZANU – PF since 1980. The Zimbabwean government and independence political party has power over cultural heritage sites such as archives and national monuments to an extent that state has control on what aspects of the past national narratives focus on. The theoretical premise in chapter three, as well as chapters four and five, is that there exists a dominant independence narrative that is both produced and controlled by the state using violence and oppressive measures that silence other histories.

The discussion on violence in chapter three is continued in chapter four which is titled *Looking Passed Dominant Historical Narratives: A Discussion of Selected Artworks by Kudzanai Chiurai.* Chapter four focusses on a selection of Chiurai's artworks and projects to discuss the intersectional uses of archival visual materials in the visual arts in relation to making women's involvements in history more visible. In the fourth chapter violence is discussed both in terms of the state's control in maintaining a single sided narrative and as a product and ultimate reaction by groups that are silenced and marginalised from dominant historical perspectives. The selected artworks by Chiurai that are discussed in the fourth chapter of this doctoral thesis focus on the trauma of silence and explore possibilities of countering invisibility in memory and history through redirecting the gaze from masculine centric narratives and recasting women in leading positions in accounts of the past.

Chapter five is titled *Looking Within: The Embodiment of Absence and Presence in Gladys Kalichini's Artworks.* It discusses some of my own multi-media artworks that explore the erasure of women's narratives from national history and memory. As a point of entry into the broader conversation about representations of women in national history and memory, my artistic practice conceptualises death as a metaphor for the erasure of women's historical narratives and relates remembrance to practices of mourning and honouring the dead. Erasure is understood as the process of dying or passing out of sight within the context of my work and the body represents individual narratives.

In the discussion in the fifth chapter, I focus on mortality and the impermanence of the body as a means of exploring the inherent characteristic of memory to either change or fade over time, and mourning practices in relation to remembrance or the preservation of memory. I discuss installation and performance-based artworks that draw on Zambian and Zimbabwean funerary practices such as preparing dead bodies for burial and tending to graves as sites where the dead reside. Archives and monuments within the context of my work represent

spaces of the dead, they are places where forgotten stories about women linger in the shadows.

Part A

Chapter One

Seeing Beyond the Cracks of Archival Invisibility: A Visual Contextualisation of Women's Participation in National Independence Movements in Northern Rhodesia/ Zambia and Southern Rhodesia/ Zimbabwe

Figure 1.1. The Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) in training (undated). Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of the National Archives of Zimbabwe.

On 27 March 1960, a crowd of people in Lusaka in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) walked down Cairo Road and made their way to the old airport area for the arrival of Iain Macleod, the British Secretary of State for Colonies. They sang and wept as they walked while holding up handwritten and collaged banners that expressed their dismay over the conditions imposed on their livelihoods. Many of the banners expressed the people's dissatisfaction and irritation towards Roy Welensky, a Northern Rhodesian politician and prime minister of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland[4], and Evelyn Hone, who was the governor of Northern Rhodesia

[4] The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (Central African Federation) was a colony that existed between 1953 and 1963 and consisted of three southern African territories: Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and Nyasaland (now Malawi) (Macola 2007).

at the time. Among this group of protestors were women who were members of a branch of the political party the United National Independence Party (UNIP) which was collectively known as the UNIP Women's Brigade (Geisler 2004 and 1995; Kalichini 2017).

The protestors gathered at the old airport, where they awaited the arrival of McLeod who was tasked with delivering a British inspired constitution that was going to be used to govern Northern Rhodesia after independence (Chibesakunda Kankasa 2016). When the plane landed, Macleod disembarked and walked towards the crowds to stand in front of three women who had made their way to the front. As the women navigated their way to the front, they took off their clothes. One woman, identified as Julia Chikamoneka (b.1910–d.1986), proceeded to slap McLeod, which caused him to weep (Kalichini 2017; Chibesakunda Kankasa 2016; Geisler 2004). Chikamoneka was then quoted as saying:

> 'We walked down Cairo Road. We just wanted the white man, particularly Roy Welensky, to know that African people were the only people who could build their own nation, not them to build the nation for us' (Chikamoneka in Geisler 2004: 44).

In 1973, in Zambia's south-eastern neighbouring state, Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), an eighteen-year-old female named Joice decided she was going to join the struggle for independence and travelled from the Mashonaland central province to Lusaka to train as a soldier (Orwenjo 2016). When she returned to Southern Rhodesia, she joined what is today known as the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) (Fig. 1.1) and fought in the Rhodesian bush war. Professedly, on 17 February 1974, during the war, Joice shot down a helicopter with a machine gun. After this event, she took on the name Teurai Ropa which translates from *Chishona* to English as 'to spill blood' (Orwenjo 2016; Mubi 2006) and rose up in the army ranks to become one of the few women to hold the position of a commander in ZANLA. After Zimbabwean independence in 1980, she was appointed as the minister of sports, youth and recreation, and thereafter as minister of telecommunications. She later served as the vice president of Zimbabwe from 2004 until December 2014, when she was expelled from the Zimbabwean independence party, the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF), after being accused of attempting to assassinate the then sitting president, Robert Mugabe (Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Ruhanya 2020; Tendi 2020; Mubi 2006).

What do the two snippets that begin this chapter have in common? They are stories that tell of specific women's interactions and involvements in anticolonial and political activities, one in Northern Rhodesia and the second in Southern Rhodesia. They represent stories that are not often told within national archives (Oyěwùmí 1997; Marschall 2009 and 2010) as epitomised by either their absence or mis/under-representation (Kalichini 2017). In the introduction of this dissertation, I argue that narratives that are about women tend to be invisible because much of the activities that are performed by women within various societies are not included within conventional classifications of freedom fighters. Additionally, women are overshadowed in independence narratives because there is a tendency to focus more on roles played by men.

In this chapter, I narrate visual stories about women's involvement in the struggles for independence in Zambia and Zimbabwe as an attempt of redressing the gender representational gap in the visual archive of independence. The visual stories in this chapter focus on six Zambian and Zimbabwean women freedom fighters including Julia Chikamoneka (b.1910 - d.1986) (Fig. 1.2), Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa (b.1936 - d.2018) (Fig. 1.3) and Alice Lenshina (b.1920 - d.1978) (Fig. 1.4) within the context of Northern Rhodesia and Zambia, and Joice Mujuru (b.1955) (Fig. 1.5), Nehanda Charwe Nyakasikana (Mbuya Nehanda) (b.1840 - d.1898) (Fig. 1.6) and Margaret Dongo (b.1960) (Fig. 1.7) in relation to the independence of Southern Rhodesia and Zimbabwe. These six women embody the concept of liberation fighters as participants of anti-colonial activities as they participated in the liberation of their respective countries either individually, or as having been part of a collective (Eager 2016).

The visual stories narrated in this chapter depart from grand independence narratives that tend to focus on the great individual in history such as leaders of independence political parties who are often men. This chapter collates photographs that portray various ways in which women participated in anti-colonial struggles in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). The captions of many of the archival photographs included in this chapter have been modified from the way they are labelled inside the archives where they were accessed. The captions were modified by me as the author of this dissertation to fill in blanks in cases where there is missing information, in other instances the captions are correct where the information provided within the archives or source of the photograph might be incorrect. In some instances, the photographs in the archive are unlabelled, for such cases I

develop captions that provide information to the event or individual that is photographed. All the archival photographs in this chapter are treated as visual materials from archives as sites of cultural heritage, as such they are not captioned using italics as in the case of artworks in other parts of this thesis.

Figure 1.2. Julia Chikamoneka (undated). Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of the National Archives of Zambia.

Figure 1.3. A portrait of Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa (1975). Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of the National Archives of Zambia Independence.

Figure 1.4. Alice Lenshina Prophetess in Northern Rhodesia 28 July 1964 (1964). Photographer unknown. Photograph sourced from https://www.imago-images.com/search?suchtext=Alice+Lenshina.

Figure 1.5. Joice Mujuru, ZANU-PF's Secretary for Women Affairs, Comrade Teurai Ropa (2016). Photograph by Justin Sutcliffe. Photograph sourced from https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/the-interview-joice-mujuru-robert-mugabes-former-vice-president-s6z222mrnnf.

Figure 1.6. Mbuya Nehanda and Sekuru Kagavi after their arrest in 1896 (1896). Photographer unknown. photograph courtesy of The National Archives of Zimbabwe.

Figure 1.7. Margaret Dongo, standing at the site where a petrol bomb struck her home on 6 January 2016 (2016). Photographer unknown. Photograph sourced from https://www.facebook.com/chipochungofficial/photos/my-last-day-in-zimbabwe-and-the-rains-have-finally-come-ill-take-with-me-many-ha/1088815547817292/.

This chapter assembles visual narratives about women using images sourced from independence photographic collections in public and state regulated institutions, as well as in personal archives of individuals that possesses information and images relating to any of the six women either in the form of hard copies or digital copies. The public institutions where the photographs are drawn from include the,

(i) National Archives of Zambia (NAZ-1),
(ii) United National Independence Party (UNIP) archives,
(iii) Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) Archives,
(iv) National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ-2), and
(v) Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF) Archives.

There are few photographic materials that portray women participating in independence movements in the above five archives, and even fewer visual representations of the six specific women that this chapter focus on. As such, supplementary photographs were accessed from alternative sources including the Getty Foundation, the Associated Press (AP)

Archive[5], the Endangered Archives Programme (EAP)[6] and the Imago Archive[7]. Additional images were sourced from various personal journals and social media accounts, and also from personal photo albums owned by individuals connected to the two countries or the six women either through bloodlines or social associations.

The photographs included in this chapter tell complex stories, in some instances they give similar perspectives while in other cases they show explicit and nuanced differences in how women from various contextual backgrounds participated within the broader and compounded contexts of the liberation struggles of their respective countries. This dissertation acknowledges that there exists an epitomised image of a woman freedom fighter in Africa during the colonial era which often depicts a woman holding a weapon such as a rifle or a gun and a baby on her back (Lyons 2004). While such an image can be perceived both as a domesticated version of women soldiers and symbolically as a powerful imagery of a woman active in battle, it is not representative of all women of African descent who participated in independence protests, rallies and even wars. This is not to say that there is a zero proportion of women with similar experiences, there is indeed actually a plethora of shared experiences by women both literally and by association, even so, this chapter insists that it is important to be able to see and acknowledge difference in the ways in which women were involved and how they are visually portrayed in photographic evidence. Difference, as Stuart Hall puts it in *Constituting an Archive* (2001), is essential to meaning (2001: 90). Differences do not create binaries nor separate, they rather enhance the fecundity of knowledge production by enriching meanings and experiences that are both positional and relational (Ibid). That is to say that seeing difference allows for the emergence of various meanings and different alternative views from different perspectives and contexts that can be relatable across eons and various groups of people.

I examine archival photographs following a methodology of engaging with absence using the concept of '*anarchive*' as prescribed by Carine Zaayman in her doctoral dissertation titled *Seeing What is Not There: Figuring the Anarchive* (2019), and book chapter titled Anarchive (Picturing Absence) (2014) in the book *Uncertain Curature: In and Out of the Archive*

[5] www.aparchive.com

[6] www.eap.bl.uk

[7] www.imago-images.com

(2014). An ‘*anarchive*’ is not the opposite of an archive but rather an extension of it. *Anarchive*’ engages with the notion of absence by considering both what is left out in the curation of formal archives as well as what escapes formal archives through various interactions and engagements with materials that come across archives (Zaayman 2014 and 2019).

1.1. The Invisibility of Women in the Visual Archive of Independence Movements in Africa

Figure 1.8. Nelson Mandela and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela walk hand in hand, raising their clenched fists upon his release from prison after twenty-seven years in detention, Cape Town, Sunday 11 February 1990 (1990). Photograph by of Greg. Photograph courtesy of Associated Press.

> From its inception, the photographic record has manifested ‘the appearance of a statement as a unique event’. Every photographic image has been endowed with this principle of uniqueness. Within that principle lies the kernel of the idea of the photograph as an archival record, as an

> analogue of a substantiated real or putative fact present in nature. The capacity for mechanical inscription and the order of direct reference that links the photograph with the indisputable fact of its subject's existence are the bedrock of photography (Enwezor 2008: 12).

A photographic archive is a collection of images that function primarily as reference points to historical events. Conceptually, photographs are thought to possess the ability to depict truth and fact because they document and crystalise particular moments in time as implied by Okwui Enwenzor (2018) in the quote above. Archival photographs are an important aspect of visual culture because they can serve as evidence of the past. However, it is important to note that while photographs can document aspects of history, they can also erase some other aspect. Erasure in photography can occur when a lens used to capture an image focuses on one part or more and blurs out some other parts, or in the manner in which a photograph is captioned (Sekula 2014).

The overarching argument of this art history PhD thesis is that visual representations of women tend to be invisible – in a continuous process of either disappearing or becoming visible - in portrayals of national independence. In the first introduction of this thesis, I argue that one of the reasons that women appear to be less visible than men in visual representations of national independence is that there exists a preconceived notion that defines freedom fighters as individuals who participated in liberation movements largely through their affiliations to political parties or in struggles that unfolded in the public space such as armed struggle. I argue that because many women contributed to the liberation of their countries in more nuanced and independent capacities and performed roles that are not often associated with armed struggle, their roles tend not to be seen or recognised. In this chapter I extend the same argument that women's stories are invisible within the collective memory of independence and offer an additional point of consideration that possibly explains some of the ways in which visual narratives that relate to women tend to be made less visible. In this chapter I add that stories about women move more towards being imperceptible because the lens used in developing the photographic archive of independence tends to focus more on men and erase women by blurring them into the background or un-naming them in the captions that accompany archival photographs.

To make this argument that women are marginalised in the photographic archive of independence, I consider the exhibition *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation*

Movements in Africa, 1945–1994 (2001) which is curated by Okwui Enwenzor and a team that includes Mark Nash, Lauri Firstenberg, Rory Bester, and Chika Okeke-Agulu. More specifically, I am interested in the photography section of the catalogue of the *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994* (2001) that is illustrated in the catalogue on pages 175 to 217. The photography section includes a text titled *Postcoloniality, Performance and Photographic Portraiture* (2001) by Lauri Firstenberg, and hundred and twenty-six photographs that are thematically divided into six themes. The categories are,

i. *Africa Goes to War* (pages 180 to 183, with thirteen photographs)
ii. *End of Empire: Toward African Nationhood* (pages 184 to 187, with sixteen photographs)
iii. *Independence Now: Africa's Century* (pages 188 to 195, with twenty-nine photographs)
iv. *Vive la Revolution* (pages 196 to 201, with sixteen photographs)
v. *Experiments with Democracy* (pages 202 to 209, with twenty-four photographs)
vi. *No Easy Walk to Freedom* (pages 210 to 271, with twenty-eight photographs).

The photographs that are included within the larger premise of the exhibition are sourced from various forms of archives and categorised into three areas which include studio documentary, photojournalism, and contemporary art (Firstenburg 2001). It should be noted that my use of the word archive here refers to the broader definition of the term to refer to retainers of memory as opposed to the conventional definition of an archive as a building that functions as a repository of historical documents (Enwenzor 2008; Hamilton and Skotnes 2014). Out of all the hundred and twenty-six photographs across the six themes of the photography section, black women are featured in only twenty-five images in the entire forty-five pages on which the photographic archive of independence is displayed in the catalogue. There is not one photograph of a black woman in the category *Africa Goes to War*. Of the twenty-five photographs in the remaining five categories, only six are captioned in such a manner that the women portrayed are identified by name or the organisation or institution they belong to. They include photograph 3 on page 192 in the section *Independence Now: Africa's Century*, photograph 5 on page 205 in *Experiments with Democracy*, and photograph 3 on page 210, photographs 6 and 8 on page 213 and photograph 7 on page 215 in *No Easy*

Walk to Freedom which is a compilation of photographs mostly from the context of South Africa. The captions of the six mentioned photographs are[8],

i. Photograph 3 on page 192: *Lady Ademola, wife of Chief Justice of Nigeria, stands outside Buckingham Palace in London after attending an investiture, where she received the M.B.E. from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Here Lady Ademola is shown displaying her insignia to Lady Aboyomi of Nigeria, July 1959*.

ii. Photograph 5 on page 205: *Federation of Gold Coast Women National Executive Meeting, 1950s*.

iii. Photograph 3 on page 210: *Members of the ANC Women's League Executive Committee at the 43rd Annual National Congress Conference, from left to right, Lilian Ngoyi (president), M. Molefi (Durban), Miss F. Mkhize (Durban), V. Gqirana (P.E), C.A.N. Kuse (Queenstown), Frances Baard (P.E), Bloomfontein, South Africa*, 1965, Photo by Peter Mugubane.

iv. Photograph 6 on page 213: *Women Delegates to the South African Congress at the end of a three-day National Conference in Cape Town*, 1965, Drum Staff Photographer.

v. Photograph 8 on page 213: *Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Sophie Williams and Radima Moosa – delegates delivering the petition to the office of the Prime Minister in front of Union Buildings during the campaign against passes for women*, 1956, Drum staff photographer.

vi. Photograph 7 on page 215: *Two members of South African Women's League during the protest against passes for women*, 1956, Drum staff photographer.

The invisibility of women in this photographic archive is also reflected in the way in which they are unidentified in the captions. For instance, the second last photograph in the subsection *No Easy Walk to Freedom* is an iconic photograph that depicts Winnie Madikezela Mandela (b.1936 – d.2018) and Nelson Mandela holding hands and walking together moments after Nelson Mandela was released from prison near Paarl in 1990 (Mandela 2013) (Fig. 1.8). In the 1990 photograph, both Winnie and Nelson have raised their other hand in the air with a fist, a gesture signifying victory over the fight against oppression. In the catalogue of *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa 1945 - 1994* (2001), Figure 1.8 is captioned as,

[8] The captions are transcribed exactly as they are printed in the catalogue *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994* (2001)

Photo Greg English, Nelson Mandela's release from prison, Cape Town, February 11, 1990

The caption of Figure. 1.8. in *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994* (2001) only identifies Nelson Mandela and does not make mention of Winnie Mandela. Figure. 1.8. is captioned differently across various archives and sources; The Associated Press captions this image as,

> Nelson Mandela with Winnie Madikizela-Mandela after his release from a South Africa prison in 1990. She often acted as a conduit to his followers during his imprisonment. They divorced in 1996. Credit...Greg English/Associated Press.

Winnie Madikizela-Mandela is mentioned which begs the question of why she is erased in the catalogue of *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994* (2001). There are more instances when the catalogue sees through women such as photograph 7 on page 215 which is captioned only as '*two members of the South African Women's League'*. My goal in this subsection is not to argue that representations of women are completely absent (although this assertion would hold true for the category *Africa Goes to War* where there is not a single photograph of a black woman), but rather to confirm the theoretical premise of this doctoral dissertation in art history, that there indeed exists a gendered discrepancy in the way in which the era of independence in Africa has been largely documented and presented.

The objective of this subsection is also not to criticise *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994* (2001) as a patriarchal project, but rather it is to highlight the gender bias that is implicit in national narratives of independence that lean towards providing mostly masculine perspectives of the colonial story. This gender bias is reproduced and reflected within the context of the photography section of the catalogue of *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994* (2001). The subsection includes more photographs of men than women, and also it identifies and names more men in the captioning of the photographs. While the exhibition can be argued to complexify and counter a simplistic story of African independence, it also arguably provides more narratives of men than those of women in such a manner that it affirms the gender biases and partialities embedded in both the national memory of many African countries and the very simplistic narrative of independence it aims to counter and complexify.

1.2. Assembling Visual Stories about Women

> … women must make their impact felt in all fields in order to strengthen the foundations of our revolutions … women have a big responsibility in combatting … exploitations … women are part and parcel of the lines of defence against those whose interest is to keep Africa in a state of perpetual bondage (Betty Kaunda, 1985, National Archives of Zambia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NAZ, FA556-337-370; Ghodsee 2015, 140).

Cited above is Betty Kaunda (b.1928–d.2012) who was the first lady of the Republic of Zambia from 1964 when the country became independent until 1991 when the political party known as the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) won the presidential elections against the independence party (the UNIP). The quote is extracted from her speech at the second National Women's Rights Conference in the Copperbelt province in 1985. Betty Kaunda's words express the importance of acknowledging women's participation and involvement in the struggle for independence and assert that visibility for women has to be created with agency and urgency.

By 2023, which is decades after Betty Kaunda's 1985 speech, the situation is one in which women's involvements in liberation struggles are still invisible or absent within the context of the official photographic archive of independence in national archives in Zambia and Zimbabwe. There is no single archival collection solely dedicated to memorialising political activities and performances of Zambian and Zimbabwean women. Visual portrayals relating to black women and their involvement in the milieu of independence are very few inside the NAZ-1, the NAZ-2, the UNIP Archives, the ZANU-PF Archives as well as the ZANIS Archives. Further, the few photographs of women that are included as part of the independence collections are either uncaptioned, miscaptioned or accompanied by very little text. There are some instances when some women are visible or photographed alongside men in some of the images, but the women are unnamed in the captions.

There is also a lack of biographical information about many women, including all the six that this chapter focuses on. There is actually not a single file, digital or otherwise, inside any of the five archives that contains at least five comprehensively captioned photographs associated to one specific woman. There are hundreds of printed and digital images, and even negatives of photographs, of Betty Kaunda inside the NAZ-1 and the ZANIS Archives. None of the

individual images are captioned. Some of the photographs are accompanied by short sentences such as '*the first lady in China*' or '*UNIP's Women's Brigade in Action*'. In the NAZ-1 there is a digital folder labelled *Kankasa* that contains nine digital photographs associated with a woman freedom fighter known as Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa (Fig. 1.3). All the nine photographs are captioned numerically as 1, 2, 3 and so forth. As a matter of fact, the photographs labelled 4 and 7 are identical. The NAZ-2 and the ZANU-PF Archives have absolutely no folder, not even a shelf, that is designated for storing photographs of a specific woman.

This chapter reads through gaps and cracks of invisibility that are described in the preceding paragraphs, and re/constructs a photographic archive to narrate visual stories that focus on histories that relate to six specific women, namely, Chikamoneka (Fig. 1.2), Chibesakunda Kankasa (Fig. 1.3), Lenshina (Fig 1.4), Mbuya Nehanda (Fig. 1.6), Dongo (Fig. 1.7) and Mujuru (Fig. 1.5). Each sub-section in this chapter is constructed as a biography of a specific woman and comprises of recaptioned photographs that are accompanied by information drawn from multiple conversations, interviews, texts and archival documents. This chapter as a whole, can be thought of as a protest or rebellion against the invisibility that is staged using photographs to visually contextualise women's involvement in independence movements.

This Chapter uses storytelling to counter women's invisibility in the photographic archive of Zambian and Zimbabwean independence. The methodological approach employed in this chapter references Saidiya Hartman's *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval* (2019) which begins with the sentence 'At the turn of the century, young black women were in open rebellion' (Hartman 2019: xiii). Hartman's (2019) book contributes to the understanding of histories of selected black American women's lives by giving insight into their individual and collective stories of navigating different aspects of social life in two American cities. *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval* (2019) counters archival absence and protests the erasure of black women within national history and memory through telling stories of specific women. This chapter contributes and supplements other literary and visual projects that endeavour to redress the erasure of women from history such as the *These Bones Will Rise Again* (2018) by Panashe Chigumadzi, *Nehanda and Gender Victimhood in the Central Mashonaland 1896-97 Rebellions: Revisiting the Evidence* (2008) by Ruramisai Charumbira, *Women combatants and the liberation movements in South Africa: Guerrilla girls, combative mothers and the in-*

betweeners (2015) by Siphokazi Magadla, and the project *Women on Aeroplanes* (https://woa.kein.org) curated by Annet Busch, Magda Lipska and Marie-Helene Gublet. These works are crucial for the context of this chapter because they centralise women's voices in the telling of women's histories.

The book *These Bones Will Rise Again* (2018) takes its title from the words spoken by Charwe Nyakasikana (Mbuya Nehanda) (Fig. 1.6) before she died. The book gives insight to social and political movements in Zimbabwe through Chigumadzi's (2018) personal stories of womanhood or experiences of being a woman in Zimbabwe. *These Bones Will Rise Again* (2018) is a creative and non-fiction book that provides information about social and political movements in Zimbabwe including the first *chimurenga* (war of liberation) which took place during Nyakasikana's (Fig. 1.6) lifetime in the 1800s, the second war of liberation in the 1900s which ended in 1980 when Zimbabwe was declared an independent nation and the coup d'état in 2017 that resulted in the resignation of president Robert Mugabe who had ruled Zimbabwe since 1980. *Nehanda and Gender Victimhood in the Central Mashonaland 1896-97 Rebellions: Revisiting the Evidence* (2008) is a journal article written by Charumbira. It analyses court recordings that document the trial of Nyakasikana (Fig. 1.7) who was accused by the white colonial government for ordering the murder of a white man settler. Charumbira's (2008) article considers a testimony provided by a witness only known as the Zambezi woman. This particular testimony was not considered by the court in the judgement and sentencing of Nehanda who was found guilty and sentenced to death.

Women combatants and the liberation movements in South Africa: Guerrilla girls, combative mothers and the in-betweeners (2015) examines roles performed by women in national liberation forces in South Africa. To explore the varied ways in which women participated in the South African struggle for liberation, Magadla (2015) analyses women's roles in three categories which include (i) guerrilla girls – young women who participated in combat, (ii) combative mothers – women who had children and also participated in combat and the in-betweeners – women who participated in fight against apartheid from home, or women who can be defined as somewhere in between guerrilla girls and combative mothers. *Women on Aeroplanes* (https://woa.kein.org) takes its title from Kojo Laing's novel *Woman of the Aeroplanes* (1988). Laing's (1988) novel explores the functions of mythology, religion, creativity, science and technology, politics and gender roles in society. It is a fictional story of immortals who travel between two imaginary towns called Tukwan and Levensvale with

two aeroplanes bought by their leader Pokuaa. *Women on Aeroplanes* is an artistic and research-based project that explores the concept of independence by considering studies and projects that focus on narratives about women (Ibid). Busch, Magda and Gublet (Op Cit) argue that despite women participating in liberation struggles, their stories are marginalised from mainstream history, and their faces remain for the most part invisible. As such, the project *Women on Aeroplanes* focuses on engaging with works that aim to make women more visible as well as projects that create new parameters and premises of storytelling.

1.3. The Torch Bearer of the Women's Brigade[9]: A Visual Narrative of Julia Chikamoneka

Julia Chikamoneka (Fig. 1.2) was born in 1910 in Kasama and died on 28th March in 1986 (Geisler 2004). She was initially known as Julia Mulenga Nsofwa and changed her last name to Chikamoneka after 1938 when became a participant of various activities with multiple political parties and social groups in Northern Rhodesia. During her political career, Chikamoneka was arrested repeatedly for inciting citizens to protest against the British colonial administration and for hosting some of the UNIP members who were threatened with imprisonment, which is one of the reasons she changed her name (Sifuniso and Nalumango 1998; Kalichini 2017). According to Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa (2016) (Fig. 1.3) who was Chikamoneka's colleague in the UNIP's Women Brigade, Nsofwa formed her new name from the expression '*chikamoneka icho batu chushisha*' which loosely translates from *iciBemba* to English as 'the cause of our suffering shall be become known or revealed'. The word *chikamoneka* translates to English as 'it will be seen', 'it will become visible' or 'it will be revealed'.

In the period leading to 1960, there had been several meetings between the British colonial government and many proponents of independence in Northern Rhodesia. By 1959 there was a common understanding that independence was going to be granted to Northern Rhodesia, however, the terms of how the country would be governed beyond the perceived independence were unclear (Geisler 2004; Macola 2007). The British colonial government

[9] The phrase 'torch bearer of the women's league is taken from Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa's farewell speech at Chikamoneka's funeral (Chibesakunda Kankasa 1986 in Geisler: 46).

drafted a proposed constitution which would be sent from Britain to Lusaka in Northern Rhodesia to be further discussed among local and British politicians. The proposed constitution was delivered by the British politician Iain Macleod who was to be received at the airport in Lusaka by local and British politicians and they would together proceed to the Legislative council to meet and discuss about the independence of Zambia (Figs. 1.9 and 1.10) (Krishna and Mulenga 2004).

Prior to McLeod's travelling, news about the proposed constitution was circulated in Northern Rhodesia and was met with disdain by locals who then had meetings on how they could counter the proposed constitution (Gewald, Hinfelaar and Macola 2011). Eventually, black people in Northern Rhodesia decided to protest by walking to the airport to meet McLeod with their grievances conveyed through placards and by weeping of women (Chibesakunda Kankasa 2016). Protestors gathered at the airport (Fig. 1.11), and shortly after McLeod disembarked from the plane, Chikamoneka, along with Emelia Saidi and Mandalena Mumba made their way to the front of the crowds, while simultaneously undressing (Fig. 1.12). When McLeod got closer to them, Chikamoneka the proceeded to slap him (Fig. 1.13). This led to a commotion as the police attempted to subdue Chikamoneka, simultaneously the crowds began to react against the police (Fig. 1.14). The police then gathered around the British politician to protect him, and they took him into a car which they used to drive away from the airport (Chibesakunda Kankasa 2016) (Fig. 1.15). This is the background of the anecdote that opens this chapter, and also what is conceivably the most prominent public memory of Chikamoneka.

Figure 1.9. Iain McCleod disembarking off an aircraft in Lusaka (1960). Photograph by L. A. Titchener. Photograph courtesy of the Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) Archives.

Figure 1.10. Iain McCleod greeting politicians and dignitaries at the airport in Lusaka (1960). Photograph by L. A. Titchener. Photograph courtesy of the Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) Archives.

Figure 1.11. Protestors gather at the airport before the arrival of Iain McCleod (1960). Photograph by L. A. Titchener. Photograph courtesy of the Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) Archives.

Figure 1.12. A photograph of two undressed women in a crowd holding up a hand-written sign. The woman holding the sign on the left-hand is Julia Chikamoneka, and on the right-hand side is Emelia Saidi (1960). Photograph by L. A. Titchener. Photograph courtesy of the Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) Archives.

Figure 1.13. Iain McCleod approaches Julia Chikamoneka and Emelia Saidi (1960), photograph by L. A. Titchener. Photograph courtesy of the Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) Archives.

Figure 1.14. Disorder erupts after Julia Chikamoneka slapped Iain McLeod at the airport (1960), photograph by L. A. Titchener. Photograph courtesy of the Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) Archives.

Figure 1.15. Policemen taking Ian McLeod away from the airport (1960). Photograph by L. A. Titchener. Photograph courtesy of the Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) Archives.

Photographs associated to Chikamoneka's visual narrative and participation in the protest on 27th March 1960 are spread across three main archives in Zambia, which are the NAZ-1, the UNIP Archives and the ZANIS Archives. The curatorial decision to visually narrate an aspect of Chikamoneka's history using digital scans of negatives sourced from the ZANIS Archives in this subsection is informed largely by factors that relate to the availability of photographic evidence as well as access to them. Of the three archives in Zambia, the ZANIS Archives has the greatest number of negatives of photographs associated with Chikamoneka. The ZANIS Archives are also the most accessible in that they provide the opportunity for researchers to engage with the actual physical negatives whereas the NAZ-1 only allows access to digital copies and the materials belonging to the UNIP Archives are stored in boxes.

There are digital copies of photographs labelled Figure. 1.12, Figure. 1.13, Figure. 1.14 and Figure 1.15. in a digital folder titled '*women in the struggle for independence*' in the NAZ-1. They are all labelled numerically. There is also an A4 sized printed version of Figure 1.12 that is displayed in the foyer of the NAZ-1. It is cropped into a square and zooms in on Chikamoneka and Saidi and is accompanied by citation that states,

> The role of UNIP women: Women Demonstrating outside of the Legislative Council in 1961 during the visit of Mr. Reginald Maulding Colonial Secretary, and on left is Mama UNIP[10].

[10] Punctuations and capital letters transcribed exactly as on the digital photograph inside the NAZ-1.

The caption in the NAZ-1 is problematic for the same reasons discussed in the subsection about the photographic section of *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994* (2001). This caption does not identify Emelia Saidi on the left-hand side of the photograph. Additionally, the caption locates the event in the photograph as outside of the Legislative council which is false because the protest was photographed at the old airport following the arrival of McLeod. Despite the fact that the women are holding up a handwritten sign that expresses their views, the caption in the NAZ-1 ignores this, silences them and identifies their actions as merely being part of the stipulated roles of the Women's League which was a branch of the political party known as the UNIP.

1.3.1. Conversing about Chikamoneka's Performance in the Protest in Lusaka on 27th March 1960 with Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa, Martha Maengeni and Barbara Nkatya

In 2016, I met with Kankasa (Fig. 1.3) at her home in Lusaka in search for information about the UNIP's Women's League and women's roles in the struggle for independence. Kankasa and Chikamoneka were both members of the UNIP's Women's League and also worked together in the formation of political party Northern Rhodesia African Congress (NRAC) (Geisler 2004). I arrived with a printout of an image of Chikamoneka that I had earlier acquired from the NAZ-1 (Fig. 1.13) that is described in the preceding subsection so that it would serve as a starting point of what would become a series of conversations. When I showed Kankasa the photograph, she immediately recognised it. '*Aah, Julia Chikamoneka!*', she exclaimed as she pointed her hand to the direction of her living room. When we were in her living room she sat on a chair and asked where to begin from. 'Where would you like to start?', I asked her. She paused in thought for a couple of minutes, and then uttered the words '*Chikamoneka was a brave woman*' before proceeding to narrate her recollection of the events of 27th March 1960.

According to Kankasa (2016) while they were protesting at the airport, Chikamoneka, Emelia Saidi and Mandalena Mumba surged out of the group of the Women's Brigade and began to take off their clothes (Fig. 1.12). When Macleod disembarked from the plane, Chikamoneka proceeded to slap him which caused him to weep as well (Kalichini 2017; Chibesakunda Kankasa 2016; Geisler 2004). In Figure 1.12, Chikamoneka is the woman on the left-hand

side of the photograph with what appears to be a rope tied around her stomach and neck. Her pelvic area is wrapped with a white cloth. In the same photograph (Fig. 1.12), Saidi is standing and holding the hand-written sign on the right-hand side. Saidi also has a rope tied around her neck and her stomach, and the only covered part of her body is the pelvic area which is concealed by a piece of *chitenge* fabric. Mumba is standing on the far left and behind Chikamoneka in the photograph, and her only visible clothing is an above the knee wrapped piece of chitenge. The hand-written sign is in the centre of the image reads,

> ‘‘U.N.I.P SAYS’’
> KAUNDA KNOWS DEMOCRACY
> WELENSKY & HONE MEAN
> NAZISM.
> SUPPORT KAUNDA
> BY ONE MAN ONE VOTE[11].

In 2017 I read an online text titled *Brief History and Activism of Mama Julia Chikamoneka* (https://leahkabamba.wordpress.com/2010/09/07/brief-history-and-activism-of-mama-julia-chikamoneka/) on Leah Komakoma Kabamba’s blog and was intrigued by a comment made by Martha Maengeni. The comment reads as follows,

> Interesting information on *ba* Mama Chikamoneka. Unforfunately justice in thorough research into the life of this dynamic woman has not been done. I speak from the point of view of the fact that my mother is a niece of *ba* Mama Chikamoneka!!My mother’s father was ba Mama Chikamoneka’s brother.
> I remember vaguely growing up as child *ba* grandma Chikamoneka coming to visit our home in Kitwe in 1966/1967 at Congo Way.
> It would be nice if more data was collected of her personal life from her many descendants scattered all over the country before many of these descendants leave this earthly life.
> (Maengeni 2011, https://leahkabamba.wordpress.com/2010/09/07/brief-history-and-activism-of-mama-julia-chikamoneka/)

Maengeni is Chikamoneka’s grandniece. Mapping and tracing descendants of women freedom fighters such as Chikamoneka who might be forgotten by the official archive, or

[11] Transcribed exactly as in photograph (Fig. 1.12).

whom there is a lack of substantial biographical information in literature and everywhere else is crucial because it can aid in filling in some gaps and restoring some of their accounts back into the historical record. I contacted Maengeni via her social media account where I was also able to connect with Nkatya Barbara Chengo who is Saidi's great granddaughter and is based in Lusaka. Chengo assisted to recaption the archival photograph labelled as Figure 1.12 and **to** identify the women in the photograph including her great grandmother and Mandalena Mumba who would have otherwise remained unknown. Maengeni provided more personal information relating to Chikamoneka who is her great grandaunt. Before getting involved in politics Chikamoneka was married and lived what her Maengeni described as a normal life. When her husband passed away leaving her with no children of her own but financially well endowed, Chikamoneka took on the role of one of the anchors of her extended family, explains Maengeni (2020). Chikamoneka assisted her family in different matters ranging from education financing, resolving marital disputes to financing funerals of deceased family members (Ibid).

Chikamoneka joined other women such as Kankasa in political activities (Chibesakunda Kankasa 2016). In 1948 Chikamoneka and other freedom fighters formed the Northern Rhodesia Teachers' Welfare, which later transformed and became partly responsible for the formation of a political party called the Northern Rhodesia African Congress (NRAC) (Sifuniso and Nalumango 1998). When the NRAC disbanded, Chikamoneka joined the breakaway party named the Zambia African National Congress (ZANCO) (Musambachime 1991). Chikamoneka was influential in mobilising women to become members of ZANCO. However, ZANCO was later banned by the Rhodesian administrative authorities and its leaders were arrested and detained (Ibid). Chikamoneka, along with women like Betty Kaunda, Saidi and Mumba, joined efforts with other liberation fighters in the organisation of a new political party, known as the African National Independence Party (ANIP), which later worked alongside UNIP and morphed into the UNIP Women's Brigade (Geisler 2004; Sifuniso and Nalumango 1998; Musambachime 1991), which functioned largely as support for the UNIP (Ghodsee 2015). Roles of the brigade included providing asylum for nationalist leaders threatened with imprisonment, raising funds, funeral committees and participating in anti-colonial protests such as the protest of 1961 in Lusaka (Kalichini 2017; Sifuniso and Nalumango 1998).

1.4. Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa Narrates Her Own History

Figure 1.16. In conversation with Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa at her home in Lusaka (2016). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa was born on 23 March 1936 in Lubwa Mission in Chinsali, Northern Rhodesia and died in 2018 in South Africa. She was educated at Mindolo Girls Boarding School in Kitwe in the Copperbelt province (Geisler 2004). Arguably one of the most popular women freedom fighters in Zambia, she is known as a politician and as the wife of a prominent figure in the history of the liberation struggle. Chibesakunda Kankasa is also famously known as the first woman appointed to the central committee of the UNIP and for her leadership and involvement in women's organisational and political clubs such as the Northern Rhodesia Congress's (NRC) Women's Brigade, the UNIP's Women's League (Ghodsee 2015). Post-independence, Chibesakunda Kankasa advocated for women's rights and mobilisation of women's participation within the newly formed government and served as the first Zambian High Commissioner to Kenya (Geisler 2004).

In the interview pictured in Figure 1.16, Chibesakunda Kankasa looks back and reflects on the genesis of her involvement in the nationalist movement in Zambia. At the beginning of the interview, she speaks about her childhood as young girl in Northern Rhodesia and about her marriage to Timothy Kankasa[12] (b.1926–d.1983), who she credits for facilitating her engagement in the political arena. She and Timothy were married in November 1952 when he worked for the local government as the township secretary for Chibulumba township in the Copperbelt province. In 1959, her husband was transferred to Ndola (still within the Copperbelt) where he would serve as the Twapya township secretary (Chibesakunda Kankasa 2016). It is in Ndola's Twapya township that Chibesakunda Kankasa has her earliest recollection of an encounter that would fuel her involvement in the struggle for independence.

Chibesakunda Kankasa recalls the day she mistakenly entered a butchery that served and catered for only white customers. It is important to note that access to that particular butchery was denied to black people, as they were neither allowed to enter it nor purchase anything from it. During the interview, Chibesakunda Kankasa (2016) explained that during the 1950s there were racial segregations in Northern Rhodesia such that there were spaces where black people were not allowed to access. Many areas were characterised by features of 'whites only' signs displayed either on the doors, walls or windows. In some sections of the town of Ndola, such signs were not displayed, but it was common knowledge that black people were not welcome there. Chibesakunda Kankasa pauses to assert and clarify that the butchery she walked into was unmarked. When inside the butchery, the attendant refused to sell her meat and accused her of starting trouble. '*They wouldn't serve me, and I did not know what I did wrong, I just wanted to buy some meat. Then the man started shouting and shouting and saying that you are a problem,*' recounts Chibesakunda Kankasa (2016).

[12] Timothy Kankasa is recognised for playing key roles in the Zambian independence struggle. During the colonial times he worked with township boards and later became president of the National Union of Local Authority Workers. After independence he served in government as the Zambian Ambassador to the Congo and the Central African Republic, member of parliament for Kitwe West and minister of State in the President's office (Chibesakunda Kankasa 2016).

News about Chibesakunda Kankasa’s dispute at the butchery soon reached her husband, who then made his way to where she was. When he arrived, his wife was still at the premises of the butchery, and he attempted to reason with the storekeeper. Unfortunately, this yielded a negative outcome as the black couple was arrested that day and spent a couple of hours in a holding cell at a nearby police station. ‘*I was very upset and sad because I did not do anything wrong*,’ says Chibesakunda Kankasa (2016) as she recalls how she was mistreated by the storekeeper and how angry she felt while inside the holding cell. After this experience, Chibesakunda Kankasa made the conscious decision to assist in efforts towards abolishing white minority rule in the country. She started by actively and purposely participating in meetings for the UNIP members that she and her husband had already been hosting in secret in their matrimonial home. Eventually, Chibesakunda Kankasa relocated from Ndola to Lusaka, where she formally joined the UNIP and began to actively participate in associations such as the women’s brigades and leagues (Chibesakunda Kankasa 2016) (Figs. 1.17 to 1.20).

Figure 1.17. Women of the UNIP Women’s Brigade at an unidentified event (1975). Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of the National Archives of Zambia Independence.

Figure 1.18. Women of the UNIP Women's Brigade at an unidentified event (undated). Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of the National Archives of Zambia Independence.

Figure 1.19. Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa and the first of Zambia at independence, Kenneth Kaunda (undated). Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of the Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) Archives.

Figure 1.20. A portrait of Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa (undated). Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of the Getty Foundation.

1.4.1. Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa's Involvement in the UNIP's Women's Brigade

The UNIP Women's Brigade (formerly known as the NRC Women's Brigade and formed in 1953) was established in 1959 as one of the three main branches of UNIP. The other two branches included the main body and the Youth League (Geisler 2004). Later in 1975 the brigade developed its own constitution and was renamed as the Women's League. The executive secretary of the Women's League was appointed by the president of the party and of the country. Zambia gained its independence in 1963, this meant that whoever was appointed as a member of the executive secretary of the Women's League would also become a member of the central committee of the UNIP. Chibesakunda Kankasa was the first woman appointed as the chairman of the Women's League in 1975 after its formation (Ghodsee 2015).

Historically, women's groups and clubs were created by women European settlers in Northern Rhodesia, and they existed prior to nationalist movements and rarely paid attention to political matters. They functioned largely as society groups that focused on 'women's issues' like childcare, knitting and performing supportive duties to their male counterparts (Geisler 2004). The UNIP Women's Brigade was formed on a similar premise, but with an extended motive of involving women in the nationalist movements against colonialism at the time; both the UNIP Women's Brigade and the Women's League were fundamentally formed to support the objectives of UNIP. The roles the Women's Brigade and the Women's League involved advocating for literacy for women, singing at political rallies, lobbying for participation of women in political activities and singing at funerals of deceased participants of anti-colonial activities, among others (Chibesakunda Kankasa 2016). Geisler (2004: 43) argues that the Women's Brigade and the Women's League were '*not intended to seek political power for themselves*' but that they were rather meant to help masculine figures achieve political power. She states that they represented and offered '*a respectable place for women where their moral reputation could be guarded*', such opportunities came at the expense of '*limiting … members to supportive roles only*' (Geisler 2004: 43).

The constitution of the Women's League mirrored the United Nations' target for gender equality that sought to integrate women into the development processes of its member states (Kikamba 2012). The black and white photographs in Figures 1.17 and 1.18 show women

participating in some activities of the UNIP Women's League in the post-independence era. Figure 1.18 depicts nine women, along with Chibesakunda Kankasa, at an unidentified public event. Chibesakunda Kankasa is standing behind a microphone in the centre of the photograph. There are four women standing on the left-hand side of the photograph and three on the right-hand side, and two women are standing behind Chibesakunda Kankasa. Some women are wearing party *chitenges* that have a portrait of a man incorporated in its design. All the women have their hands in the posture of clapping, which can culturally symbolise humility[13]. There is a Zambian flag waving on the top left corner of the photograph which suggests that the women are at an official or government related event.

The 1975 photograph (Fig. 1.17) depicts Chibesakunda Kankasa is in a workshop setting with five other women. Only Chibesakunda Kankasa is standing while the other women are seated. Comparable to Figure 1.18, Chibesakunda Kankasa in Figure 1.17 is in the central position of the photograph and is again standing behind a microphone. A difference between the two photographs is that one depicts an outdoor setting while the other is indoors. Another difference is that while Figure 1.18 depicts an ambiguous event, figure 1.17 reveals the event and date within itself. The blackboard positioned on the left-hand half of the photograph has the following words written on it,

> 14/11/75
>
> Z.C.T.U
>
> WORKSHOP SERMINAR ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE ZAMBIAN REVOLUTION[14].

Figure 1.17 is quite a powerful image because it reveals within itself what it is memorialising. The words on the blackboard recognise that women participated in the Zambian revolution against British colonialism. It is quite meaningful that in the picture, Chibesakunda Kankasa, along with other women, appears to be addressing an audience about the roles they played, because the UNIP Women's Brigade provided key support in the consolidation of political

[13] Information relating to the thankful clap was provided by Betina Nyalugwe (2021).

[14] Transcribed exactly as in photograph (Fig. 1.17).

power and independence in Zambia. Even though the UNIP Women's Brigade and the Women's League were created as auxiliaries of the main body of the UNIP, there are intersections and slippages between the functions of the women's organisations as prescribed by the political party and some activities that were performed by their members that point to the fact that women not only played supportive roles but actively participated. An example is in the sub-section that focuses on Chikamoneka, where three women extended their roles by undressing in public. Another example from the 1960s is when the colonial government sent police officers to forcefully break up a rally by black nationalists and a heavily pregnant Chibesakunda Kankasa sat on a box of ammunition to prevent the police from using it (Chibesakunda Kankasa 2016 Ghodsee 2015; Geisler 2004; Sifuniso and Nalumango 1998). Such examples represent stories that are either invisible or entangled within other stories.

Chibesakunda Kankasa is a quite well known and respected figure in Zambia, however there is not much that is visually documented about her and many other women's involvement in Zambian independence. Chibesakunda Kankasa's political activities are partly written about and recorded within the NAZ-1 where there exists a digital folder dedicated to her that is titled *Kankasa*. The folder *Kankasa* which is located inside a folder which is labelled *Women in the Struggle for Independence* contains a total of 13 photographs. The folder has only twelve unique photographs, which are labelled numerically as 1, 2, 3 and so on. All the twelve photographs of Kankasa in the NAZ-1, including Figures 1.17 and 1.18, depict Kankasa participating only in the activities of the UNIP Women's Brigade. The photographs that appear here in Figures 1.17 and 1.18 are typical examples of those in the folder. Arguably, Chibesakunda Kankasa's visual narrative within the NAZ-1 is not completely omitted or absent. As such, this subsection supplements to her history that is recorded in the archive, largely through recaptioning some of the images as well as adding photographs that are missing in the NAZ-1.

1.5. Alice the Creator, Alice the Queen: A Visual Biography of Alice Mulenga Lenshina

Figure 1.21. A portrait of Alice Lenshina (undated). Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of the National Archives of Zambia.

Figure 1.22. The District Commissioner at Chinsali, Mr John Hannah, and 'prophetess' Lenshina (1964). Photographer unknown. Photograph sourced from John Hudson's *A Time to Mourn: A Personal Account of the 1964 Lumpa Church Revolt in Zambia* (1999).

Alice Lenshina (Figs. 1.4, 1.21 and 1.22) lived in Northern Rhodesia before independence and died after the country was liberated from British colonialism. She was born Alice Mulenga in Senior Chief Nkula's area in Kasomo, Chinsali district, Northern Rhodesia, and died in 1978 in new Chilenje compound in Lusaka, Zambia (Kalichini 2017; Gordon 2012). Chief Nkula's area is a Bemba chiefdom located on the lower Lubu river, an area that historically served as a transition point into Nyasaland, Angola and Congo for traders, missionaries and *bamuchapi* (witch finders). Alice belonged to the minor house (*inganda*) of the Lubusha Kasaka of *Bena* Ngandu family and had limited formal education (Hinfelaar 1994; Gordon 2012).

In 1953, Alice Mulenga said that she had died and had an encounter with God. Some accounts, mostly found in travel diaries of colonial adventures of white men such as John Hannah (1999), who was a district commissioner in Chinsali in the 1950s, suggest that she did not die but merely fell into a coma, while scholars such as Hugo Hinfelaar (1994) and David Gordon (2012) argue that she had a spiritual experience. Following her return to earth,

Alice adopted the name 'Lenshina', which is an *iciBemba* translation of the name Regina. The name Regina means queen or monarch in Latin and her middle name, Mulenga, means creator in *iciBemba* – she changed her name to become Alice Mulenga Lenshina, Alice the creator, Alice the queen. After adopting a new name, Lenshina proceeded to form a religious sect known as the Lumpa Church (Figs. 1.23 and 1.24) (Kalichini 2017; Gordon 2012; Hinfelaar 1994).

Prior to becoming the founder of the Lumpa Church, Lenshina attended the Presbyterian church (United Free Church of Scotland)[15] at Lubwa Mission. After her spiritual encounter, she returned to inform the priests of the church she attended about her experience, but she would not be allowed to lead or preach because she was a black woman. She then decided to combine some aspects of the Christian doctrine and cultural beliefs to form a hybrid religion known as the Lumpa church (Kalichini 2017; Gordon 2012). Lenshina's church combined theological doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church, the Presbyterian Church and Bemba spiritual beliefs to form its own ideologies. Lenshina took on the role of a spiritual leader and facilitated connections of her followers to God. During the Lumpa baptism, converts crossed a river to meet Lenshina on the other side, which signified the cleansing of sins and becoming reborn (Macola 2007). This conversion process parallels the biblical reference of the crossing of the river Jordan in the Book of Kings and Joshua (Macola 2007; Kalichini 2017).

In the Bible, the crossing of the Jordan river symbolises the transition from slavery to freedom and is represented in the story of the journey of the Israelites from being oppressed by the Egyptians and transitioning into the promised land across the river Jordan. It is also on

[15] The protestant Presbyterian Church carried out intensive missionary work in northern rhodesia during the colonial period and beyond independence. The church that lenshina was a member of prior to meeting god is part of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) in Zambia. After independence, some people remained members of this church while some broke away either return to Catholicism or to form part of the United Church of Zambia (UCZ) (Chilenje 2007). This information is important to note because of the role of women's leagues and groups in religious churches in contemporary Zambia and Zimbabwe in relation to aspects of my own artistic and research practices.

the banks of river Jordan that Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist in the biblical accounts of his disciples Matthew, Mark and Luke. The river Jordan is a symbolic site of transition, healing and a place where many miracles occurred according to the Christian faith. Arguably, Lenshina understood the significance of water baptism as a spiritual activity of not only conversion, but of healing and regeneration as well. In one of the conversion hymns written by Lenshina herself (Hinfelaar 1994: 95), the waters of the river Jordan are mentioned as a site where repentance occurs. Some of the lyrics which attest to Lenshina's understandings of the river Jordan are,

> *Mu menshi ya kwa Jordani* (In the waters of Jordan)
>
> *Mwishina lya katebe* (In the name of the strong)
>
> *Iya Landelande* (The immeasurable)
>
> *Ne libwe lya mwalala* (The unbreakable stone)
>
> *Imwe, bakatula lekeni* (You, my Saviour, if you leave me alone)
>
> *Nshakacita nangu chimo* (I will not do anything)
>
> *Nalapila ne mubi* (I, a sinner, repent)
>
> (Hinfelaar 1994: 95-96).

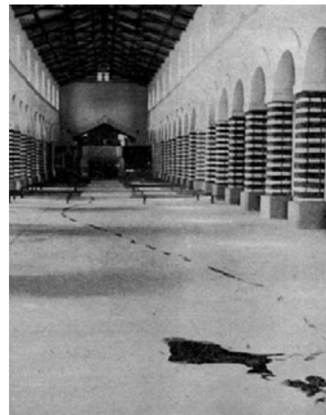

Figure 1.23. Arial photograph of the Lumpa Church (undated). Photographer unknown. Photograph sourced from John Hudson's *A Time to Mourn: A Personal Account of the 1964 Lumpa Church Revolt in Zambia* (1999).

Figure 1.24. Blood stain on the floor inside the Lumpa Church (undated). Photographer unknown. Photograph sourced from John Hudson's *A Time to Mourn: A Personal Account of the 1964 Lumpa Church Revolt in Zambia* (1999).

Once Lenshina set up the Lumpa Church (Figs. 1.23 and 1.24), its membership numbers began to escalate, triggered by individuals who were said to have begun abandoning practices related to *ubwanga* and *ubuloshi* (the use of charms and witchcraft)[16] out of self-conviction. News about these acts of repentance was spread by converts who returned to their villages in Northern Rhodesia and across into neighbouring colonial territories of Nyasaland and the Belgian Congo (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo) (Gordon 2012). By the late 1950s and early 1960s, the UNIP was heavily involved in the nationalist movement and was preparing to become the political party that would rule the country after independence. Around the same period, the UNIP and the Lumpa Church clashed in ideology and in the following years there were violent conflicts amongst followers (Kalichini 2017; Hinfelaar 1991).

The Lumpa church members were under the impression that the UNIP members wanted to destroy them, and the UNIP members spread rumours about the Lumpa Church being a cult that practised witch-hunting and consuming human urine and faecal matter. Opponents of the Lumpa church included of course some of the UNIP members as well as some defectors of the church such as *badikoni* (deacons) who betrayed Lenshina to join forces with UNIP. Some village headmen also expressed that they felt that Lenshina was arrogant and that she undermined their authority within the community by ignoring them and refusing to pay tax. One of the headmen was quoted saying of Lenshina that, '*balya ba mayo ba la iyuma pa*

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[16] The terms *ubuloshi* and *ubwanga* loosely translate into English as witchcraft. The term witchcraft has generally been used in a derogatory manner within western academia and is often associated to African primitivism. However, it is important to note that *Ubwanga* can mean traditional medicine, charms, or objects such as beads, skin of animals and human beings strung together and used in spiritual practices. The phrase *ukupanda ubwanga* means to activate such materiality for it to operate within a spiritual realm and yield results in the physical. It is true that sometimes ubwanga can be used for sinister objectives or wrongdoing, but also it can be used in more empowering ways like healing. *Ukupanda ubwanga* is complex and can involve anything from washing selected body parts of a live human being with water used to cleanse a corpse, the tying together of herbs and plants and placing them in a sacred place, such as under the bed, or even the wearing of a special type of bead on a specific body part to attract favour. For further reading on the complex uses of power objects refer to the article *Cosmolocal Orientations: Trickster Spatialization and the Politics of Cultural Bargaining in Zambia* (2019) by Ruth Simbao.

chifuba' which means 'that woman bangs on her chest with her fists' and was used to signify confidence and arrogance (Hinfelaar 1994; Kalichini 2017).

Resentment for the Lumpa Church from some individuals who held authoritative positions in the village and the country grew and the UNIP resorted to working with the colonial government. In 1964 the colonial military police surrounded and ambushed Senga village, where many Lumpa members resided, and began to shoot. The police shot and killed many men, women and children, who were later buried in a mass grave not too far from Chinsali General Hospital (Figs. 1.25 and 1.26). Many of the surviving Lumpa Church members were forced to flee into surrounding villages, and Lenshina and her husband surrendered and were arrested. Less than three months after this occurrence, the British government granted independence to Northern Rhodesia following the UNIP's victory in the 1964 elections (Chisembele 2015). After independence, the new republican president did not call for Lenshina to be tried, rather he attempted to ban the church and ordered for the destruction of the Lumpa church building (Fig. 1.29) and decreed that Lenshina was to be transferred from the prison in the village and taken to Lusaka (Figs. 1.26 and 1.27).

Resentment for the Lumpa Church from some individuals who held authoritative positions grew and UNIP resorted to working with the colonial government. In 1964 the colonial military police surrounded and ambushed Senga village, where many Lumpa members resided, and began to shoot. The police shot and killed many men, women and children, who were later buried in a mass grave not too far from Chinsali General Hospital (Figs. 1.25 and 1.26). Many of the surviving Lumpa Church members were forced to flee into surrounding villages, and Lenshina and her husband surrendered and were arrested. Less than three months after this occurrence, the British government granted independence to Northern Rhodesia following UNIP's victory in the 1964 elections (Chisembele 2015). After independence, the new republican president did not call for Lenshina to be tried, rather he attempted to ban the church and ordered for the destruction of the Lumpa church building and the confiscation of weapons that were used by the Lumpa church members (Fig. 1.29) and decreed that Lenshina was to be transferred from the prison in the village and taken to Lusaka (Figs. 1.27 and 1.28).

Lenshina escaped from prison in 1967 but was later caught in 1970 and put under house arrest in Chilenje where she eventually died. In an interview just a few months before her death, Lenshina was recorded as saying, '*tabatesheshe ifundi lyandi, ukuchila abalumendo abapula mafunde. Fimapolitiks fyalifulishishe*' (They did not understand my teaching, particularly young immoral men who were too preoccupied with politics) (Gordon 2012). Much of Lenshina's history leaves conflated and conflicting perspectives within Zambian society. Traces of the Lumpa Church exist today under different names, such as Uluse Kamutola and New Jerusalem, which is under the leadership of Lenshina's daughter. In the past few years there has been an emergence of attempts to revisit Lenshina's history in works such the drama sketch *Lenshina: the uprising* (2016) written by Kulijekuszyika Nyimbili and directed by Mwambi Kasakwi and performed at the Playhouse in Lusaka, and through music such as *I am Lenshina* (2015) by musician Mumba Yachi.

Figure 1.25. Dead bodies of some members of the Lumpa religious sect piled outside the morgue after the Northern Rhodesian troops stormed the village stronghold of Alice Lenshina on 31st July 1964. Chinsali, Northern Rhodesia (1964). Photographer unknown. Photograph sourced from IMAGO/ United Archives International, https://www.imago-images.com/search?suchtext=Alice+Lenshina

Figure 1.26. A father of the French Catholic order of White Fathers stands by a mass grave, which was set on fire to prevent disease after a savage revenge raid by Senga villagers on members of the Lumpa Church of Alice Lenshina, 12 August 1964, North of Rhodesia (1964). Photographer unknown. Photograph sourced from the Endangered Archives Programme (EAP) www.eap.bl.uk.

Figure 1.27. Northern Rhodesian African Forces & Prisons Officers escorting Alice Lenshina to detention in Mumbwa after the Lumpa uprising (1964). Photographer unknown. Photograph sourced from the Northern Rhodesia Police Association. http://www.nrpa.org.uk/lumpa_22/

Figure 1.28. Alice Lenshina with a police officer (undated). Photographer unknown. Photograph sourced from Smart Eagles, https://m.facebook.com/SmartEaglesZambia/photos/a-lesson-in-history-the/1840668616246560/

Figure 1.29. Weapons confiscated from Lumpa followers (undated). Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of the Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) Archives.

1.5.1. Misrepresented as a Villain: Perceptions of Alice Lenshina's Visual Account in the Narratives of Zambian Liberation

There are two main perspectives of Alice Lenshina and the Lumpa Church that exist in parallel with each other in modern day Zambia. Some accounts cast Lenshina in the role of a villain who opposed the independence party and who led a cult that practised unorthodox rituals such as smearing faeces on bodies and drinking urine, while other accounts position her as a brave woman who was defiant towards not only the British colonial government, but also the broader system of colonialism in terms of its objective to subdue people's freedom. The ambivalence about Lenshina's heroism or villainy can be seen both inside the archives in Zambia and in expressions of different people within Zambia.

In a journal account titled *A Time to Mourn: A Personal Account of the 1964 Lumpa Church Revolt in Zambia* (1999), John Hudson (the then District Commissioner of Chinsali) writes about Lenshina as a troublemaker who is elusive and uncooperative, and casts himself as one attempting to find peaceful resolution. Hannah provides a somewhat one-sided narration of Lenshina's activities and personality. In writing about his view of a reported incidence of disturbances between the UNIP followers and the Lumpa Church members in Chapaula village, he reaffirms negative perspectives of the way her story is presented. Hudson (1999: 2) writes,

> The following day the Provincial Commissioner, Mr Baker, and the Provincial Police Officer, Mr Bird, arrived. Mr Bird said he would ask for 100 European police officers to be flown into Chinsali to deal with Chapaula village. Meanwhile the Provincial Commissioner asked me [John Hannah] to go and try to reason with Alice Lenshina, so I set off with my driver (having first handed over my wallet, watch and keys to a friend, just in case...). When we arrived at Sione, about five miles away, there was a certain 'atmosphere'. I did manage to see her, although at first, I was told she was in the bush looking for medicine, and then I was told she had gone to the Copperbelt, and finally I was told that she was ill in bed. I asked to see her and was ushered into her house and then into her bedroom. As soon as I walked in, she hopped out of bed, fully dressed, pulled her blue plastic shoes out from the bedclothes and said, "I knew it would come to this!" However, my visit was of no avail. She was adamant that the UNIP were the cause of all the trouble, and that she and her followers only wanted to be left alone.

In the above citation, not only does Hudson (1999: 2) present Lenshina as being elusive in meeting him, he also writes about the locals who worked around him in a derogatory manner. He points out that he felt the need to leave his items of value (keys, watch and wallet) with his friend before attempting to go meet Lenshina with his driver. He highlights his feelings of being at risk and also presents himself as going to lengths to finally meet Lenshina. Hudson says he asked multiple times to meet with Lenshina and was given a response that basically implied that Lenshina was unavailable to meet with him. He then proceeds to make it seem as if Lenshina just hopped out of bed and was not ready to listen to anything he had to say. Many accounts that cast Lenshina in a negative light are like Hannah's account in that she is often presented as unwilling to cooperate or listen to alternative views.

Similar to Hudson's account, the NAZ-1 and UNIP Archives present Lenshina, as an enemy of the UNIP, and fundamentally as one who undermined the independence political party's efforts to achieve liberation. Inside the NAZ-1, I came across a book titled *Blood on their hands* (1998) written by Kampamba Mulenga. This book offers an account of Lenshina that in some ways contradicts her narrative that is portrayed by NAZ-1 and the UNIP Archives. In Mulenga's perspective of the relations and frictions of the Lumpa Church and UNIP, he argues that Lenshina was merely refusing to succumb to an oppressive political system, while the UNIP was focused on acquiring power and maintaining their dominance. Additionally, Mulenga (1998) argues that the UNIP party members who were against Lenshina and her church actively attempted to erase her memory by discrediting her church. Mulenga (1988) attempts to redeem the legacy of the Lumpa Church and writes,

> In 1964, government unleashed soldiers on the Lumpa members… [this] book counteracts the 'blatant lies' that were circulated by UNIP about Lumpa Church members; that they (Lumpa Church) rebelled against the government and became a law unto themselves, that they built unauthorised villages and that they smeared faeces on their bodies and drank urine. UNIP used this ridiculous propaganda in order to make the general public lose confidence in the members of the Lumpa Church, and justify the genocide (Mulenga 1998, ii)

1.6. *Zvemweya Nematongerwo*[17]: Nehanda Charhwe Nyakasikana's Story

Figure 1.30. In the centre of this photograph are four individuals found guilty of their involvement in the Shona - Ndebele Uprising of 1896-1897. From left to right, the four individuals include the spirit medium of Goronga, Charwe Nyakasikana (the spirit medium of Nehanda), vaMponga (another female medium about whom there is very little information) and Kaguvi-Gumboreshumba (standing behind Mbuya Nehanda). The photograph was taken in 1897, before they were hanged (1897). Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of the National Archives of Zimbabwe.

The struggle for independence in Zimbabwe is summarised in the *chiShona* word *chimurenga*, which translates as 'war of liberation' and is commonly used in reference to the Rhodesian Bush War that took place between 1964 and 1979. The interpretation of the word *chimurenga* has been expanded to explain struggles for human rights, political dignity, and social justice. The Rhodesian bush wars are categorised as part of the second *chimurenga*, while the first *chimurenga* (first war of independence) denotes the *chindunduma* (uprising) between the years 1896 and 1897, commonly referred to as the revolution against

[17] *Zvemweya Nematongerwo* is a *chiShona* phrase that loosely translates to of spirituality and politics (translation by Barnabas Ticha Muvhuti 2022).

colonialism, which is believed to have been stimulated by a woman named Charwe Nyakasikana, popularly referred to as Mbuya Nehanda (Fig. 1.6) (Charumbira 2008).

Nyakasikana (Fig. 1.6) is believed to have been a female reincarnation of Nyamhita Nehanda, and her roles within society included communicating with ancestors, making oracular declarations and facilitating traditional ceremonies that were thought to ensure rains and good harvests. Nyakasikana was well esteemed and held an influential religious and cultural position in the society she was part of in the 1800s as she was believed to facilitate communication between *Mwari* (God) and the people; she was both the voice of *Mwari* and the voice of the ancestors (Chigumadzi 2018; Charumbira 2008). Reports by writers such as Chigumadzi (2018), Charumbira (2008) suggest that when white settlers begun arriving in Mashonaland Province in the 1800s, spirit mediums in various sections of the land are said to have encouraged good relations between locals and Europeans. Mbuya Nehanda is believed to have advised the people in her society to not fear the newcomers but rather to be courteous and welcome them by offering them meat of a black cow (Chigumadzi 2018).

As the Europeans settled in, they began to take control of most aspects of life in Mashonaland and Matabeleland, such as the imposition of land and hut taxes on the local people. They also began to appropriate land, force locals into labour, control women, control trade and farming of cattle. This strained the good relations that were previously encouraged by spirit mediums, as locals began to revolt against the settlers' behaviour and impositions. After the imposition of a hut tax by European settlers in 1896, spirit mediums encouraged locals to stand up for themselves and to fight for their land. Spirit mediums such as Nehanda and Kaguvi (Figs. 1.6 and 1.30) preached messages of revolt and of war in Mashonaland. Their messages of war echoed the locals' disgruntlement and suggested that *Mwari* had implied that the cause of all the trouble that had come upon the land was because of the white settlers (Chigumadzi 2018) – essentially, according to the spirit mediums, Mwari declared that white settlers were the cause of suffering and had to be removed from Mashonaland. The mediums reassured the locals that Mwari would protect them and make them victorious in the war of liberation. In 1896 the black people in Southern Rhodesia revolted in what is today referred to as the first *chimurenga*, or the First War of Liberation (Charumbira 2008). In the following year, 1897, Mbuya Nehanda was captured by the colonial administration of the British South Africa Company (BSAC) (Fig. 1.6). She was tried, but as it would be difficult to prove that she

participated spiritually she was charged instead for ordering the murder of the Native Commissioner, Henry Hawkins Pollard. Men who had come forward as witnesses claimed that Nehanda had requested for Pollard's head to be chopped off, and a male jury found her guilty Pollard's murder. Mbuya Nehanda along with three other spirit mediums Kaguvi-Gumboreshumba, vaMponga and Goronga were sentenced to death by hanging (Ibid) (Fig. 1.30).

The spirit mediums were placed in holding cells and Father Richartz, a Catholic priest, was assigned to persuade the spirit mediums to convert to Christianity. In the priest's first attempt, he failed to convert all the spirit mediums except for Kaguvi-Gumboreshumba, whom he baptised as Dismas 'the good thief' before he was hanged. Eventually, all the other spirit mediums apart from Mbuya Nehanda agreed to convert and were subsequently hanged. Nehanda refused to convert and expressed her wishes to be returned to Mazoe to die there (Chirumbaira 2008: 129). Fr. Richartz described Mbuya Nehanda's behaviour on the day before she was hanged as strange, to the extent to which he could do nothing for her. Father Richartz writes,

> However, when in the evening about 6 o'clock I saw her (Mbuya Nehanda) again and in the presence of Victor, who tried his best to persuade her to listen to me, told her that she was to die the next morning (27 April 1897), she began to behave like a mad woman. She took her blankets and wished to leave the cell, and when told to remain and keep quiet, she refused and said she would never endure being locked up. When I saw nothing could be done with her, I went away with Victor, and Nehanda began to dance, to laugh and to talk so that the warders were obliged to tie her hands and watch her continually, as she threatened to kill herself (Fr. Richartz 1897 in Charumbira 2008: 130).

Ruramisai Chirumbaira (2008: 129–130) suggests that Nehanda's reaction as presented in Father Richartz's narration was not at all strange or that of a person that is mentally beaten down in psychiatric madness, but rather it seems more as an expression of anger and dissension. Chirumbaira (2008: 129–130) argues that it was insulting and disrespectful that a woman of Mbuya Nehanda's status had been accused of crimes that she had denied (the killing of Pollard) and was reduced to being put in a small cell while she waited to be killed in an undignified and inhumane way. It is reported that Mbuya Nehanda, before the priest left

her in the cell, said to him *'mapfupa angu achamuka'* which translates to English as 'my bones will rise again'. The next day, 28 April 1897, the spirit mediums were hanged and died. Figure 1.30 is a photograph of Nehanda along with three other individuals who were blamed for taking leading roles in the revolution of 1896 and 1897. It was taken to display the success of the BSAC in capturing and killing spirit mediums and ending the first *chimurenga* (Chirumbaira 2008). The skulls of the mediums photographed in Figure 1.30 were packaged and sent to England as trophies.

1.6.1. Her Bones Will Rise Again: Traces of Memories of Mbuya Nehanda in the 21st Century

When I visited the NAZ-2 in early 2019, I noticed that there was a printed photograph of Mbuya (Fig. 1.6) displayed in the foyer along with photographs of other individuals who had played significant roles in the history of Zimbabwe. The photograph had the following caption placed beneath it:

> Mbuya Nehanda and Sekuru Kagavi after they were arrested[18]

There is no information about the photographer or the date this image was photographed. This photograph is symbolic of the of the *chimurenga* in Zimbabwean history. It is generally supposed that Mbuya Nehanda and the other mediums were unfairly tried and killed by the colonial government. Charumbira (2008) considers an account of a woman identified only as 'the Zambezi woman' that was deemed as incredible at Mbuya Nehanda's trial. In highlighting the privilege that is accorded masculine voices and the need to consider and validate women's voices as credible historic sources, Charumbira (2008: 19) writes this in reference to the Zambezi woman:

> Her piece of evidence is just as important as all others mentioned (in Mbuya Nehanda's trial) … because it tells us of how women sought ways to reshape their lives at that turbulent moment of the struggle for power in an African land that was becoming that was becoming a British colony. By denying the woman's voice [the Zambezi woman], women's voices are rendered irrelevant to the discourse, and if relevant, in need of

[18] Transcribed exactly as captioned in the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ-2).

> verification by patriarchal standards by those that created the archive in the nineteenth century and those that use it to write narratives in our time (Charumbira 2008: 19).

Beyond the NAZ-2, memories of Mbuya Nehanda can be traced in the arts and popular culture such as music, theatre and film. Her memories are also embedded in the city of Harare where there is a monuments constructed in her honour as well as roads named after her. In the recent past, there has been an emergence of conversations and debates about possibly repatriating the remains of Nehanda Charwe Nyakasikana and other liberation heroes from Britain and back to Zimbabwe[19]. The remains of Nyakasikana are suspected to be part of the over twenty thousand collection of human remains that are in the custody of London's Natural History Museum located on Cromwell Road and Akeman Street (https://www.nhm.ac.uk). According to the museum, their extensive collection of human remains consists of eleven Zimbabwean individuals (https://www.returningheritage.com/where-is-the-skull-of-mbuya-nehanda). The London's Natural History Museum insists that there is not enough evidence to support the assertion that Mbuya Nehanda's remains are among the eleven because the remains were donated between the 19th and 20th centuries and cannot be directly linked to the first chimurenga in the 1800s (Ibid).

[19] Shingi Mavima's Contextualising the Politicisation of Nehanda's Legacy in the Post-Mugabe Era (2021) in the book Raising Her Bones (2021) offers detailed insight into the complications and controversies surrounding ongoing dialogues about the repatriations of Mbuya Nehanda's remains and history.

1.7. A Discussion of Photographs Associated with Margaret Dongo

Figure 1.31. *Zimbabwe: Independent Margaret Dongo Wins By-Election* (1995), video still 00:00:44, 00:02:09:24. Video sourced from: Associated Press Archives, http://www.aparchive.com/metadata/youtube/a9a797444993c633157a76ebb8189d33

Figure 1.32. *Zimbabwe: Independent Margaret Dongo Wins By Election* (1995), video still 00:01:01, 00:02:09:24. Video sourced from: Associated Press Archives, http://www.aparchive.com/metadata/youtube/a9a797444993c633157a76ebb8189d33

> I feel very happy to be part of the change of the system in Zimbabwe, and I feel very happy to be the first independent woman to stand the parliamentary election and win. And, I am going to be the first independent parliamentary in our house of assembly, you know, our system has never been challenged and it has (now) been challenged by a woman, and I have won in court. And I have gone further in actual fact to prove them the point.
>
> (Margaret Dongo in *Zimbabwe: Independent Margaret Dongo Wins By Election*, 1995, from 00:00:44 to 00:00:58, http://www.aparchive.com/metadata/youtube/a9a797444993c633157a76ebb8189d33)

Margaret Dongo (Figs. 1.7, 1.31 and 1.32) is a Zimbabwean politician who was born in 1960 in Southern Rhodesia. She is the founder of a political party known as the Zimbabwe Union of Democrats (ZUD) and she was a guerrilla fighter in the 1970s liberation war (the second *chimurenga*). Dongo joined the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) (Figs. 1.33 and 1.34) at the age of fifteen and went to train as a nurse at Chimoio Military Training Camp (Fig. 1.35). At the camp her job involved assisting combatants in platoons in the Tete Province in Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique) (Sadomba and Dzinesa 2004; Lyons and Israel 2017). After Zimbabwean independence in 1980, Dongo formed the

Zimbabwe War Veterans Association (ZWVA) in 1989 to give voice to veterans who had been marginalised after the war of liberation (Lyons 2004).

Figure 1.32. *Training women fighters in ZANLA* (undated). Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of the national archives of Zimbabwe.

Figure 1.33. *ZANLA woman combatant in Mozambique* (undated). Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of the National Archives of Zimbabwe.

Figure 1.35. *Taking care of the sick in Mozambique* (undated). Photographer unknown, photograph courtesy of the National Archives of Zimbabwe.

Between 1983 and 1990, Dongo (Figs. 1.7, 1.31 and 1.32) was an intelligence field officer for the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF). Her roles involved

developing and executing government policies to facilitate intelligence functions and enhance national defence. In the early 1990s she resigned from the ZANU-PF to become an independent politician. In 1995 she stood as an independent candidate against the ZANU-PF's Vivian Mwashita in the parliamentary elections. According to Dongo in multiple interviews she has participated in, the government had initially declared Mwashita as the winner (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CH5U_ntK_OM&t=9s). Dongo requested a recount of the votes, and she won the election (Figs 1.31 and 1.32). The following year Dongo attempted to run for presidency in, but unfortunately was below the minimum age requirement to be a presidential candidate.

There is not a great deal of literature or photographs inside the NAZ-2 that provides a detailed elucidation of Dongo's involvement in the war of liberation inside the NAZ-2 or the ZANU-PF Archives. In fact, there is absolutely no photograph or information that is specifically about Dongo in both of the Zimbabwean archives to the extent that she is arguably not just invisible inside these archives but is indeed absent. However, there are traces of her narrative that exist beyond the archives in the form of interviews that she continues to participate in, newspaper clippings and video clips that are part of the Associated Press (AP) Archives (www.aparchive.com). Dongo is also a popular of multiple tabloids in Zimbabwe. There is also not much available information about her private life; even in the interviews she speaks largely about her public self and her engagements within the Zimbabwean political sphere. The biographical information in this chapter centralises Dongo's voice by stringing together information largely from an interview in which she speaks about herself on a show called *In Conversation with Trevor*. The conversation is available on the YouTube channel that can be accessed via this link https://www.youtube.com/@InConversationwithTrevor.

How did Dongo get to the place where she felt the need to challenge the independence political party, given that when Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980, she too was a member of the ZANU-PF? When Dongo returned from the war, she worked as a central intelligence officer and served in various parliamentary committees, including the public accounts committee and the committee on indigenisation. She was sponsored by the then first lady of Zimbabwe, Sally Mugabe, to pursue secretarial courses at the polytechnic in Harare. Dongo (2022) credits much of her political career to Sally Mugabe and states that she learnt

about politics and was exposed to the plight of many Zimbabweans when she worked with her alongside other women such as amai Munyathi and amai Takawira. Dongo (2022) states that she used to accompany Sally Mugabe to political rallies where she would take notes of what the first lady would promise to do for the people; and when they returned to their offices, Dongo would hold the first lady accountable (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CH5U_ntK_OM&t=9s).

'*Margaret, have you noticed that female combatants are suffering a lot, very little has been done to improve the lives of comrades*', Sally Mugabe said to Dongo one day. Dongo (2022) says she agreed with the first lady's words, adding that she had also noticed that some women walked long distances, sometimes barefoot, to attend their political rallies (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CH5U_ntK_OM&t=9s). Following her conversation with Sally Mugabe, Dongo proceeded to attempt to form a women ex-combatants association. The association faced some organisational challenges and unfortunately did not workout at the time. Eventually, in 1989 Dongo aided the foundation of the War Veterans Association (WVA), which advocated for the compensation of ex-combatants and the inclusion of women in politics (http://www.africanfeministforum.com/margaret-dongo/). Dongo continued to notice that some members of the newly ruling party were corrupt, and she began to actively oppose and expose them for abuse of office. Consequently, she defected and left the ruling political party to participate in politics in an independent capacity. As she navigated the political terrain over time, she was often threatened by some members of ZANU-PF, and there several attempts to kill her by setting ablaze her home and she was defamed in the media (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CH5U_ntK_OM&t=9s).

> When we fought for the liberation, we were not fighting to remove the colour skin whatever it is, we were fighting to remove the evil spirit that was oppressing the blacks … I didn't expect to have a situation like we have now where we have our own blacks being the terrible exploiters of their own (Dongo in Zimbabwe: General Election Campaign (2015), AP Archive, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XxQyiFMxtmo).

After she broke away from the ZANU-PF, Dongo embarked on her political career as an independent politician who often challenged the ZANU-PF's leadership and encouraged women to participate in political activities. She encouraged women to challenge the

autonomy of authority by the male dominated ZANU-PF emphasising that one of the ways for women to do this was to vote. In a documentary clip posted on YouTube by the Associated Press (AP) Archive (2005), Dongo is recorded addressing women and saying,

> Mugabe is running the country … Think about it, he is running the country, the country is in his hands, nobody else and that is the type of monopoly that we have given to Mugabe … What is the empowerment we are talking about? We go and kneel! And yet we say we want to empower ourselves. Why don't we show those men, because those men that won the primary election were voted by majority women (Margaret Dongo in Zimbabwe: General Election Campaign (2015), AP Archive, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XxQyiFMxtmo).

In the quote above Dongo addresses the media following her victory in the elections for member of parliament of Harare South in 1995 were she stood as an independent candidate against ZANU-PF's Mwashita. Dongo says that initially the election results showed that she had lost, and that the ZANU-PF candidate had won. She continues to narrate about how she contested the vote count and challenged the result claiming that there was voter rigging by the ruling party. The votes were re-examined, and it was revealed that there were defects in the electoral roll showing that at least 41% of the registered voters on the roll were incorrect with many voters being non-residents of Harare South. There was a re-run of the elections, and Dongo emerged victorious with more than three quarters of the vote and became the first independently elected member of parliament in Zimbabwe (Figs. 1.31 and 1.32).

After her victory in the 1995 parliamentary elections, Dongo formed the political party the ZUD with ambitions of standing against Mugabe for the presidency. The ZUD collaborated with a political party known as the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in the hopes of jointly opposing the ZANU-PF in 2000 (Ndlovu and Mutale 2013). The two parties, the ZUD and the MDC, had disagreements and separated, and neither of the two parties were unable to win by the national elections by themselves against the ZANU-PF. Dongo continued challenging the government and advocating for the inclusion of women in the political arena, often facing much opposition and resistance from both the society and the government (Ibid).

In January of 2016 Dongo's house in Ridgeview, Harare was set on fire by unidentified individuals who threw petrol bombs through the windows. In an article in the Daily News Newspaper (2016), Dongo actually states that this was not the first time experiencing such an attack. Dongo says,

> That was an attempt on my life, … I am not surprised as this is not the first time that this has happened to me. In August 1995, I survived a petrol bomb attack in St Mary's (Chitungwiza) … I had another similar experience in Sunningdale the following year. It could be that they are trying to instil fear in me because of my work as a political activist. Still, one asks why me and why has it happened in such a way. All this also causes one to ask where we can go where they cannot follow us. And when you live in fear in your country it hurts badly. I participated in the liberation struggle like many others, and I wonder whether this is the thank you I'm getting (Dongo in the Daily News Newspaper 2016: https://www.pindula.co.zw/Margaret_Dongo).

This quote is particularly intriguing because when I was in NAZ-2 (which are controlled by the state) in 2019, I was unable to find any photographs of Dongo. The absence of any materials relating to Dongo inside the NAZ-2 is remarkably consistent, as I also could not find any photographic evidence associated to her in the ZANU-PF Archives either. The absence of Dongo's narrative in the NAZ-2 in some ways reflects an attempt to erase her history; essentially it can be viewed as an attack on her life as she has said in the article, and also on history and memory.

1.8. Teurai Ropa: A Visual Biography of Joice 'Teurai Ropa' Mujuru

Figure 1.36. A series of three photographs of Zimbabwe's vice president Joice Mujuru answering questions during an interview in her office at President Robert Mugabe's ruling ZANU-PF party headquarters, 19 January 2006, in Harare, Zimbabwe (2006). Photographer unknown. Photograph sourced from STR/AFP via Getty Images.

Joice Mujuru (Figs. 1.1, 1.5 and 1.36), like Margaret Dongo is a Zimbabwean politician and an ex-combatant who participated in the war of liberation in Southern Rhodesia[20]. Her maiden name is Joice Runaida Mugari and she was born on 15th April 1955 in Mount Darwin District in Mashonaland Central province. She attended Howard High School, which is a missionary centre supported by the Salvation Army in Nyachuru village in the Mazowe district and which is also the region where Mbuya Nehanda lived in the 1800s. In 1973, she joined the ZANLA and was trained in the camp located in Zambia. The following year she returned home and participated in the Rhodesian Bush War where she supposedly shot down a helicopter on 17th February 1974, before taking on the nick name, *Teurai Ropa*, which translates from *Chishona* to English as to 'spill blood' (Tendi 2016) (Fig. 1.37). She later became a commander in the ZANLA at Chimoio military and refugee camp that was based in Mozambique (Lyons and Israel 2017).

[20] See the second anecdote in the beginning this chapter.

Figure 1.37. ZANU-PF's Secretary for Women's Affairs, Comrade Teurai Ropa (undated). Photographer unknown. Photograph sourced from Associated Press (AP) Archives (www.aparchive.com).

In 1977, Joice Runaida Mugari married Solomon Mujuru[21] (b.1945–d.2011), a military officer largely recognised for leading an army in the second *chimurenga* and as a politician in post-independence Zimbabwe. It is often argued that she was a beneficiary of her husband's influence in the ZANU-PF and in the army (Tendi 2016; Mangena 2022). This way of presenting women's pollical activities is neither new nor unique to Mujuru, as political narratives of other women such as Chibesakunda Kankasa (Fig. 1.3) are also sometimes presented only in relation to their husbands. Quite often such narrations are simplistic and

[21] Solomon Mujuru (Rex Nhongo) was the army chief until 1995 when he became the member of parliament for Chikomba as a member of the Zanu-PF political party (https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14550942).

misogynistic, as they often neglect women's participation in the struggle and foreground men by assuming that the only way for women to be involved in the struggle is only through their husbands. Some women participated in different capacities, and sometimes on their own terms. In the case of Mujuru, it is almost ridiculous to argue that she participated in the independence struggle because of her husband, because she had already gone to train as a combatant and had even risen to become a commander in one of the ZANLA camps before she was married. This is not to say that the Mujuru couple did not work together and possibly encourage one another, they probably did. But, to credit her involvement in the armed struggle solely to her marriage to Solomon Mujuru in some ways takes away from her achievements.

After Zimbabwean independence in 1980, Joice Mujuru was one of the popular individuals within ZANU-PF and held several positions within the newly elected government. She was celebrated by the political party, who based her heroism largely on her activity of shooting down a helicopter in the war. In 2004, she was appointed as the vice president of the country (Fig. 1.36) but would later be accused of plotting to assassinate the president of Zimbabwe. In 2014, Mujuru was expelled from the ZANU-PF and she lost both her position in the party leadership and post as vice president of the country (Tendi 2016; Mangena 2022).

After her expulsion from the ZANU-PF, Joice Mujuru formed a party known as the Zimbabwe People First (ZPF) in 2016. In 2017, she formed yet another political party called the National People's Party (NPP). Her political parties were generally small in comparison to the ZANU-PF and had a low probability of winning the presidential elections. Consequently, she proposed a syndicate of other similar smaller parties and stood as a presidential candidate in the 2018 elections under the banner of the People's Rainbow Coalition (PRC) (Mangena 2022) (Fig. 1.38). The PRC did not amass enough support during the elections for various reasons. One of the dominant reasons the coalition did not succeed was that much of Zimbabwean society still heavily associated Mujuru with ZANU-PF, which had over the years gained a negative reputation of being corrupt and violent to civilians. Current and former ZANU-PF members are generally perceived to be corrupt and abusive and are said to have taken the country for themselves ever since independence (Ibid).

Figure 1.38. Joice Mujuru, former vice president and leader of the Zimbabwean opposition party ZimPF (Zimbabwe People First), delivers an address in Mamelodi on September 17, 2016. Mujuru's visit is to encourage South African based Zimbabweans to vote for her party (2016). Photographs by John Wessels. Photographs courtesy of AFP via Getty Images.

Similar to Dongo (Fig. 1.7) there is no photographic evidence Joice Mujuru participating in the war for liberation inside either the NAZ-2 or the ZANU-PF Archives. When I was in Harare in 2019, I had several conversations about Mujuru’s absence from the national archives with various individuals and quite often I received opposing views about her reputation. Many of the individuals interviewed showed a lack of confidence in her with an underlying rhetoric that her unpopularity stemmed from her prior relations and associations with the independence political party. Part of the society felt that when Joice Mujuru was a member of ZANU-PF she had also participated in the corrupt activities by the party and did not oppose the injustices they inflicted on the broader Zimbabwean society after independence. Others used the *term ZANU- chiwororo* to describe her fate. *ZANU- chiwororo* is a colloquial term that is used to say, ‘the ZANU-PF will ultimately betray you’ (Muchemwa 2023). People who use the term in relation to Joice Mujuru believe that she is a victim of the political party because after she was expelled from ZANU-PF, the government soon retracted the narrative of her heroism in the war and presented a story in which Mujuru was cast as a threat to the ideals of nationalism by threating the president’s life.

In years after 2014 many politicians and state-controlled media in Zimbabwe objected the narrative of Joice Mujuru’s participation in the war of liberation. Defaming newspaper articles, political rallies and slanderous speeches were made to ridicule her. Statements such as, ‘*She was not bright! Aah, don’t forget she came in to represent the women’s bloc … it was about representing women; she came from the women and the President had to oblige.*’ (The Herald 2016) and ‘*She has betrayed women. She can’t be a female leader. She is back to*

being led by men, even those at the very deep end of their wits' (The Herald 2017) were made in public spaces such as parliament meetings and in the national news on Zimbabwean television channels. Beyond such derogatory proclamations, the media further presented Joice Mujuru as a person who is 'anti-women and pro-men', suggesting that she preferred to work with masculine political acquaintances such as Morgan Tsvangirai, who was the president of the political party known as the MDC.

While the attempts by the ZANU-PF were aimed at discrediting Joice Mujuru's political career, they also incidentally make a mockery of the idea of women's participation in the struggle for independence. In Zimbabwe, women's involvement in liberation movements – whether by way of the ZANLA or the ZIPRA – is framed on the premise of gender equality by the very same independence political party that was heavily involved in discrediting, undoing and erasing a specific woman's efforts. '*Pakati penyu pane achandipandukira'* is a *Chishona* phrase that translates as 'there are some among you who would betray me'. This phrase is taken from a song that the ZANU-PF Women's League sang while in war and is also the title of Zimbabwean hymn in the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church version of this song can be accessed on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qlTCgmAa4FQ.

Joice Mujuru's narrative is heavily associated to the ZANU-PF to an extent that her own voice remains unheard. To close sub-section on Joice Mujuru, I highlight portions of Tim Sebastian's interview on https://www.dw.com/en/did-zimbabwes-former-vp-joice-mujuru-turn-a-blind-eye-on-human-rights-violations/a-37890617. In the interview, Sebastian does not have a discussion with Joice Mujuru, but rather speaks over her and does not allow her to finish her sentences or responses. He interrogates her and accuses her for not speaking out against the ZANU – PF government, while simultaneously not allowing her to speak in the very same way the archives and the Zimbabwean state have silenced her. Sebastions blames her for crimes off the Zimbabwean state while she was still a member of the ZANU-PF and assumes that she had power as a vice president to reprimand and give or refuse directives from the government executive. As there are no archival photographs directly associated to Joice Mujuru, in which one is able to see or hear her, I use text as image. Joice Mujuru's words in the following transcription of sections of the interview are in bold italic.

> Tim Sebastion (T.S): … you were a willing and senior member of a regime that perpetrated grave human rights abuses …

Joice Mujuru (J.M): … it is a fact. It is known that there is a lot that has and is still going on in Zimbabwe … I am here to make people see that, yes, I was there, but I was an individual …

T.S: … you were vice president … you were even acting president at one point …

J.M: … but did you hear that anybody was killed while I was acting president … in 2008, I went to mount Darwin to ask them who directed them to kill people …

T.S: … but you did nothing to stop them …

J.M: … I was not an executive … there are executive orders which are carried out which nobody can stop … I could not stop it …

T.S: … according to the Washington Post's account, women were stripped and beaten so viciously that sections of flesh fell from their buttocks. Many had to lie face down in hospital beds during weeks of recovery. Men's genitals became targets. The official post-mortem report on Chaomwa opposition activist Alec Chiriseri listed crushed genitals among the cause of death. This is what your party was doing while you were vice president, and they were stealing the election …

J.M: My party is NPP …

T.S: … it maybe now, but you were ZANU – PF … you have no shame, do you? Women were beaten viciously … you have no shame, no regret, no humanity ….

J.M: … I regret a lot …

T.S: … you claimed that you were uncomfortable with it … just a little bit uncomfortable with brutality of that scale, with women beaten so bad that their flesh fell away from their buttocks … that made you just a little bit uncomfortable as a Christian politician …

J.M: … the choice of words to use how you feel, maybe best known and understood by those who are good at that language … we want peace, truth and reconciliation ….

T.S: … you want the easy way out …

J.M: … we are trying to workout solutions …

T.S: … Rashid Mahiya who is the boss of Heal Zimbabwe, says you were one of the biggest beneficiaries of your party system, patronage, and its widespread use of political violence. He says you are rewriting history, exaggerating your reformist credentials. 'We want her to come clean with the past,' he said. The ZANU – PF colour and paint that she is associated with does not go away …

J.M: … I have been in ZANU – PF since the days of the struggle … that is no secret …

T.S: … what use are you to Zimbabwe? You are a person who did not ask, wasn't curious, didn't know, turned a blind eye. What use are you to Zimbabwe …

J.M: … you are failing to hear what I am saying … it could have been a drowned voice of Joice Mujuru, but I asked …

(https://www.dw.com/en/did-zimbabwes-former-vp-joice-mujuru-turn-a-blind-eye-on-human-rights-violations/a-37890617)

1.9. Conclusion

The stories of Joice Mujuru, Dongo, Mbuya Nehanda, Lenshina, Chibesakunda Kankasa and Chikamoneka all reveal that the dominant national liberation narratives in both Zambia and Zimbabwe are not only curated by the independence political parties, but also that they are also politically controlled by the state. Some of the women's stories such as Chibesakunda Kankasa and Mbuya Nehanda, and even Mujuru at one point, can be argued to have been included as part of the dominant liberation narrative while others such as Dongo and Lenshina have been marginalised since the attainment of independence. There is no clear distinction between how much of each of these women's visual narratives are included or removed, displaced and even forgotten.

There are complexities that are specific to each one of the six women's stories explored in this chapter that arguably suggest that the dominant liberation narrative excludes some aspects of

history while simultaneously glorifying other aspects. In this chapter I have reconstructed a visual archive that focuses on selected women who participated in liberation movements in Northern Rhodesia/ Zambia and Southern Rhodesia/ Zimbabwe as a way of going against the grain of erasure. This chapter does not restore all women's narratives back into the historical record, it does not even fully restore the narratives of Joice Mujuru, Dongo, Mbuya Nehanda, Lenshina, Chibesakunda Kankasa and Chikamoneka. Even so, it contributes sufficiently to the independence narrative by filling in some archival gaps.

Chapter Two

Looking Up: A Critical Investigation of the Veneration of Masculine Led Narratives in Independence Monuments and Memorials in Zambia and Zimbabwe

> The genre of public monuments has traditionally been strongly male dominated … the official memory landscape is, in theory, aimed at reflecting cultural diversity and gender inclusiveness, but is in practice still dominated by the proliferation of monuments and statues dedicated to African male leader figures (Marschall 2010, 261).

Figure 2.1. The National Heroes' Acre in Harare, Zimbabwe (2017). Photograph by Tycho A. van der Hoog. Photograph sourced from *North Korean monuments in southern Africa: Legitimizing party rule through the National Heroes' Acres in Zimbabwe and Namibia* (2017).
Figure 2.2. The Freedom Statue in Lusaka, Zambia (2022). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

I begin this chapter in a physical position in which I have to look up to see larger than life statues that are securely positioned on pedestals that are taller than me. Just outside of Harare in Zimbabwe, I am on a hilltop at a place known as the National Heroes Acre (NHA) (Fig. 2.1). Here, I am standing on polished granite and looking up at a large sculpture of soldiers and what seems to be a flame on top of a narrow structure reaching out to the sky. On each of my sides are large bronze relief sculptures placed on at least eight meters high free-standing walls made of granite. The images on the relief sculptures tell a story that transitions from battle to elation and two specific visuals stood out to me; firstly, embossed in bronze is an image of a woman lying on the ground while being attacked by a dog and a policeman. The

other on my left-hand side, is a portrayal of a silhouette of a man raised above a triumphant crowd. As I make my way around this monument, I see graves made of black granite rectangles arranged in rows. These are graves of Zimbabwean heroes, I am told.

In Zambia I am within the heart of the capital city, Lusaka. I have made my way through Great East Road, moved along Cairo Road and gone passed a round-about with a waterless fountain that has a statue of an eagle at its pinnacle. An eagle in flight is the national symbol for freedom in Zambia. I have navigated my way through the city to find myself standing in front of The Freedom Statue (Fig. 2.2) along the Independence Avenue. Here I am standing amid people walking along paths, sitting, and laying down on the lawns around a bronze statue of a man that stands on an approximately two-meter pedestal made of stone and concrete. Independence Avenue is busy as many vehicles and bicycles pass by. Across the road is a busy market area known as Kamwala (which means a small stone). From where I am standing, I am facing the word 'FREEDOM' that is inscribed on a pedestal made out of a large stone that the bronze statue of a man stands on. There are pieces of red, orange, green and black cloth placed around the statue. These pieces of cloth that were left behind after Independence Day celebrations. The pieces of cloth gently move along to the rhythm of almost still wind on a sunny day.

The physical structures of the NHA (Fig. 2.1) and The Freedom Statue (Fig. 2.2) are different, but their function is remarkably similar as they both act as physical reminders of lives lost in national independence struggles (Samwanda 2013; Van der Hoog 2017). They are landmarks that symbolise pride and heritage, and they both exist because of the will to immortalise particular moments in history. Beyond and above encapsulating historically important epochs, they both function as public signifiers of victory over British colonial oppression and largely communicate narratives of heroism and patriotism to various social groups across time and several generations (Marschall 2009 and 2010).

Sabine Marschall's *How to Honour a Woman: Gendered Memorialisation in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (2010) quoted in the beginning of this chapter, critically analyses complexities relating to representations of gender in selected public monuments, memorials and statues in South Africa. Marschall (2010) focusses her inquiry on public commemorative structures that were constructed to honour women in order to elucidate the problematics that are embedded

in such structures for the South African context. She argues that majority of the monuments that commemorate women tend to emphasize on conceptions (or misconceptions) of traditional gender roles[22] in their designs. This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the critical role of independence monuments in Zambia and Zimbabwe in the formation and perpetuation of masculine and monolithic narratives about the era of liberation in two former British colonies known as Northern and Southern Rhodesia (now Zambia and Zimbabwe).

The discussion in this chapter focusses around the NHA (Fig. 2.1) that is situated in the outskirts of Harare which is the capital city of Zimbabwe and The Freedom Statue (Fig. 2.2) that stands along the Independence Avenue in Lusaka, Zambia. Based on a close reading and analysis of the artworks (statues and bronze relief sculptures) and public performances that happen within and around the two independence monuments, this chapter argues that the national memory of independence in the two countries inclines towards valorising narratives that pit largely white men as oppressors and black men as victims and heroes of colonialism. Stories about colonialism are often told from the perspective of men as can be seen in the poem *Black Orpheus*[23] (Satre 1988; 13 to 52), which was initially written as a preface to Leopold Sedar Senghor's anthropology of black poets (Irele 1964: 13). *Black Orpheus* (1988) tells of the intimate and social experiences of a black male poet during the French revolutionary era, and it begins with Jean Paul Satre (1988), as a white man, addressing other white men as oppressors of black men. The poem begins as follows,

> When you removed the gag that was keeping these black mouths shut, what were you hoping for? That they would sing your praises? Did you think that when they raised themselves up again, you would read adoration in the eyes of these heads that our fathers had forced to the very ground? Here are black men standing, looking at us, and I hope that you – like me – will

[22] In the introduction of this PhD thesis I use the question '*Am I setting a table for a dinner party or laying the foundation of a building?*' to point how roles are categorised by gender within the context of Lusaka. For further reading on gendered roles, see *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses* (1997) by Oyèrónkẹ́ Oyěwùmí, *Holy Motherhood: Gender, Dynasty and Visual Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (2008) by Elizabeth L'Estrange, *Towards 'Radical Contemporaneity in African Art History: The 'Glocal' Facet of a Kinship-Based Artistic genre* (2008) by Gitti Salami and *Gender: A Historical Perspective* (2017) by Paola Giuliano.

[23] The term 'orpheus' in Jean Paul Satre's (1988) poem is drawn from Greek mythology and refers to the name of a God who was a poet and musician and who almost rescued his wife Eurydice by charming Pluto and Persephone through playing his lyre (harp) (Bowra 1952).

> feel the shock of being seen. For three thousand years the white man has enjoyed the privilege of seeing without being seen … Today these black men are looking at us, and our gaze comes back to our own eyes (Satre 1988: 13).

Sartre's (1988: 13) statement positions black men as both victims and victors of colonialism, while white men are presented as executors of the colonial agenda. I think that it is quite alright to position white men as perpetrators of the imperialist schema and black men as conquerors of colonisation, however, my point of contention is that placing only men as oppressors, victims and heroes in narratives about colonialisation poses something of a concern in relation to the ways in which women become unseen and unrepresented in such articulations of histories that are associated to black people and Africa. Additionally, in this chapter, I submit that men are generally presented as brave and patriotic, while women are portrayed more in supportive roles within the context of the NHA (Fig. 2.1) and The Freedom Statue (Fig. 2.2). Both the NHA and The Freedom Statue were commissioned by male leaders of the independence political parties, the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU – PF) in Zimbabwe and the United National Independence Party (UNIP) in Zambia, to honour the lives of freedom fighters and as symbolic gestures that provide narratives of victory against British colonial rule. Although the two monuments are framed around historicising the independence struggle as a noble cause of the patriotism of men and women, I argue that they largely overlook actions performed by women and enunciate nationalist party leaders as 'strong men'. I further insist that the NHA and The Freedom Statue reflect political influences in the (re)constructions of national history and memory through annual commemorations that are facilitated by the state.

The NHA and The Freedom Statue are situated within the public space where they are accessible and visible fixtures within the landscape. The NHA in particular is enormous covering land mass larger than an acre, and it is elevated above the city of Harare as it sits on hilltop. The Freedom Statue covers approximately five squared metres piece of land and is comparably much smaller in size than the NHA. It is situated in the centre of the city in proximity to buildings that host government offices and a densely populated market area across the road. Both of these monuments can be seen by anyone but there are varying degrees of restrictions relating to who can get close enough to touch the artworks that form part of the monuments. The Freedom statue for instance, despite its vicinity within a section

of a city where there is constant movement of people, is fenced and access to the pedestal is reserved to a select few such as the president during special events. The NHA is guarded such that although the monument is in the public space, the public's interaction with the monument is, for the lack of a better term, controlled.

2.1. Standing in the Midst of Statues of Men: A Discussion of the Statue of Mbuya Nehanda

Monuments ('*μνημόσυνον*' or '*mnemosyne*') by definition relate to something that brings to memory. They are often constructed to commemorate notable epochs or individuals and are usually associated with triumph. Memorials on the other hand normally embody grief or loss and are usually assembled as graves that honour specific people (Sturken 1998: 164). Although there are some differences between monuments and memorials, the two are often interwoven and merged within the same spaces that are designed to commemorate individuals who are connected to similar historical events. National monuments and memorials are typically constructed as larger than life structures in public or communal spaces as emblematic structures that not only connect the past, present and future, but also as way of distinguishing heroes amongst civilians (Marschall 2006, 178).

There is a dearth of memorials and monuments that are etched into the Zambian and Zimbabwean landscapes that are specifically designed to commemorate women's involvement in the liberation struggles that occurred from the 1950s to 1980s as discussed in the subsection titled Historical and Political Context in the earlier pages of this dissertation. The only public structure that memorialises women in both countries as of 2022, is the approximately three-meter-high statue of Mbuya Nehanda[24] (Fig. 2.3) that was unveiled by the Zimbabwean government in 2021. Mbuya Nehanda (or Charwe Nyakasikana) is a female iconic figure who is said to have stimulated the revolution against white settlers in the 1800s in then Zimbabwe (Charumbira 2008; Chigumadzi 2018). The bronze figurative structure of Mbuya Nehanda (Fig. 2.3) that stands on a circular platform and was modelled referencing two archival pictures that were taken by colonial officers (Figs. 2.4 and 2.5). In the first

[24] Refer to subsection 1.6 in Chapter one of this doctoral dissertation to read about Mbuya Nehanda.

image (Fig. 2.4), Mbuya Nehanda was photographed after she was arrested in 1897 along with another spirit medium who is popularly referred to as Sekuru Kagavi, while the second is a photograph was taken before she and other spirit mediums known as Sekuru Kagavi, vaMponga and Goronga were hanged to death following a guilty verdict by the court (Fig. 2.5). The spirit mediums were accused and tried for inciting the uprising against white settlers in Mashonaland in the 1800s.

Figure 2.3. The Statue of Nehanda Charwe Nyakasikana in Harare (2021). Photograph by Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi, photograph courtesy of Zimbabwe Live.

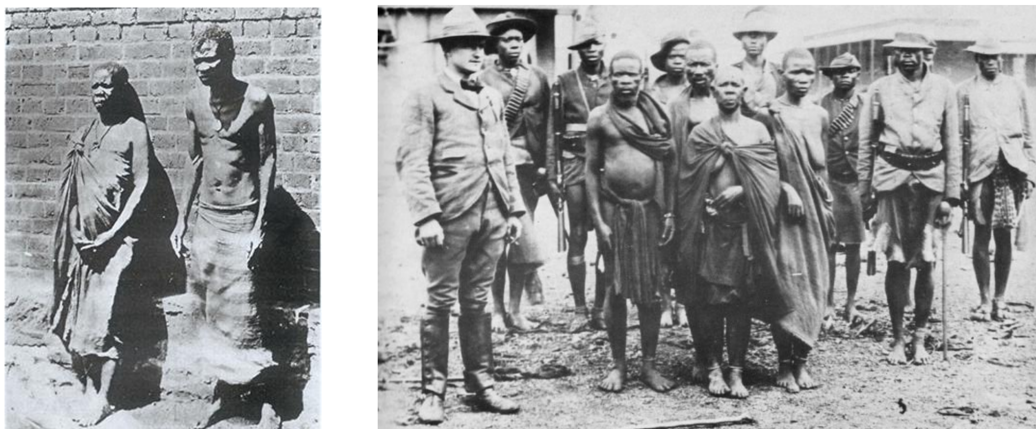

Figure 2.4. Archival photograph of Mbuya Nehanda and Sekuru Kagavi after their arrest in 1896 (1896). Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of The National Archives of Zimbabwe.

Figure 2.5. Archival photograph of the four spirit mediums before they were hanged to death. Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of the National Archives of Zimbabwe.

The Statue of Mbuya Nehanda was produced by Zimbabwean politician and artist David Mutasa who also made the Zimbabwe Bird sculpture that is outside the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe as well as the statue of Sekuru Kaguvi for the Parliament of Zimbabwe (https://www.pindula.co.zw/David_Mutasa). Mutasa has made several figurative sculptures of historic figures such as Herbert Chitepo and Maurice Nyagumbo. He also sculpted the four busts of Prince Charles of England that were presented to the Zimbabwe High Commission in London in 1990 to mark Zimbabwe's 10th independence anniversary and a Statue of the Unknown Soldier[25] that is located at the fifteen-story high-rise building used as the headquarters of the ZANU-PF (Ibid).

The Statue of Mbuya Nehanda portrays Nyakasikana holding her hands together with a cloth covered around her shoulders and shackles positioned around both of her ankles. The statue is located at the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe where it can be argued to be geographically misplaced. This memorial is surrounded by controversy largely stemming from the society's perceptions that the governments priorities at the time of unveiling the statue were misplaced. In the year 2021, as well as the previous years, there was economic and social turmoil in Zimbabwe, and many believed that the construction of The Mbuya Nehanda Statue reflected the Zimbabwean government's attempt to co-opt the history of Nehanda in validating their own political agenda (https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/may/26/anger-in-zimbabwe-at-nehanda-statue-amid-collapsing-economy). On one hand, one might argue that although the construction of The Statue of Mbuya Nehanda is seemingly misguided, to some extent its production and erection suggests that there is some effort to construct spaces to commemorate women freedom fighters and histories that are invisible.

On another hand, the aesthetic design of the monument as a whole can be argued to be lacking in some regards. One might argue that the statue is not well constructed. The fabric that is wrapped around Mbuya Nehanda's shoulders as well as the one that is used to render her skirt are lumpy and not hollowed out in the inside. There is also what seems to be an extension of the shawl placed behind her legs, that connects awkwardly to the pedestal. Beyond the physical aesthetics of this structure, the design of it falls into the trope of

[25] It is important to note that the Statue of the Unknown Soldier at the ZANU-PF Building and one at the National Heroes Acre (NHA) are two separate statues. The one at the NHA was constructed earlier and is much larger than the one at the ZANU-PF headquarters.

representing women in a manner that reinforces them within the boundaries of stereotypical gender roles (Marschall 2010: 263) which can at times be problematic. In *How to Honour a Woman: Gendered Memorialisation in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (2010), Sabine Marschall critically analyses the Gugu Dlamini memorial in Durban which is one of the few monuments that were constructed in South Africa as part of efforts to redress the male dominated landscape of memory. Marschall (2010) argues that artists who work on designing monuments that specifically honour women are usually faced with two particular types of conundrums; they are either likely to produce structures that reinforce entrenched notions of traditional gender roles such as associating characteristics of motherhood and care giving to women, or attempt to take the route of following a 'gender-blind' approach which then sometimes results into a failure of communicating notions of dignity and grandeur, whose readings are often contingent on the materiality and physical structure of monuments.

Mbuya Nehanda's portrayal in the statue that stands in front of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe in some ways resembles and differs from the ways in which she appears in the two reference photographs labelled as Figures 2.4 and 2.5. In the statue (Fig. 2.3) and in the 1986 photograph of Mbuya Nehanda's and Sekuru Kagavi's arrest (Fig. 2.4), Mbuya Nehanda can be seen wearing a string with a pendant around her neck. In the photograph taken before she and the other spirit mediums were hanged to death (Fig. 2.5) Mbuya Nehanda has no necklace around her neck. There is no literature that explains why her necklace is missing in the photograph labelled as Figure 2.5 or what was done with it following her passing. The assumption I make is that her neck lace was either taken from her by police officers or cell guards when she attempted to kill herself while in prison as explained in first chapter of this dissertation. An assumption that jewellery and possibly other items were taken away from individuals who were arrested during that time does not seem plausible as the spirit medium of Goronga pictured standing on the left of Mbuya Nehanda in the photograph of the four spirit mediums (Fig. 2.5) has an ornament that appears to be a bracelet on his left wrist. Following this reasoning, perhaps the artist's choice to place a pendant and necklace around Mbuya Nehanda's neck in the statue could be read as a way of giving her back a physical object that might have represented something sentimental to her and that which was likely forcibly taken from her.

Moving from top to down, the next point of discussion is the positioning of the Mbuya Nehanda's hands in the statue as well as in both of the reference photographs. In the 1896

photograph of Mbuya Nehanda and Kaguvi-Gumboreshumba (Fig. 2.4), Mbuya Nehanda's hands are connected by the interlocking of her fingers and rested below her stomach. In this photograph, Mbuya Nehanda appears quite powerful, confident and defiant, while in the statue (Fig. 2.3) and in the photograph of the four spirit mediums (Fig. 2.5) Mbuya Nehanda appears to be exhausted, anxious and to have lowly. According to Pau Pérez-Sales, Teresa Durán-Pérez and Roberta Bacic Herzfeld (2000) in their study of the psychological effects on relatives of individuals who are disappeared or executed for political reasons in Chile, argue that it is not uncommon for individuals who are about to be executed to exhibit signs of being scared, nervous or even extreme remorse. Others show signs that could suggest that they have accepted and made peace with their fate or that their death is an honourable sacrifice in whatever they either religiously or politically believe in (Ibid).

I personally cannot say for sure what Mbuya Nehanda's feelings might have been in the very moment the photograph labelled Figure 2.5 was taken, I can only speculate based on how she looks in the photograph and the testament of a Catholic priest known as Father Richartz who is said to be one of the few people who had an interaction with Mbuya Nehanda on the day before her death (Charumbira 2008, 130). In my personal opinion as both an artist and art historian, I would question what it means to take a particular moment or represent a gesture that suggests intense feelings and emotions that can be associated to anxiety and pain through enlarging and crystallising that very moment in bronze to make a spectacle of historical trauma. Because of the very fact that the artist that designed this monument, Mutasa, is a politician and a member of the ZANU-PF who have ruled Zimbabwe since independence, it would be difficult to argue that the statue is not politically motivated or that it was not constructed to feed some political narrative. One could read this representation of trauma as making visible of her pain in order to feed into a political narrative (Marschall 2010b).

In addition to visually referencing historical trauma and pain, Mutasa has also placed thicker chains around Mbuya Nehanda's ankles in the statue he has constructed. In the photograph labelled Figure 2.4 Mbuya Nehanda's legs are not chained while in the 1897 photograph (Fig. 2.5), all the captured spirit mediums' feet are bound together. This information begs the questions 'what was the artist's intention in representing her legs as being bound with a thicker chain?' 'Was he attempting to represent the violent nature in which the mediums were treated by the colonial authorities or was the decision to bind her legs a literal interpretation of the archival photograph?'. Mbuya Nehanda's history is quite violent given that she was

captured, hanged, and her corpse was beheaded, and her head was taken to Europe as a symbol of the power of British colonialism in Africa. The decision to add such a forceful and intense object such as chains (which traditionally function as form of restriction) on the representation of her body does not seem successful because it contributes to the perpetuation of violence and trauma experienced during the colonial period. In the statue conceptualised by Mutasa, Mbuya Nehanda is portrayed in a manner that makes her appear meek or humble. Her facial expression in the statue seems almost devoid of emotion. In the first chapter of this thesis, I write about Mbuya Nehanda's reaction to a Catholic priest who attempted to convert her to Christianity the day before the 1987 archival (Fig. 2.5) photograph was taken. During her interaction with the priest, she had expressed anger, resentment and disappointment, but also, she stood her ground and refused to convert. Both archival photographs (Fig. 2.4 and Fig. 2.5) portray a defiant woman well aware of her own feelings and emotions, while the Statue of Mbuya Nehanda at the reserve bank ignores her agency and renders her as a defeated woman because of the heavy reference on the photograph taken under conditions which presented her in a lowly state. In my opinion the statue would have benefited from referencing more of her posture and demeanour in the 1896 archival photograph (Fig. 2.4) before she was forced to go through such a traumatic experience. The statue in its current state does not tell us anything about who Mbuya Nehanda was beyond the fact that she was involved in the first chimurenga.

Public monuments and memorials reflect power because they are constructions that are situated within shared space and they are usually funded by the government or the elite in society to honour of individuals and events that they deem are worthy of such recognition. Monuments and memorials often include statues or busts that resemble a particular individual as in the Statue of Mbuya Nehanda for example. Statues within the public space are generally placed above pedestals or elevated platforms to communicate to the public who to revere as heroes (Marschall 2006; Erichsen and Olusoga 2010). Representational figurations of iconic figures are traditionally portrayed in a similar manner as official portraits[26] and are rarely ever erected to highlight negative traits of the individuals that they portray, in fact they actually almost never do.

[26] Official portraiture is the visual representation of important personalities such as monarchs, presidents and leaders (Griffey and Jackson 2010).

Professor of Public History, David Olusoga (2022) in a presentation at the Manchester Histories Festival (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFQYzXMKNSw&t=1379s) states that public statues communicate messages that are prescribed by their funders. Even though the rationale of many statues in monuments and memorials across the world is to historicise and to act against the course of historical erasure, in reality statues by themselves are incapable of performing such functions. Olusoga (2022) raises two main points to justify this assertion, firstly he sumbmits that there is an ambivalent relationship between statues as memory figures and history as an intellectual production about the past. Olusoga (2022) emphasises that history evolves and changes over time[27] while statues of heroic figures are immobile fixtures that are incapable of providing historical nuance or complexity (Ibid). Many monuments do not have the capacity to change because they are constructed as solid structures that represent a specific individual for a definitive performance. As can be seen in the Statue of Mbuya Nehanda in Harare, such representational figurations do not tell an entire story of the person they are fashioned after, let alone a complex picture of history. Additionally, statues can tell half-truths and they can also lie about what really transpired in the past: the figurative sculpture of Mbuya Nehanda is incapable of informing the public simple details like what her spiritual believes were and whether she had children or not.

Secondly, to further question the ability of statues in providing historical accounts of larger events, Olusoga (2022) gives examples of statues that have been removed from the public space to argue that the absence of statues (at least when they were removed) does not make history any less visible. The past is articulated in numerous ways, representational statues tend to provide memories that overshadow other historical perspectives. To substantiate Olusoga's (2022) contention, the statue of John Cecil Rhodes in Cape Town in South Africa

[27] David Olusoga's perception of history differs from that of French historian Pierre Nora in *Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire* (1989). Olusoga presents both memory and history as phenomena with flexibility to change over time, while Nora (1989) suggests that sometimes history tends to be inflexible in ways that it less fluid than memory. The difference between the two historians is that Nora (1989) conceptualises a place of memory as a site that is connected to history and investigates tensions in the relationship between history and memory. Olusoga, on the other hand engages with public memory in times when there is more historical reassessments and redress within the public space as evidenced by iconoclastic reactions to particular monuments such as the toppling down of confederate statues in America and the defacing of sculptures of colonial figures in Africa.

for instance, was beheaded in 2015 amidst student protests (Kros 2015; Schmahmann 2016; Nielsen 2021) and his history did not get erased or become invisible. The defacing of the statue of Rhodes rather brought his legacy to the ground where his history could be reassessed by descendants of the people that the British colonial empire had historically oppressed and whose histories the statue had overshadowed for a long period of time.

Statues of imperialist leaders assembled in Africa impose a peculiar form of violence because rather than articulating historical moments, they offer visual biographies of many individuals who are argued to have been oppressive to Africans. Such statues and monuments are physical sites of trauma (Hlongwane 2008: 135 and 140) because millions of black people were oppressed, tortured, and killed over several hundreds of years under which the continent was overtaken by European empires. Rhodes was the leader of the British South Africa Company (BSAC) that tried and condemned Mbuya Nehanda (Fig. 2.2) along with other spirit mediums to death by hanging. This is just one example, there are more stories of people who were killed during the colonial epochs, there are also stories of women such as Sarah Baartman who was paraded in an insulting and degrading manner in Europe because of the structure of her body (Rapoo 2011). It seems quite arrogant that while there is an absence of monuments for women, there is a polarising presence of large bronze and marble statues of imperialist men such as Rhodes standing publicly on pedestals in former colonial territories where they committed multiple crimes against humanity. To add on, these statues of white colonialist men continue to be violent objects that not only overshadow the memories and histories of the historically oppressed but are also structures that are incapable of providing truth because by nature they cannot provide inconvenient and negative characteristics of the individuals that they portray.

There is a place in Mozambique known as the *Forteleza De Maputo* (or the Maputo Fortress) which is a graveyard for statues of Portuguese colonial leaders that were removed from the public urban space in 1975 (after Mozambican independence in 1974). The removal of colonial monuments from the Mozambican city served to mark the end of the colonial era and was motivated by the need to create space for the construction of new symbols and statues of African political leaders and heroes (Ribeiro 2016; Franco de Mendonça 2022). After independence many African states sought to create new statues that symbolised the birth of independent states, for the most part the new visual icons were constructed in a similar manner to the monuments of former colonial leaders (Marschall 2006 and 2010; Ribeiro

2016). In essence, statues of white men were replaced by those of black men. In Zambia and Zimbabwe where there were fewer statues of white men by the time of independence compared to countries like South Africa, there was an opportunity to construct national memorials that did neither mirrored white colonial figures nor perpetuated the erection of statues of male political leaders that was already occurring in other African countries. Unfortunately, as this chapter unfolds into the following sections, it shows that in some ways Zambia and Zimbabwe did not construct monuments that were any different but followed the pattern to make independence symbols that mimic statues of white colonial figures.

Figure 2.6. Heads of State Conference in Kampala, Uganda in December 1967. In the picture is President Gregoire Kayibanda of Rwanda, Jean-Bedel Bokassa of the Central African Republic, Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, President Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Ismael el-Azhari of Sudan, Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, Milton Obote of Uganda, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, and Prime Minister Mohamed Egal of Somalia[28] (1967). photograph by Marion Kaplan. Photograph sourced from *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation movements in Africa 1945-1994* (2001: 188).

[28] Image quote revised for thesis. The citation of this photograph in the catalogue *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation movements in Africa 1945-1994* (2001) on page 188 erroneously identifies Kenneth Kaunda as President of Uganda.

The catalogue of the exhibition *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation movements in Africa 1945-1994*[29] (2001) curated by Nigerian American curator Okwui Enwenzor features a photograph that plausibly indicates the reverence of male political leaders in narrations of liberation on the African continent (Fig. 2.6). The photograph (Fig. 2.6) portrays black men African heads of state standing on an elevated platform in Uganda in 1967, at a time when many states in Africa were engulfed in the pursuit of independence from European colonial governments. This photograph corroborates the words of Jean-Paul Satre in the essay *Black Orpheus* (1988, 33), that black men are indeed standing and looking after they have overthrown the white man who has oppressed them for many centuries. Marschall's (2010: 261 - 265) argues that national memory in Africa as represented in public monuments tends to be formed around male African leaders. Many of the memorials include statues of men positioned in a way that they are read as heroic whereas women are either not included or when they are represented it is usually in a manner that is problematic. Marschall's (2009 and 2010) contends that visual representations of women are either framed in such a manner that they fall into categories of prescribed gender roles, or when there is a gender-neutral aesthetical strategies employed in the design of a given monument this can further contribute to their historical invisibility. Honouring and representing women's stories within the genre of public art is complex, it is beyond just adding a sculpture of a woman.

2.2. Contextualising the National Heroes' Acre and The Freedom Statue as Public Spaces of Memory

French Historian Pierre Nora (1989) conceptualises the place of memory or *lieu de mémoire* (memorial place) as spaces that have a special significance to a group's recollection and forgetting. Nora (1989) argues that memory and memorial spaces (or monuments) are to each other process and product – process in the essence that the memories that are secreted in public spaces are continually evolving and changing, and that also that while memories fluctuate, at any given point in time the *lieu de mémoire* offers a specific narrative. Nora's (1989) reasoning is that is while both memory and history can be fluid phenomena that

[29] See Literature Review and Chapter one. *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994* (2001) is an exhibition project that explores the development of political and cultural consciousness from the mid-1940s through the 1990s (Enwenzor 2001).

consist of multiple strands, memory is more susceptible to change as it … *belongs to everyone* ... and is … *by nature multiple and yet specific; collective, plural, and yet individual* … (Nora 1989, 9). History on the other hand he argues is less malleable than memory because it … *binds itself strictly to temporal continuities* (Nora 1989, 10) as it functions largely as a representation of the past that is controlled by those in power.

The National Heroes Acre (NHA) in Harare (Fig. 2.1) and The Freedom Statue (Fig. 2.2) in Lusaka are public monuments which act as repositories of memories associated with the independence struggle. Consonant with Nora's (1989) concept of memorial place (*lieu de mémoire*), the two monuments can be said to be spaces of memory that play significant roles in the shaping of collective imaginations of the eon of liberation struggles. Publicly, they represent the valorisation of national heroes through acknowledgements of their suffering and sacrifices (Marschall 2009: 1). Like many public monuments on the African continent, the NHA and The Freedom Statue comprise of structures made from materials such as stone, bronze, marble and granite. Such kind of materiality expresses qualities of permanence and are usually used in the construction of monuments because of their innate inflexible quality that enhances their durability over a stretched period of time. Their hard materiality articulates the function of monuments as reminders of events and people who must not be forgotten (Mpofu 2017; Van der Hoog 2017); in their materiality, they infer the solidification of memory.

2.2.1. The National Heroes Acre in Zimbabwe

The National Heroes Acre (NHA) (Fig. 2.1) is located in Zimbabwe's capital Harare where it primarily functions as a testimonial of the liberation war that occurred between the 1960s and 1980s, it is also burial grounds for Zimbabweans who are conferred with the status of a hero. The status of a hero in Zimbabwe is generally bestowed on individuals who participated in the independence struggle of the country or who have contributed their service to the advancement of the state (Nyaude 2019; Mawere, Tandi and Zhou 2022). The NHA is located on a hill which according to legend, was an area where pre-colonial rulers met as well as the place where some chiefs were buried (Ibid). This monument was commissioned in 1981 by President Robert Mugabe, whose remains are not located at the national monument but are rather buried in the village of Kutama. This independence monument in Harare is

facilitated and managed by the state through the Heroes' Acre Act of 1984 and is the maintained by the National Museums and Monuments Act chapter 25:11 (Mawere 2015: 1).

From an aerial point of view the NHA in Zimbabwe mimics two AK-47s placed side by side. The monument comprises of four main features which include the burial grounds that on the circular portions of the monument as shown in Figure 2.1, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (Fig. 2.7), the Eternal Flame (Fig. 2.8) and two free-standing walls that hold relief sculptures made with bronze (Figs. 2.9 and 2.10). The NHA in Harare was constructed by the Mansudae Art Studio which is a North Korean state-owned enterprise that specialises in the production of statues of political figures, government buildings and memorial sites (Siegert 2017; Van der Hoog 2017; Schult and Popescu 2019). Examples of their work in Africa include the Statue of Joshua Nkomo in Bulawayo in Zimbabwe, the National Heroes Acre in Namibia[30], the Statue of President Agostinho Neto at the Cultural Centre in Angola, the Three Dikgosi Monument in Botswana, the Statue of Béhanzin in Benin, the African Renaissance Monument in Senegal, the monument with the Statue of President Gnassingbé Eyadéma in north Togo among others.

Many of the monuments in Africa that are constructed by Mansudae Art Studio are designed very similarly in concept and structure to the Revolutionary Martyrs' Cemetery in Pyongyang. The proliferation of the existence of monuments constructed by Mansudae Art Studio can be rationalised as an economic venture by the North Korean state, it can also be considered in relation to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) involvement in liberation movements in Africa particularly from the 1960s (Van der Hoog 2017). Many liberation movements in African states benefitted from creating allies with neighbouring states as well as countries across oceans. North Korea played a role in partly funding liberation movements in countries such as Zimbabwe, Namibia and even South Africa. The DPRK not only assisted the process of attaining independence, but also influenced some countries' ideas about the post-independence epoch and the making of history and memory through the construction of memorials in honour of liberation heroes (Ibid).

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[30] The NHA in Namibia is located on a hill outside the capital city of Windhoek where it also acts as visual reminder of anti-colonial movements in the country and as burial grounds for Namibian freedom fighters. Both NHAs in Namibia and Zimbabwe consist of black granite graves, bronze tombs for the unknown soldier, eternal flames and murals that narrate the history of the countries' independence struggles against Germany (Van der Hoog 2017).

Figure 2.7. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (2022). Photograph by Fadzai Muchemwa. Photograph courtesy of Fadzai Muchemwa.

Figure 2.8. A flight of stairs leading to the tower with the eternal flame at the National Heroes Acre (2019). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 2.9. *Free standing wall with bronze relief sculpture at the National Heroes Acre* (2019). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 2.10. *Free standing wall with bronze relief sculpture at the National Heroes Acre* (2019). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

The design of the NHA in Harare mirrors the Revolutionary Martyrs' Cemetery (혁명 순교자 묘지 - *hyeogmyeong sungyoja myoji*) which is situated on a on a mountain known as *Taesong* (great fort) in one of the oldest North Korean cities known as Pyongyang (Van der Hoog 2017). The martyrs' cemetery on the top of *Taesong* mountain contains white marble

sculptures, a bronze figuration of a tomb of the unknown soldier and portrait busts placed above graves of North Koreans who contributed the country's independence from Japanese occupation (Atkins 1996). It is important to highlight the context in which the term 'martyr' is used within the context of North Korea to be able understand the context or construction of the Pyongyang cemetery. The word martyr in English describes an individual who is oppressed for their beliefs and is often used in reference to religious persecution. It translates as 순교자 (*sungyoja*) in the *Hangul* script which is the widely and officially used dialect in North Korea and is generally used to describe someone who dedicated their life to national service (what would be referred to as a national hero in English). The term for national hero in *Hangul* is 국가 영웅 (*gugga yeong-ung)* (Wang 2022).

One of the integral motifs that is used in monuments constructed by the Mansudae Art Studio is a Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (Fig. 2.7) which dates its origins back to the 1920s in Europe. Historically, tombs for unknown soldiers were constructed as spaces to commemorate the lives of combatants whose remains could not be found or were unidentifiable. In France and Britain these tombs also comforted the families of soldiers (usually men) who did not return from war (Wittman 2011). The early tombs of the unknown soldier in Europe provided physical spaces for the public to perform vigils where flowers would be laid on the ground to signify and express gratitude to the bravery of soldiers. The notion of the tomb of the unknown soldier, was not designed to commemorate women fallen heroes because at the time they were conceptualised it was mostly men who went to war as part of the army. Tombs of unknown soldiers were formed in accompaniment of a testimony that states,

> … Here is a hero of the Great War with no known identity except nationality. He might be your husband, your father, your brother, your son… take solace in the knowledge that he has a grave and has been honoured as a hero … (Blair, Balthrop and Michel 2011, 22).

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the NHA in Zimbabwe (Fig. 2.7) slightly departs from the general idea that spaces constructed for unidentified fallen soldiers should be masculine depending on which angle a viewer looks at it. It is a large sculpture made of bronze that depicts three guerrillas - two men and one woman - dressed in military attire. The statue is positioned in front of three plaques, with two walls on each end that portray the Zimbabwean flag and a wall on the back centre that holds an embossed national emblem of the country.

The three figures illustrated in the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier stand at different heights with the one closest one to the ground, in the frontwards position being a sculpture of a man holding a bazooka with his left arm and his right arm firmly placed on his waist. The bazooka is supported on the ground close to his left leg. The sculpture on the highest altitude also depicts a man with an AK-47 hang on his back with his right hand rolled into a feast, a symbol that can be understood as representing power[31], and a large flag in his right hand. During the Rhodesian Bush war in the 1970's, Zimbabwean guerrilla fighters often used AK-47 guns. This gun continues to be the official weapon of the Zimbabwean police and defence force (Musemwa 2011).

The flag is lifted high in altitude and its large fabric drapes onto the statue of a woman soldier who is depicted wearing a skirt and an AK-47 hang on her right shoulder. To argue that the tomb of the unknown soldier at the NHA in Zimbabwe does not honour unknown women soldiers would be untrue because there is a representation of a woman in the statue. However, one could argue that the statue is invisible[32] – both visible and invisible - depending on the vantage point of a viewer. From the front and right-hand sides of the statue, one is able to see statues of two men and one woman. On the left-hand side perspective, the sculpture of the woman becomes obscured but remains partially visible, and as one transitions to the back of the tomb, she disappears from one's sight completely because the flag covers her.

Figure 2.11. Side view of The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (2022). Photograph by Fadzai Muchemwa. Photograph courtesy of Fadzai Muchemwa.

[31] See Chapter one in the sub-section where I discuss the photograph of Winnie and Nelson Mandela on pages 56 and 57.

[32] Invisibility is defined as a process of becoming either perceptible to sight or disappearing (see Introduction).

To have a clearer view of the back of Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the NHA, one must move around it. From the left-hand side of the monument (Fig. 2.11) one is able to see the profiles of the 3 soldiers, and one is able to view the back of the statue (Fig. 2.12) from an elevated position (on the stairs leading to the eternal flame (Fig. 2.8). Even from a higher altitude, the figuration of a woman in the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier remains invisible and covered by the sculpture of the flag. In her definition of blindness in *Blind Spots: Trickery and the 'Opaque Stickiness' of Seeing* (2015a), Ruth Simbao considers a concept of double blindness which can be understood both as a … '*blindness unaware of its own blindness*'… (Simbao 2015a: 175-176), or as a cognitive disability that occurs because of skewed perspectives. The invisibity of the statue of the woman in Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the NHA can be understood through Simbao's (2015a) elucidation of blindness. When a viewer looks at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier from certain angles, they cannot see the statue of the woman - the viewer is made blind when standing at given positions where the sculpture of the woman is obstructed (Simbao 2015).

The representations of women in monuments constructed by the Mansudae Art Studio such as the NHA and the African Renaissance Monument in Senegal can be problematised because of the way in which women are portrayed. In the African Renaissance Monument a muscular man is portrayed with his hand around a woman's waist and a baby in his other hand, while in the structure of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier the woman's visibility is compromised in certain aesthetical decisions such as positioning her where she is concealed behind other aspects of the statute. Similar problematics in relation to how women are represented within the context of the NHA in Zimbabwe can also be seen in the relief sculptures on the granite walls.

Figure 2.12. Back view of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (2019). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

There are two bronze relief sculptures at the NHA that are situated on the sides of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (Figs. 2.9 and 2.10), they are mounted onto the two free standing marble walls built onto granite bases. Each of the walls is approximately fifteen meters long and about eight meters high on the highest point. There are sculptures of a bird perched on the zenith of each of the black granite walls. The Zimbabwe bird (fish eagle or *hungwe* in *ChiShona*) has various spiritual and cultural interpretations within the Shona social linguistic grouping. The *hungwe* is believed to be a messenger from *Mwari* (God) and the ancestors. It symbolises socialism, and the revolutionary struggle for freedom and peace (Hubbard 2009). This bird is also a national emblem as it is depicted on the national flag, the coat of arms and the local currency (Ibid).

The two relief sculptures (Figs. 2.9 and 2.10) provide a narration of the second *chimurenga* in six parts (three sections on each wall). The liberation movement is presented commencing from the lowest section of the wall on the left-hand side and moving towards the sculpture of the Zimbabwe bird at its pinnacle. The historical narrative then transitions diagonally across the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and continues at the lower portion of the second wall on the right. The second half of the narrative on the second wall is presented similarly from the bottom to the peak of the wall. According to Maritz (2007, 121-122), the six parts of this narrative are,

i. The beginning of protests against the oppression by the colonial rulers, epitomised by the police, from about 1919.

ii. The formation of nationalist political parties and the politicising of the people.

iii. The beginning of the armed struggle and camps in neighbouring countries, Zambia, Tanzania and Mozambique, during the 1960s.

iv. The armed struggle 1966 – 79.

v. Joy and jubilation at the cease fire in 1980.

vi. Independence – and the way forward. This includes the portrait of Robert Mugabe, Prime Minister of the new state of Zimbabwe and leader of the patriotic front.

The relief sculptures depict larger than life realistic figurations of numerous human beings with different types of emotions embossed onto their faces and expressed in the positions of their bodies. In the beginning of the first pillar, a policeman with a riffle on one hand and a leash attached to a dog is seen attacking a woman who has fallen to the ground. This image brings to mind Zimbabwean politician Margaret Dongo whose narrative is narrated along stories of five other women in the first Chapter this dissertation. Dongo's mother had a traumatic experience while she was pregnant in the 1960s when she was chased by a policeman and, like the woman portrayed in the relief sculpture, she too fell to the ground and bruised some parts of her body (Dongo 2022). The manner in which the figures are portrayed is hypnotising as it draws viewer in, to the extent of experiencing the violence that is associated with the struggle for independence in Zimbabwe.

The visual portrayal of the liberation movement begins pugnaciously and transitions into less violent portrayals in the middle pillar which shows people seated and discussing. The middle pillar speaks to the coming together of local communities in the then Northern Rhodesian state. The motive of these collective gatherings was to find a unified way to overthrow the colonial administration, and this translated into the formation of political parties such as the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) (Chimhanda 2003). The ZANU was part the ZAPU until 1975 when they split due ideological differences. The two political parties each formed their own military wings, the ZAPU formed the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA), and the ZANU established the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA)[33]. Both army wings sent their soldiers for training into military camps in neighbouring countries that are part of the frontline states (Alexander, McGregor and Tendi 2017). This explains why women like Dongo and Joice Mujuru (see Chapter One) found themselves in camps in Zambia and Mozambique. It is important to note that the relief sculpture on the first wall does not make a distinction of the two political parties.

The third bronze sheet on the left-hand side of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier shows the commencement of the armed struggle in the 1970s which is continued to the first pillar on the second wall. The middle section of the embossed sculpture on the second wall represents the

[33] Margaret Dongo and Joice Mujuru were members of the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) (see Chapter One).

end of the armed struggle. Here women can be seen holding and hugging children while men are portrayed with their feasts up in the air. There is a representation of one man holding up an AK-47. The last scene shows a euphoric crowd carrying a giant Zimbabwean flag and marching in celebration, and an elevated enormous profile of Robert Mugabe, leader of the ZANU-PF, looking beyond the frame of the wall.

2.2.2. Envisioning The Freedom Statue in Zambia

> I like the notion of spirit — spirit in the sense of active life, you are injecting some sort of living spirit into inert material, you inject into the objects you make a life of their own — the impression of a life outside your own (James Butler, Sculptor, https://jamesbutler-ra.com/about/)

Figure 2.13. Four images documenting the production of the Freedom Statue (1974). Photographs by James Butler. Photographs courtesy of Angie Butler.

The independence struggle in Zambia is commemorated through various monuments and performances that are spread across the country. The most prominent independence monument is known as The Freedom Statue (Figs. 2.2 and 2.13) which is situated along Independence Avenue in the capital of the country. Zambian freedom fighters and heroes are accorded state funerals and buried all over the country while the remains of deceased Zambian presidents including the first president, Kenneth Kaunda who is revered as the father of the nation, are housed in mausoleums at the Presidential Burial Site National Monument in Lusaka.

The Freedom Statue (Fig. 2.2) was commissioned in 1974 to signify the struggles that were faced in the process of liberating Zambia from British colonial rule (Grant 2007, 224) and as a memorial site (Nora1989) to remember and honour the lives of those who participated and lost the liberation movement. The statue was unveiled on 23rd October 1974 by the first president of the republic of Zambia, Kaunda, to commemorate the 10th anniversary the country's independence which was officially recognised on the 23rd of October in 1964. The Freedom Statue currently stands in front of the Government Complex along Independence Avenue. It is an approximately two metres high bronze statue of a man breaking chains and standing on a slightly over two metres high pedestal in the shape of a cube. The word 'FREEDOM' is inscribed on the frontmost wall of the pedestal and there are bronze relief sculptures placed on the remaining three sides. According to Andrew Mulenga (2017: 66) the chains in The Freedom Statue represent the oppression that was imposed by the British colonial authority and the act of breaking chains depicted them is symbolic of conflicts faced in the process of becoming an independent nation. The statue is secured by a black steel fence which is at times adorned with green, red, orange and black ribbons to represent the colours of the national flag.

From a much closer glance, around the edge of the fence, a viewer is able to clearly see the relief sculptures on the pedestal which otherwise disappear as one moves away from the monument. Moving counter-clockwise from the side of the pedestal with the word FREEDOM etched on it, the first relief sculpture depicts ten school girls kneeling and holding up banners with slogans such as 'KWACHA NGWEE[34]', '1961 AFRICAN RULE', 'KAUNDA MEANS FREEDOM FOR ZAMBIA', 'WE WANT TO SELF GOVERN' and 'WE TRUST KAUNDA OF UNIP'. All the slogans are written using capital letters. The girls are wearing pleated skirts and buttoned up shirts which is a traditional schoolgirl uniform in many government schools in Zambia even in this current epoch (Fig. 2.14).

The wall on the back of the pedestal holds a portrayal of three standing men who are waving and clothed with pieces of plain fabric that is draped on their bodies against a background with the words CHITSOKONE (Fig. 2.15). In the early days of Zambian independence, Kenneth Kaunda who was the first president of the country often waved a white handkerchief

[34] Kwacha and Ngwee are the currency in Zambia. The word *kwacha* also means dawn, or the sun has risen. In *iciBemba* the word is *bwacha*.

to the public who would respond in solidarity by rhythmically repeating the word *chitsokone* (to wave in *iciBemba*) (Kabungwe-Kalichini 2022). This is a greeting of jubilation, and the waving of a white handkerchief has over time become a symbolic gesture associated with the first democratically elected Zambian president. Last but not least, the third relief ornament is an illustration of women, men and children looking up with their hands lifted towards the statue standing above the pedestal almost as if they are lifting him up (Fig. 2.16).

Figure 2.14. Relief panel I at The Freedom Statue (2022). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 2.15. Relief panel II at The Freedom Statue (2022). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 2.16. Relief panel III at The Freedom Statue (2022). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Looking up the monument, one is comforted with a view of broken chains around strained arms, and a face in despair (Fig. 2.13). The statue's face expresses anguish with open eyes, and folds formed in the skin around his eyes and forehead. The shirtless man is muscular with a robust chest, biceps and forearms. The man is standing with his right leg positioned on a slightly more elevated platform such that he appears to be either firmly standing or climbing onto another smaller pedestal. The sculpture overlooks the Kamwala area such that there is an interplay of gazes between the statue, a viewer and the market area. The statue glances down at the people within its proximity and at the Kamwala area. At times people look up at the statue, while he simultaneously looks back. In the night hours the statue overlooks a less crowded space with empty buildings and market stands across the avenue, and during the day people who are physically in the area, and those who drive, walk and cycle past Independence Avenue either unconsciously or knowingly interact with the statue.

There are two narratives that explain the origins of the sculpture that stands on the pedestal at the freedom statue. The two stories acknowledge different individuals for the creation of the sculpture, but in some other ways also have intersections as well as disconnections. One perspective, availed through the Facebook account of the Lechwe Trust[35], credits the design

[35] The Lechwe Trust is an arts institution in Zambia that aims to promote artistic development in Zambia (www.lechwetrust.org).

of the sculpture to Zambian artist Akwila Simpasa[36] (b.1945 – unknown date of death[37]) and the construction of the statue to British sculptor, James Butler (b.1932 – d.2022) (https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2022/apr/01/james-butler-obituary). The second narration focusses largely on the history of the man illustrated in the integral sculpture at the monument and suggests that the statue was fashioned in reference to a photograph of a man known as Zanco Mpundu Mutembo.

The story of Mutembo is largely circulated with the assistance of local state-owned newspapers, online blogs, and social media posts as well as vocally in government institutions such as archives[38]. This narration of Mutembo's past and the inception of the Freedom Statue is often received with reverence and remorse within Zambian societies as evidenced by thousands of comments by individuals who encounter this information. Many of the comments on social media, overwhelmingly posted by people that identify as Zambian, are usually of praise and articulate the bravery of Mutembo. Some of the comments are expressions of remorse or perhaps empathy in that they highlight that Mutembo lived and died in poverty after independence; he was only publicly acknowledged as the man the Freedom statue was modelled after in the latter part of his life, and even then, his economic status was not improved.

Here is the story of Mutembo as presented online on blogs and social media accounts. In the early 1960s Kaunda and other officials chose Mutembo to die for the nation in an unknown

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[36] Akwila Simpasa is an important figure in the history of art in Zambia. He worked largely with pencil drawings and sculpture. Some of his artworks are part of the national collection at the Lusaka National museums, the Lechwe Trust collection as well as the collection of art by the Chaminuka Gallery (Mulenga 2017).

[37] It is not known whether Akwila Simpasa is alive or not, he is assumed dead because there is no information of his whereabouts.

[38] Between the years 2019 and 2022, I searched for scholarly and academic writing on Zanco Mpundu Mutembo and for traces of his narrative in relation to the Freedom Statue in the National Archives of Zambia, the UNIP Archives and the Zambia News and Information Services pictorial archives. I was not able to find anything. It should be noted that I as a researcher did not look through all the archives in their entirety, and therefore do not make the claim that evidence of this story does not exist. I submit that this narrative is largely disseminated orally by people who speak about it and through social platforms on the internet. In some ways this can be argued to expose historical absences and highlights the limitedness of both national archives and monuments as institutions in revealing information about the past.

meeting at an undisclosed location. Mutembo was then driven with a police escort down King George Avenue (now Independence Avenue) to the Police Force Headquarters where he was chained and arrested. Mutembo was then presented with an ultimatum to either be shot and die, or to free himself by breaking the chains that were used to subdue him. Mutembo summoned enough strength and broke the chains in the presence of eighteen armed soldiers, a photographer, Kaunda, Evelyn Hone as well as the other unnamed officials. The photographer, who is also unknown then captured the exact moment Mutembo broke the chains around his arms. "*You are now the symbol of the nation*" declared Kaunda and the decision to fashion The Freedom Statue was jointly made with the then governor, who according to this story was Hone[39]. The story ends with Mutembo making demands towards the independence of the nation. This narration does not provide any further details that relate to the artist that produced the sculpture (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GfzN5sYvkQ8).

I encountered the second story about the Freedom statue on Facebook on a post published on the 11th of February 2021 on the Lechwe Trust account (https://m.facebook.com/lechwetrustartgallery/posts/730201597692239) and learnt more about it by email correspondence from Angie Butler who is the widow of British sculptor James Butler. According to the Facebook post The Freedom Statue in Lusaka was designed by Akwila Simpasa who had entered a competition to design a symbol of Zambia's independence in 1973. It proceeds to suggest that Simpasa won the competition, but unfortunately was not given the opportunity to create his own design because the competition facilitators doubted his artistic capabilities to execute his own vision. Simpasa had not previously worked with the medium of bronze in his earlier works. Simpasa's design was then provided as a reference point to James Butler who had earlier produced the bronze sculpture of Kenyan president Jomo Kenyatta in 1969 which was erected in Nairobi on Kenya's tenth anniversary of Independence (https://jamesbutler-ra.com). According to Angie (2022), James had a remarkable understanding of the human figure and had previously worked on public and figurative sculptures such as the portrait statue of Field Marshal Earl Alexander of Tunis and the Memorial for Fleet Air Arm 'Daedalus' that are both standing in London to date. Noteworthy is that The Freedom Statue uncannily resembles some of the monuments and figurative sculptures produced by Butler. The similarity can be seen in the

[39] Given the timeline of this story, which is in the early 1970's, it is not possible that Hone was the governor as Zambia was no longer a British colony. Zambia gained independence in 1963.

artist's technique in rendering human figures, the choice of the materials (usually a bronze statue on a stone base) and the design of the monuments which often portray one masculine figure standing on an elevated platform.

In the correspondence between myself and Angie, she reveals that James did not meet nor know about Mutembo and had in fact sculpted the statue of the man that stands at Zambia's independence monument in his studio in the United Kingdom. The statue (Fig. 2.13) was shipped to Africa and then driven by lorry to Lusaka where it was unveiled to the public in 1974 (Fig. 2.17). The story about Mutembo is one that got formed over time and that has spread largely because of social media. In 2012, the Lusaka Times ran a story in which they described Mutembo as the man who is portrayed in the Freedom Statue, though this was certainly not the first time this story was being shared to the public, the article played a significant role in further promoting this version of the narrative behind The Freedom Statue. Later that year Mutembo was publicly honoured on Freedom Day and again on Independence Day, and when he died in 2021 the then Zambian President Edgar Lungu publicly offered his condolences to the bereaved family and the people of Mbala where Mutembo is said to have been born. It should be noted that Kaunda who was the first republican president and who also features in Mutembo's story as the one who declared him to be the national symbol of freedom, did not at any point publicly confirm or refute this story.

Figure 2.17. Crowds gather around The Freedom Statue (1974). Photograph by Harry Muntanion, photograph courtesy of Zambia Belonging.

2.3. Preforming History at Sites of Public Memory

National monuments and memorials are typically constructed in public or communal spaces as emblematic structures that connect the past, present and future. The topographical location of monuments plays an active function in shaping the social process of remembering and interpreting specific historical events (Hlongwane 2008). The National Heroes Acre (NHA) and The Freedom Statue are structures that are physically inscribed in the landscape to act as repositories of memories associated with the independence struggle and are also used as arenas for public performances and rituals such political rallies and funerals of national heroes (at least for the case of the NHA). Every year on Independence Day, thousands of people gather at these memorial sites to commemorate the lives of people that were lost in the struggle and to collectively celebrate national liberation. Annual commemorative performances are significant because they re-enact history and reactivate the spaces in which monuments are constructed.

Every year in Zambia on Africa Freedom Day which falls on the 25th of May and on Independence Day on the 24th of October, the head of state and crowds gather at The Freedom Statue where they pay their respects to fallen freedom fighters and to celebrate individuals who are recognised for their service to the nation. The performances done at and around the memorial site on Independence Day are televised on the Zambia National Broadcasting Channel (ZNBC) and are more elaborate than those that occur on the 25th of May. The celebrations on the 23rd of October usually begin with a procession of a motorcade of the armed forces that begins from the official presidential residency along the Independence Avenue to the Freedom and then finally to the Heroes Stadium in the Mandevu area. The Independence Avenue is usually cleared of traffic in the morning and all public spaces are adorned with posters of national symbols such as the fish eagle and, ribbons and banners that are coloured red, black, green and orange. The procession of the presidential motorcade moves along the Independence Avenue escorted by vehicles from the army and the Zambia National Service (ZNS). At The Freedom Statue, as per tradition the president as the commander of the armed forces presides over a national service that includes speeches that honour national heroes, and performing symbolic gestures of saluting and laying wreathes of flowers on the plaque situated at the foot of the pedestal (Fig. 2.18). The plaque at The Freedom Statue reads,

MONUMENT DEDICATED TO

- FREEDOM FIGHTERS –

IN MEMORY OF ALL THOSE WHO LOST THEIR
LIVES FOR ZAMBIA'S FREEDOM
THIS MONUMENT WAS UNVEILED
BY
HIS EXELLENCY THE PRESIDENT DR. KENNETH
DAVID KAUNDA
ON
23RD OCTOBER 1974
TO MARK THE TENTH INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA[40]

Figure 2.18. Zambian President Edgar Lungu lays a wreath to commemorate the Africa Freedom Day celebrations at The Freedom Statue in Lusaka (2018). Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of the Lusaka Times Newspaper.

In 2022, the national celebration service for independence was extended to the Presidential Burial Site National Monument where the first republican president and father of the nation is buried. Kaunda's grave is located at the entrance of the presidential burial site, where it is now tradition for the presiding chief commander lays flowers on Independence Day. There is a golden sculpture of an eagle with its wings spread out placed above Kaunda's head stone at

[40] Transcribed exactly as formatted on the plaque at The Freedom Statue.

the Presidential Burial Site National Monument. A fish eagle[41] in flight is the national symbol of freedom in Zambia as attested by the third verse of the national anthem which states,

> One land and one nation is our cry,
> Dignity and peace 'neath Zambia's sky,
> Like our noble eagle in its flight,
> Zambia, praise to thee.
> All one, strong and free.

The national is played on the national television and radio channels as the presidential motorcade makes its way to The Freedom Statue and sang again during the laying of wreathes. The eagle in the lyrics 'like our noble eagle' is specific to the nation, it is not just any fish eagle but specifically the Zambian eagle to represent Zambian liberation. The Zambian national anthem, *Stand and Sing for Zambia* has the same melody as the South African *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika* (God Bless Africa) and was composed by Enoch Mankayi Sontonga. National anthems are sang all over the world as a gesture of patriotism.

Across the southern eastern border of Zambia, Independence Day celebrations are held annually on the 18th of April at the National Sports Stadium in Harare in Zimbabwe. They also include speeches of patriotism and processions by the uniformed forces. In the afternoon there is usually a football match that is locally denoted as the Independence Cap Final (Muvhuti 2022). The main feature of the Independence Day celebrations in Zimbabwe is the lighting of the Eternal Flame on a copper and black obelisk by the president (Fig. 2.19). The flame that is lit by the president is symbolically represented at the peak of the Eternal Flame (Fig. 2.8) that is constructed behind the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the National Heroes Acre (NHA). The eternal flame signifies the spirit of love, determination and bravery that the Zimbabwean people showed in their pursuit for freedom (Mataga 2019, 280). Like many aspects of the design of the NHA, the eternal flame draws from European commemorative practices. In 1957, an eternal flame – a constantly burning flare – was positioned at the monument that honours Soviet soldiers who died in the second World War. The monument is located near the village of Pervomaisky in the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

[41] The African fish eagle is found in Southern Africa typically in proximity to large water bodies such as the Zambezi River, Lake Malawi and the Okavango Delta.

(USSR or Soviet Union) (Tumarkin 2003, 599). There is also an eternal flame that memorialises the second world war at the Park of Friendship in Belgrade, Serbia, in Almaty, Kazakhstan and more countries in eastern Europe.

On April 18, 1980, the British flag was lowered, and the Zimbabwean flag was raised at the Rufaro Stadium in Harare as a sign of the fall of the colonial empire. Moments later, the newly elected Prime Minister Robert Mugabe lit the Independence Flame which was meant to burn eternally as a monument to the victory of black Zimbabweans in the protracted seven years of guerrilla warfare (https://www.voazimbabwe.com/p/6702.html). Mugabe set precedence, ever since then the eternal flame of liberation is lit every year at the Rufaro Stadium which is the official venue of the Independence Day celebrations in Zimbabwe. Mugabe lit the eternal flame as the leader of the ZANU-PF for thirty-seven consecutive years, from 1980 until 2017 when he stepped down from the presidency seat following tensions within the ruling ZANU–PF about who would succeed him. There were protests in Harare were civilians along with the Zimbabwean Defence Force were calling for the resignation of the president. When Mugabe resigned in November of 2017, Emmerson Mnagwagwa was appointed as the new leader of the ZANU-PF as well as of the president of the country (Hlongwana 2018, 93). And in the following year on April 18th, at the very spot where Mugabe had stood for thirty-seven years on that very day, President Mnangagwa continued the liberation heritage and performed the role of lighting the gold and black obelisk that holds the eternal flame (Fig. 2.19) (The Herald Newspaper 2018).

Figure 2.19. Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa lights the Independence Flame during Zimbabwe's 38th Independence anniversary celebrations at Rufaro Stadium in Harare (2018). Photograph by Tawanda Mudimu. Photograph courtesy of The Herald Newspaper.

The Zimbabwean national anthem is sung during the Independence Day celebrations as it is a patriotic musical composition that evokes and eulogizes the history the struggle for independence. *Proudly Lift High the Flag of the Land of Zimbabwe*[42] is the title of national anthem which was adopted in 1994 to replace the former anthem titled *Ishe Komborera Africa.* The latter anthem was written by Professor Solomon Mutswairo and composed by Fred Changundega, it reads as follows,

> O lift high the banner, the flag of Zimbabwe
> The symbol of freedom proclaiming victory;
> We praise our heros' sacrifice,
> And vow to keep our land from foes;
> And may the Almighty protect and bless our land.
>
> O lovely Zimbabwe, so wondrously adorned
> With mountains, and rivers cascading, flowing free;
> May rain abound, and fertile fields;
> May we be fed, our labour blessed;
> And may the Almighty protect and bless our land.
>
> O God, we beseech Thee to bless our native land;
> The land of our fathers bestowed upon us all;
> From Zambezi to Limpopo
> May leaders be exemplary;
> And may the Almighty protect and bless our land
> (http://www.zim.gov.zw/index.php/en/my-government/government-ministries/national-symbols/462-the-national-anthem?showall=1).

[42] The title of the national anthem translates as '*Simudzai Mureza wedu WeZimbabwe*' in *ChiShona* and '*Kalibusiswe Ilizwe leZimbabwe'* in Ndebele.

2.4. Bowing in Front of Graves of Men: Tending to the Memory of National Heroes

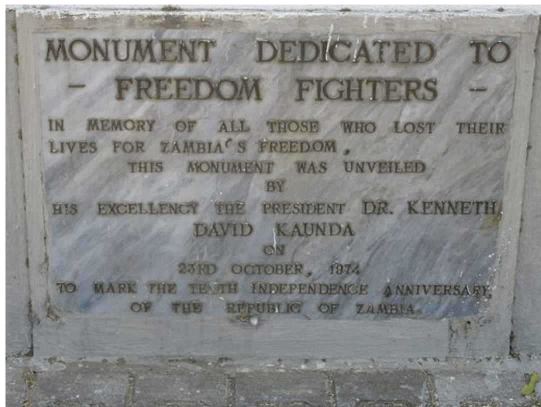

Figure 2.20. *A plaque at The Freedom Statue* (2022). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 2.21. *A plaque at The National Heroes' Acre* (2022). Photograph by Fadzai Muchemwa. Photograph courtesy of Fadzai Muchemwa.

> OUR EYES ARE ON YOU, OUR BROTHERS
> AND SISTERS, THE FALLEN HEROES OF
> ZIMBABWE.
> WE BLEED FOR YOU YET WE MUST NOT
> GRIEVE, FOR IN YOU IS OUR REBIRTH
> AND YOU ARE ALL THAT WE
> SHALL EVER BE.[43]

The opening quote of this subsection is transcribed from the plaque at the foot of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (Figs. 2.7, 2.11 and 2.12). In the photograph labelled Figure 2.22, Zimbabwean president Emmerson Mnangagwa lays wreaths at the National Heroes Acre (NHA) on the second Monday of August in 2019 which is officially recognised as National Heroes Day. Laying flowers on graves is part of various processes of mourning the dead, as well as one of the ways in which the living tend to graves of the departed. The laying of wreathes on graves and during commemorative services can be traced back thousands of years ago when the ancient Greeks honoured fallen warriors by placing flowers on the ground (Inglis 1993). This tradition has been adopted as part of mourning principles across the world

[43] Transcribed exactly as formatted on the plaque at the foot of the statue of the unknown soldier at the NHA in Zimbabwe.

even in places like Zambia and Zimbabwe where historically laying of flowers was not as much of a prevailing practice as it is today.

In the past deceased people in Africa were generally mourned in various ways that signalled their social status, gender, age and even social linguistic grouping. In parts of the continent, items such as cloth or jewellery were placed in the shrouds that wrapped around the dead, and sometimes the body of the deceased was physically positioned in a specific posture such as in a seated position, while in other instances a corpse faced a particular direction (Igboin 2016; Lee and Vaughan 2008). In Uganda for example, the number of pieces of bark cloth that were used to wrap a dead body signified the social rank of the person who had died. Chiefs were typically buried in more pieces of brown bark cloth which is a fabric made with the pulp of inner bark of the Mutuba tree (ficus natalensis) (Nagawa 2018). The tradition of mourning people differently based on their status has evolved over the years but still continues to this day, where heads of nations, politicians and national heroes are accorded state funerals.

The NHA is used as a stage on two main occasions in Zimbabwe, firstly it hosts burial services of Zimbabwean heroes and secondly it is the venue for the annual memorial services on National Heroes' Day. Funerals of national heroes are partially funded for by the state and are usually characterised by the lowering of flags across the nation and of course the singing of the national anthem at the burial service. For the most part, such funerals also follow the convention of mourning practiced in honour of the deceased who are not recognised as national heroes. Caskets of heroes are covered with the national flags before they are officially escorted to their final resting place. Before the burial, the body of the dead is prayed for, saluted and the flag is folded and given as a token to close relatives of the deceased at the end of the funeral.

According to Zimbabwean visual artist Shamilla Aasha (2022) whose acquaintance is a close relative of someone buried at the NHA (Fig. 2.1), on National Heroes' Day families of the heroes that are laid to rest at the memorial site go the graves before the official commemorative ceremony. At dawn the families have private and intimate rituals in which they tend to the souls of their departed loved ones by cleaning their graves and praying for their souls. Thereafter government officials gather around the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

where the president is filmed giving a speech and laying wreathes to pay his[44] respects to the individuals who lost their lives during the guerrilla warfare in the 1970s (Fig. 2.22).

Figure 2.22. President Emmerson Mnangagwa lays a wreath during Heroes Day commemorations held at National Heroes Acre in August 2019 (2019). Photographer unknown. Photograph sourced from https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-09-09/zimbabwe-president-emmerson-mnangagwa-at-national-heroes-acre-1/11490780?nw=0.

Figure 2.23. Hakainde Hichilema[45] along with members of the United Party for National Development (UPND) lay wreathes at the grave of the first republican president of Zambia Kenneth Kaunda at the Presidential Burial Site National Monument in Lusaka (2021). Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of the Lusaka Times Newspaper.

[44] I use 'he' because like many countries in the world, there has only been men heads of state in Zimbabwe.

[45] In June 2020 at the time of Kenneth Kaunda's death, Hakainde Hichilema had not yet been elected as the Zambian president. Hakainde emerged victorious in the presidential elections in August of the same year and Edgar Lungu (Fig. 2.17) conceded and stepped down (https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-58270973).

State preceded commemorative performances and rituals that take place at memorial sites (Norah 1989) are an inherent and crucial feature of the liberation heritage (Hlogwane 2008). They function largely to legitimise national history from a political perspective – they largely provide eulogies that cast men such as Kaunda and Mugabe as liberators of the countries. At both the NHA and the Freedom Statue portraits of both the first heads of state at independence are cast in bronze and elevated (both literally and figuratively) in such a manner that blurs out the stories of women and other participants of anti-colonial movements. It is true that memory is fluid because it changes and it can be contested, however for the specific context of the NHA and The Freedom Statue the narratives independence in which men have been cast as heroes are solidified. They are visually portrayed in the compositions of the artworks that are made out of durable materials and are physically entrenched into the ground where they will not be forgotten.

2.5. Conclusion

Monuments are an important aspect of social practices about remembering, this chapter has provided a detailed description and of national commemorative processes and rituals that are facilitated through national independence monuments in Zambia and Zimbabwe. The performances are elaborate and curated as political re-enactments of history that to some extent overlook women's contributions in anti-colonial activities. I began this chapter by narrating my own experience of standing at the National Heroes Acre in Lusaka and The Freedom Statue in Lusaka and looking up to see statues of men. I highlighted that there is an absence of monuments that are constructed to specifically recognise women for their efforts and contributions to the liberation struggle. While the statue of Mbuya Nehanda can be argued to reflect some sort of attempt to fill in this gap, it however has several limitations ranging from its design and execution.

While public structures and statues that designed to commemorate women in both Zambia and Zimbabwe remain almost nonexistent, there are more statues of men that are being erected and unveiled. In December of 2022, a five-metre bronze statue of Kenneth Kaunda sculpted by a man Zambian artist known as Chande Kapunde was unveiled at the Longacres mall in Lusaka. There are at least two large sculptures of David Livingstone produced by Nsofwa Bowa in the town of Livingstone. One is situated in close proximity with the Victoria

Falls and the other at the Livingstone International Airport. Men liberation heroes in Africa are publicly honoured in multiple ways, the larger portion of airports on the continent for instance are named after ‘fathers of independence’ – OR Tambo (Oliver Reginald Kaizana Tambo) International Airport in Johannesburg, Murtala Muhammad International Airport in Lagos, Kenneth Kaunda International Airport in Lusaka, Robert Gabriel Mugabe International Airport in Harare, Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi and Modibo Keita International Airport in Bamako to name but a few. The question in relation to the new statues of men that are being erected is, do we really need more statues or public commemorative gestures in honour of fathers of independence?

I end in this chapter with a photograph of a group of people laying flowers on the grave of a woman freedom fighter known as Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa (Fig. 2.24). The photograph of the people in white (Fig. 2.24) represents one of the ways in which commemorative practices can be reimagined to include women freedom fighters. As I conclude Chapter two and Part A of this doctoral dissertation in art history, I am in a position in which I am bowing down. In my hands is a wreath of white roses. As there is a lack of monuments that honour women’s involvement in the struggle for independence in Zambia and Zimbabwe, I am looking at the soil on the ground. There is no physical public structure to lay the wreath of flowers in my hands. In Part B of this dissertation, I refocus my gaze away from the statues of men and patriarchal memories that offered through state choreographed performances of history and inside national archives. Part B of this dissertation critically analyses some of the ways in which selected visual artists in Zambia and explore representations of women in independence narratives.

Figure 2.24. Freedom fighter Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa’s children and their spouses laying wreaths on her grave at Memorial Park in Lusaka (2018). Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of the Lusaka Times Newspaper.

Part B

Chapter Three

Looking Eye to Eye and Looking Down: Protesting National Memory in Selected Paintings by Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude

Figure 3.1. Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude discusses the motifs of artistic practice inside his studio at the Karigangombe building in Harare, Zimbabwe (2019). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

This art history doctoral dissertation argues that visual narratives about women are invisible within the broader context of the national memory of liberation movements in Northern Rhodesia/ Zambia and Southern Rhodesia/ Zimbabwe. The process of invisibility is defined as one in which narratives about women are sometimes visible, but are at other times invisible. The overarching theoretical assumption of this study is that there exists a dominant liberation narrative in both countries. The dominant liberation narratives are constructed largely from the perspective of the political parties that were voted into power at the time of independence. The political party that was in power at the time of independence in Zambia in 1964 is the United National Independence Party (UNIP) with Kenneth Kaunda as president of the country and party. In 1980 the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF) under the leadership of Robert Mugabe was voted in power.

In Part A of this dissertation, Chapters one and two, I focus on visual materials that are part of heritage culture to critically explore visibilities of women's narratives in archival photographs (Chapter One) and independence monuments (Chapter Two). In part A, I submit

that archives and public monuments are spaces that store memory that is largely curated by the state and also spaces in which the state can the influence the construction of particular historical narratives, more specifically narratives that focus on the role of political parties in the attainment of independence. I argue that the state plays a significant role in shaping histories that relate to national identity, and in some ways attempts to provide narratives about the past that focus largely on independence political parties. Further, I submit that particular histories associated to independence are continuously reproduced in Zimbabwe and Zambia through state led public commemorative practices. Even so, my contention is that liberation narratives are hardly ever singular and static because they can change over time, and sometimes they can even be contested.

Part B of this doctoral dissertation provides an in-depth discussion about visual art practices and artworks that critically engage with notions of liberation struggles in Zambia and Zimbabwe, and the politics of representation with a particular focus on gender. Part B is divided into three chapters that each visually analyse and critically discuss a carefully curated selection of visual art works and projects produced by a selected artist. In Chapter Three, I focus on a selection of paintings by Zimbabwean artist Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude (Fig. 3.1), in Chapter Four I critically analyse selected projects and artworks by Kudzanai Chiura who identifies as a Zimbabwean artist and activist. In fifth and last chapter of this dissertation I discuss some of my own artistic installations.

This chapter on Nyaude's paintings focuses on the latter section of the underlying theoretical assumption of this study in art history – to reiterate, that liberation narratives are hardly ever singular and static because they change over time, and sometimes they can even be contested – and responds to two questions. How do artists who reside within contexts that are characterised by conflict and the threat of violence produce artworks that challenge politically motivated narratives? How do they navigate issues of censorship to disrupt and shift historical perspectives that are prescribed and endorsed by the state? This chapter critically examines some of Nyaude's (Fig. 3.1) paintings to discuss political influences in the constructions and perceptions of national memory within the broader context of post-independence Zimbabwe.

Nyaude (Fig. 3.1) is a visual artist living and working in Harare. He holds a Diploma in Fine Art which he acquired from the National Gallery of Zimbabwe Visual Arts Studios in 2018.

He was born in 1988 in Mbare which is one of the oldest neighbourhoods in the then colonial administrative capital of Northern and Southern Rhodesia which was known as Salisbury and later renamed as Harare in 1982 (Gundani 2019, 2). Nyaude's artistic practice draws from a rich and dynamic culture imbedded in the atmosphere of his birthplace to produce paintings that critically engage with social and political matters in Zimbabwe after 1980 (Nyaude 2019). His multi-coloured and frenzied paintings which can be described as a cross between abstraction and graffiti, often depict dismembered, disabled and at times comical figurations which he achieves usually with the use of oil paints, his fingers and paint brushes.

Mbare is one of the largest townships in Harare (Ibid) and just as is characterised by many townships in some parts of Africa such as Soweto and Gugulethu in South Africa, Mbare is a space associated with a high-population density with many individuals who are classified as part of low to lower-medium income groups. Mbare is located about five kilometres south of the central business district in Harare where it is the host of the largest farm produce market in the country which is referred *kuvarimi* (farmers). It was founded in 1907 by a group of military engineers known as the Pioneer Column who were contracted by the British South Africa Company (BSAC) (Gundani 2019). The Pioneer Column used the space as a settlement area for migrant workers. Mbare is a place of special significance in relation to the political history and memory of Zimbabwe because it is home to many Zimbabwean heroes including historic figures such as Thomas Tafirenyika Mapfumo "The Lion of Zimbabwe" who was a musician whose claim to popularity came through his criticism of the president Robert Mugabe and the Zimbabwean government (Taonezvi Vambe 2004; Vambe and Rwafa 2018). Mbare can be viewed as a space that emanates dynamic memories associated with the liberation of the country as some of its streets and public buildings are named to honour the memory of some women that contributed to the freedom struggle such as Elizabeth Maria Ayema who is popularly known as *Amai* Musodzi and Barbra Tredgold (Gundani 2019).

Ayema was born Musodzi Chibhaga in the1880s in the upper Mazowe valley and was the niece Nehanda Nyakasikana (see Chapters one and two). Musodzi was baptised after 1897 and renamed as Elizabeth Maria. She married a Zambian police sergeant named Frank Kashimbo Ayema in 1908 and became known as Elizabeth Maria Ayema (Ruzivo 2006). Ayema (or Amai MMusodzi) assisted in establishing the Harare African Women's Club in 1938 and also led several organisations that provided aid and services for women as well as

men who participated in the liberation struggle while she was alive (Ibid). Tredgold born in 1905 in Southern Rhodesia, and she was an Anglican sister. She was involved in activities and projects that aimed to empowerment women. In 1947, Tredgold founded the Runyararo (Place of Peace) hostels in Harari, Southern Rhodesia, and in 1952 she opened the St. Nicholas Nursery School where working mothers could take their children (Gundani 2019).

Nyaude identifies himself as a 'born free' which is a term used to describe someone born after 1980 who is not entitled to any benefits from the state (Nyaude 2019). The born free in Zimbabwe are perceived to not have participated in the armed struggle and are therefore ranked much lower in society. Nyaude says that he grew up in Mbare where he faced similar economic challenges as the people who were born before independence, and so his work speaks to the social and political situations faced by the whole community. Nyaude's paintings have been presented within Zimbabwe, other African countries and abroad in exhibitions such as the fourth New Museum Triennial in New York titled *Songs of Sabotage* (2018), *Mirror Mirror! - South SouthVeza* (2021) at the First Floor Gallery in Harare, *Poetry of Rebels* (2019) and *The Joys of Self-Delusion* (2022) at the Vanguard Gallery in Shanghai and *Premonition of Civil Peace* at the Selma Feriani Gallery in Tunis.

Even though Nyaude (2019) attributes much of the influence on his work to Mbare, his paintings to the broader social and political context of Zimbabwe after 1980. When Zimbabwe gained political independence in 1980, the country was well endowed with natural resources and well-functioning industries. By 2000, the production of goods in Zimbabwe had begun to decline and the inflation rate rose to over 50% under the management of its independence political party the ZANU-PF. In an attempt to resolve the rising cost of living within the country, the government increased the money supply (printed more money) which led to a further decline of the purchasing power of their currency. By November of 2018, the month-to-month inflation rate was estimated to a flabbergasting almost ninety sextillion percent, which meant that goods in the country became more expensive every minute (Koech 2011). During this period multitudes of Zimbabweans lost their wealth, for most this meant that the savings they had acquired over time were not enough to even buy a loaf of bread.

In 2019 the Zimbabwean government headed by the ZANU-PF imposed a national internet shutdown which restricted the flow of information entering and leaving the country. During

this time there were reports on international news platforms such as the British Broadcasting Cooperation (BBC) and the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) that the economic and social conditions in Zimbabwe had further plummeted. The fuel shortages that had previously been a challenge within the country worsened with motorists spending up to days on queues at filling stations and electricity outages (loadshedding) lasting up to weeks. Prices of food basket items such as cooking oil and maize meal escalated as the local Zimbabwean currency devalued and traders preferred to quote charges on their good using the United States of America Dollar (USD) (https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-46862194). The government also imposed a curfew which stipulated that all public facilities and institutions in Harare were to be closed by 6 pm. To ensure the public's obedience to the stipulated measure, the government deployed armed police officers and military personnel within the city of Harare who monitored and patrolled the city and quite often beat up civilians who they claimed broke the rules (https://www.africanews.com/2019/07/22/zimbabwe-raises-fuel-prices-again//).

In the following year, 2020, in the midst of the Corona virus (COVID-19) global pandemic and in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movements which were fuelled by the murder of George Floyd, Bryanna Taylor and other individuals of colour, news again emerged about Zimbabwe. This time, reporters and human rights activists in the country such as Tsitsi Dangarembwa were being arrested for covering stories that exposed the dire conditions of health facilities within Harare and the economic hardships that arose from the national lockdown that was imposed as an attempt to curb COVID-19 infections and casualties (https://rsf.org/en/five-zimbabwean-reporters-arrested-while-covering-coronavirus-lockdown). The context of Zimbabwe is authoritarian, it is a nation in which the government often enforces strict obedience to its laws using force and violence at the expense of personal freedom.

According to Tandazani Dhlakama, who curated the exhibition *Five Bhobh — Painting at the End of an Era*[46] (2018) which debuted at the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa in

[46] *Five Bhobh — Painting at the End of an Era* is a survey of paintings by Zimbabwean artists (Nyaude is not one of the artists whose works are shown in this show). The exhibition explores how painting can function to provide commentary about social matter political issues in the context of post-independence Zimbabwe. It is thematically divided into seven categories that include *Land*, *Politics, Memory*, *Patonaz*, *Spirituality*,

Cape Town, the context in which artists in Zimbabwe work in is one which has to be carefully navigated, particularly when their work critiques the state (Bumhira, Greef, Dhlakama, Hemmings and Proud 2020). Openly and directly criticising the government in Zimbabwe can and has in the past resulted in the incarceration of some individuals, as such many artists working and living in the country have to find and develop means in which they can speak to power or authority. One of the strategies Nyaude (Fig. 3.1) employs to code the messages of his work is the use of language. Nyaude titles his exhibitions and artworks using witty phrases, slang and words that allude to Shona proverbs such as *Mazino* (teeth) (2017), *The Famous Prodigal* (2018) (Fig. 3.2) and *Saint Pragmatist* (2018) (Fig. 3.3).

The titles of Nyaude's works are often expressions whose meaning sometimes are directly linked to the definition of the words used and at other times they do not necessarily relate to the literal meaning of the words he employs. For instance, the term pragmatist used in the titling of one of Nyaude's paintings (Fig. 3.2), is defined as an individual who advocates for tactics that evaluate theories or beliefs in terms of the success of their practical application. In the title of his painting, *Saint Pragmatist* (2018), Nyaude (2019) uses the term pragmatist satirically in reference to an imaginary politician or representative of the state to question the practicality of some of the policies formulated by state. Nyaude does not disclose the specific policy he is referring, and he also does not name the imaginary politician or provide any information of the nation that the politician comes from. In the title *The Famous Prodigal* (2018) (Fig. 3.3), Nyaude (2019) references a biblical story about a son that acquires his inheritance from his father and goes off to waste it, only to return to his father's home after effectuating all his resources to the point of finding himself eating and laying with pigs. Here Nyaude (2019) makes a commentary on the state of the nation after it acquired independence from the British colonial government. Nyaude (2019) uses words such as recklessness, wastefulness and extravagance in relation to the concept of a prodigal. But, yet again he does not explicitly or directly state which nation he refers to in his title.

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kuDiaspora and *SheMurenga*. The category SheMorenga references the book *SheMurenga: The Zimbabwe Women's Movement 1995-2000* (2013) by Shereen Essof, this section of the exhibition is dedicated to acknowledging women's struggle for space and active voices in society (Bumhira, Greef, Dhlakama, Hemmings and Proud 2020).

Figure 3.2. Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude, *Saint Pragmatist* (2018), oil on canvas, 150 x 110 cm. Image courtesy of First Floor Gallery, Harare, Zimbabwe and Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London, United Kingdom.
Figure 3.3. Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude, *The Famous Prodigal* (2018), oil on canvas, 130 x 90 cm. Image courtesy of First Floor Gallery, Harare, Zimbabwe and Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London, United Kingdom.

3.1. Painting Protest: Between Personal and National Memory

In Zimbabwe, looking down can be viewed as a sign of respect particularly when a younger person is being spoken to by an elder, while looking someone in the eye is often perceived as a sign of disrespect and arrogance. Looking at someone eye to eye can also be seen as a form of defiance, while the act of looking down, facing down to the ground can also be understood as a rebuttal to confront or acknowledge what is right in front of someone, it sometimes implies shame, or the inability to lift one's head often when experiencing a perceived failure. In the discussion of Nyaude's paintings in this chapter, the acts of looking down and looking eye to eye take on several aspects of their social meanings. They are framed to highlight tensions and contestations in the relationship between dominant political memories and individual memory.

Memory, as discussed in the introduction of this dissertation, refers to an expansive concept that refers to social and psychological processes of acquiring and retaining information about the past, present and future (Nora 1989; Nooter-Roberts and Roberts 1996). Memory can be distinguished into various interrelated categories that include individual, political, social and national memory among others. In this chapter I focus primarily on personal and national memory. Nyaude's (2019) interpretation of personal memory is that it is knowledge that is acquired through personal experiences. Recollections of the past that are based on personal or individual memory can be subjective because they are contingent on an individual's perspective or experience (Nooter-Roberts and Roberts 1996). Personal experiences on which memories are formed is not always the same, for instance one could have a memory of a war that they participated in, another person could have a different recollection of the same war because they lived during its time even though they did not participate in the war. Further, one could have a memory of the very war in the previous sentence by learning about it either through hearing about it from people who experienced it or even from a museum. Although personal memory is associated to an individual, it can also be a form of shared memory and also in can be inherited.

National memory is a subcomponent of collective memory which is the shared understanding and interpretation of the past by a collective group of people (Halbwachs and Díaz 1995). It is associated to a group of individuals connected by a similar national identification (Nuttall 2013, 143 - 144). National memory is contingent on the politics of a given time and places and is generally facilitated through social practices such as the organisation of national archives, the constructing public monuments, and the gazetting of national holidays that provide historic narratives (Ibid). The curation of national memory is often led by the state, in the second chapter of my Master of Fine Art thesis, *Conflicting Archives: Modifications and Concealments of Narratives as Erasure* (2017), I argue that the curation of national memory is invariably an act of both preservation and discardment, in which while some aspects of history are revealed, other historical accounts (such as narratives about women and narratives associated to individuals that challenge the state) are simultaneously concealed or excluded (Kalichini 2017: 27). Ali Khangela Hlongwane in *Commemoration, Memory and Monuments in the Contested Language of Black Liberation: The South African Experience* (2008) posits that the state selects what and who is to be publicly remembered by choreographing how national and public commemorations unfold.

According to Stephen Mpofu (2016) the state generally functions to curate and reproduce national memories that avail a one-sided historical account that often casts political parties (the ZANU-PF in the case of his text titled *Toxification of National Holidays and National Identity in Zimbabwe's post-2000 Nationalism* (2015)) and their members as the heroes of history. Although the state appears to control how the past is constructed in a manner of forming a uniform national narrative that highlights independence political parties in a heroic light as argued by Mpofu in *Toxification of National Holidays and National Identity in Zimbabwe's post-2000 Nationalism* (2015), it is impossible to have a singular as per the theoretical assumption of this doctoral dissertation which posits that historical narratives inevitably change over time. In her essay title *Capturing the Soweto Uprising: South Africa's Most Iconic Photograph Lives On* (2018b), Ruth Simbao postulates that state narratives are not always entirely singular or homogenous, and that it is even possible for conflict and contention to exist within a state narrative. Granted that Mpofu makes his argument in relation to the peculiar context of Zimbabwe where the distinctions between the state and the ruling party are blurred, however as the chapter unfolds, it will be highlighted through the discussion the dismembered human-like figure in Nyaude's painting, that even for the case of Zimbabwe there are internal conflicts that exist within the independence narrative that foregrounded by the state.

I am not arguing that Mpofu (2016) is wrong to argue that there exists some sort of 'homogenous state narrative' that focuses on the ZANU-PF given that Zimbabwe defies the definition of what a state is (a government that is made up of a ruling party and representatives of other political parties as well). The ZANU-PF is the independence political party, and the ruling party as well as the party with the largest parliamentary representation. To an extent Mpofu's (2015) argument holds true. However, even if some 'state homogenised narrative' was created, it would have to exist in parallel, opposition or harmony with other narratives or recollections of the past. Nora (1989) argues that there are as many memories as they are people, and they are intertwined with one another in a manner that they either contest, harmonise or agree with each other.

Nyaude's paintings such as *Saint Pragmatist* (2018) (Fig. 3.2), *The Famous Prodigal* (2018) (Fig. 3.3) and *The Best Laid plans of Mice and Men* (2017) (Fig. 3.4) reflect the complex relations and tensions between national and individual memory as described in the preceding paragraphs. Using paints, he collages delusions associated with the idea of nationalism that is

framed on the foundations of a glorious past against the realities of a post-colonial context that is riddled with disfunction and dysphoria. Within this reading of Nyaude's paintings, the social and political context of post-colonial Zimbabwe parallels the newly formed independent state described by Ayi Kwei Armah in the *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1988). In his novel, Armah (1988) tells in excruciating detail a story of a man navigating social ills such as corruption and poverty in a newly formed Ghana. Written in 1968, eleven years after Ghana's political liberation from Britain, the novel articulates the disillusions of independence as experienced by the novel's protagonist, the man, whose moral compass appears to be at odds with the corrupt environment of post-independent Ghana.

The story in the novel transitions from a state of promise and euphoria based on a utopian and idealistic perception of the promise of national liberation, to hopelessness and despair established by unpleasant experiences with corruption and poverty following the change from a colonial government to one that is democratically elected. The other three central characters in the novel, Oyo the man's wife, Koomson the man's old friend and teacher the man's confidant, have different views about the political and economic conditions of the post-colonial state. Koomson rises up in ranks as a government officer by obviously participating in corrupt activities, and Oyo is convinced that the only way to elevate her family's social status is by giving into the corrupt system and, to no avail, she pressures her husband to participate in corrupt activities. The teacher has a pessimistic view of post-independence Ghana because of the unpleasant occurrences that he has experienced. For some *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1988) can be seen as taking an unenthusiastic tone in relation to the concept of self-governance, but to others such as Nyaude it speaks to a real and not imagined reality. The painting *The Best Laid plans of Mice and Men* (2017) (Fig. 3.4), which is one of the central paintings in Nyaude's first solo exhibition *Mazino*[47] (2017), points the idea of disillusion and confusion that transpired in Zimbabwe following its independence in 1980.

The Best Laid plans of Mice and Men (2017) (Fig. 3.4) is a semi-abstract painting that is oriented with a longer height of 250 centimetres and a width of 140 centimetres. Looking at the painting titled *The Best Laid plans of Mice and Men* (2017) (Fig. 3.4) from the top to down, a viewer can a figure with arms that are stretched. The bottom half of the figure are

[47] See Subsection 3.2 for more details about the exhibition *Mazino* (2017).

painted with a lime green hue. The painting consists of multiple and differently coloured camouflage patterns all over it. Almost as if to attest to the view of the post-independent nation as being in a state disfunction as expressed by the teacher in Armah's *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1988), the background and subject of Nyaude's painting are smudged together and appear to be flowing in and out of one another. The arms of the human-like figure in *The Best Laid plans of Mice and Men* (2017) are painted with burnt sienna and hints of crimson while one set of legs are covered with an army green and purple camouflage pattern, and another set of legs is lime green. The legs are positioned above what looks like a vase on a table or what appears to be a draped green and yellow fabric painted with yet another camouflage pattern.

Figure 3.4. Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude, *The Best Laid plans of Mice and Men* (2017), oil on canvas, 250cm x 140cm. Image courtesy of the First Floor Gallery, Harare, Zimbabwe.

The liberation struggle in Zimbabwe is generally presented through a patriotic lens that centres and glorifies heroic men. The dominant national memory of independence presents a story of men who were brave and fought for the country's freedom. In his paintings Nyaude challenges this dominant narrative, he paints images that reference his personal experiences acquired from his time living in post-independent Zimbabwe. Nyaude as a born free Zimbabwean who lives and works in a country where there is corruption and were opportunities are privileged to individuals who are associated with the independence political party, is like Armah's (1988) protagonist, the man.

In many of his paintings, Nyaude paints floating human limbs and incomplete figures that he statess are masculine, that are disjointed in a manner that they appear to be in conflict with some force. Tension can be seen both in the way he renders the masculine figures with broad and thick stokes of brightly coloured paints. In some instances, such as in the case of the paintings *The Dissemblance of Normalcy part 2* (2018) (Fig. 3.5) and *Blessings of the Bedridden* (2019) (Fig. 3.6), he adds bold lines to emphasize the figure and furniture such as television sets and chairs that are typically part of the compositions of his paintings. Often Nyaude juxtaposes the main subjects of his paintings 'the male human-like figure' against dramatic backgrounds of vivid shades of mauve, green, red and blue that are applied onto the canvas by way of splashing. In *The Dissemblance of Normalcy part 2* (2018) (Fig. 3.5) the figure is headless while in the paintings *Saint Pragmatist* (2018) (Fig. 3.2) and *The Famous Prodigal* (2018) (Fig. 3.3), Nyaude paints portraits that have heads with no eyes, ears or noses to depict figures that cannot see, hear nor smell. Both of the portraits in the paintings labelled Figures 3.3 and 3.4 have open mouths with large red lips and full sets of teeth. These figures are laughing, and without speaking to the artist his work one is unlikely to know what or who the figures are laughing at. According to Nyaude (2019), 'they are laughing at themselves'. These figures represent a state which is largely comprised of by men[48] who attempt to shape narratives that incline to shout out particular historical perspectives that are blind and deaf towards more nuanced recollections of the liberation struggle.

[48] According to Kennedy Nyavaya's (2022) article on Aljazeera (https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2022/7/25/stereotypes-violence-keep-women-out-of-politics-in-zimbabwe), in 2013 the Zimbabwean government adopted what they referred to as a 'pro-gender equality' policy that reserved sixty (out of two hundred and seventy) parliamentary for women (that would translate to roughly twenty two percent). However, the formulation of this policy has not resulted into increased female representation in the Zimbabwean parliament, because as of 2022, there are only sixteen women members of members of parliament and two hundred and fifty-four members of parliament who identify as men (Ibid).

Figure 3.5. Gresham Nyaude, *The Dissemblance of Normalcy part 2* (2018), Oil on Canvas, 130 x 90 cm. Image courtesy of First Floor Gallery, Harare, Zimbabwe.

I asked Nyaude (2019) why he speaks about the figure in his paintings in the masculine? Nyaude (2019) states that he frequently paints a male figure for the particular reason that during his upbringing in Mbare he noticed that the news broadcasted by the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) focused on the president who was and is still a man. He adds that, he also saw a portrait of the president hanging on the walls of public institutions (Ibid). What Nyaude is referring to here is the official portrait of the head of state that are traditionally produced to record into history who the leader of a given nation was at a specific point in time, and also to offer hints of the ideology of the state through of symbols and props that are often placed in the backgrounds of the portraits[49] (Schmahmann 2009).

[49] For a further analysis on official portraiture refer to *The portrait as leader: Commissioned Portraits and the Power of Tradition* (2010) by Erin Griffey and Brad Jackson, and *Face-to-face Negotiations: Portraits of Leaders at Three South African Universities* (2009) by Brenda Schmahmann.

The figure in Nyaude's paintings can be orated in multiple ways; it is a figure that dominates its surroundings by being loud, it could be a representation of a national memory that contests and is detached from personal experiences within the country. Perhaps it is a figure that is in conflict with itself and so it disintegrates, and some of its body parts such as its eyes and ears disappear while its limbs float around the canvas in oblivion. Drawing from Nyaude's explanation, the figure possibly also points to how national history can be presented in a gendered way, at least for the specific case of the geographical context that he currently works and lives in.

Figure 3.6 Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude, *Blessings of the Bedridden* (2019), oil on canvas 210cm x 350cm. Image courtesy of Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude.

In *Blessings of the Bedridden* (2019) (Fig 3.5), Nyaude depicts neon coloured line drawings of three figures seated on chairs that he refers to as '*the three wise men*', against a background of a carmaflouge pattern. The figure in the most right direction of the painting is seated on an upright stool while the two figures towards the left-hand side of the painting are placed on upside down chairs. '*There are always three figures which hold the seat of power*', says Nyaude (2019) (Fig. 3.6). The three figures Nyaude refers to in this statement are the three branches of government that are outlined in the Zimbabwean constitution. According to Jennifer Horan and Stephen Meinhold (2012: 30) the three arms of the government in

Zimbabwe are known as the legislative, executive and judiciary. The legislative which is represented by a purple outline on the right-hand side of Nyaude's painting is headed by the speaker of the national assembly and is responsible for making, amending and repealing national laws. The figure with the tangerine line, positioned in the middle of the composition denotes the Judiciary. This branch of the government is headed by the Chief Justice, as a branch it functions to interpret the laws made by the legislature and has the power to adjudicate legal matters. The executive is the branch of government that is responsible for enforcing the national laws formulated by legislative within the country. The executive branch which is represented in the figure with a green outline in *Blessings of the Bedridden* (2019) (Fig 3.6), and it is headed by the republican president. In Nyaude's painting this figure is drawn with a halo around its head and its contours are filled with the military uniform.

The three branches of the government are supposed function independently from one another (separation of powers), however, for the specific context of Zimbabwe, all three arms are headed by members of the independence political party known as the ZANU-PF (Mpofu 2016). This is to say that the ZANU-PF holds autonomous power in the formulation and facilitation of the law. The domination of a politicised national memory is produced on the basis of recollections of a selected group of people (mostly the independence political party) and transmitted through state run institutions and commemorative structures such as state media, national archives and public monuments. In this perspective, both national history and memory as intellectual portents can be argued to provide a grand narrative that overpowers or subdues other recollections of the past as argued by Mpofu (2016). The other memories are then relegated to the margins of invisibility where they continuously protests against the dominant national memory (Simbao 2018b; Nora 1989).

3.2. *Zino Irema Rinonesekerera Newarisingadi:* Speaking (In)directly To and Against Power

Figure 3.7. Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude, *Life is Greener on the Other Side* (2015), oil on canvas, 100cm x 120cm. Image courtesy of Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude.
Figure 3.8. Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude, *Untitled* (2015), oil on canvas, 100cm x 120cm. Image courtesy of Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude.

> I work with Shona proverbs. I began working more consciously with Shona proverbs while preparing for my first solo exhibition project titled *Mazino* (2017), were I used the Shona word *mazino* as a form of slang to mean that things are tight. This title is taken from a Shona proverb that says *zino irema rinonesekerera newarisingadi* which translates directly to English as 'a tooth is not choosy, it still smiles for the one it does not like'. This proverb means that a smile cannot be trusted because teeth can be illusive … When people communicate, they mask their feelings using proverbs. This is because proverbs have the ability to hide and mask, proverbs are like linguistic camouflage (Nyaude 2019).

Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude had his debut solo exhibition titled *Mazino* (2017) at the First Floor Gallery which was at the time situated in a room next to a tailor's workshop inside an old building in the centre of Harare. In this exhibition, Nyaude sets out to provide a commentary on the social realities in Zimbabwe between 1980 and 2017. Using the genre of painting, he

explores the idea of censorship as a form and product of political violence. Other than the dismembered human-like figures and drawings of body parts such as arms and legs discussed in the preceding subsection, some of the reoccurring motifs in Nyaude's artistic practice include incorporating the military uniform pattern which is commonly referred to as camouflage and the use of proverbs and vernacular idioms in the titles of his paintings and exhibitions. Camouflage is a pattern that is traditionally designed with splatters of bush or army green or tan and khaki to enable military personnel to conceal their visibility and to blend in with their surroundings particularly during war (Wadham and Hamilton 2009: 2).

Camouflage is associated with the army and with combat, but also as a pattern it is used in the fashion industry. It is important to note that it is illegal in Zimbabwe for civilians to use, sell, buy, or even wear anything that bears resemblance to an army uniform (Nyaude 2019). The Zimbabwe Defence Act Chapter 99 (2) reads,

> Any person who, without authority
> (a) sells, offers or exposes for sale, wears or uses any uniform supplied to or authorized for use by any member of the Defence Forces or other Military Forces; or
> (b) manufactures, sells, offers or exposes for sale, wears or uses any uniform so nearly resembling a uniform referred to in paragraph (a) as to be likely to deceive; or
> (c) wears or uses any decoration supplied to or authorized for use by any member of the Defence Forces or other Military Forces or any decoration so nearly resembling such decoration as to be likely to deceive;
>
> shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a fine not exceeding level six or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding one year or to both such fine and such imprisonment:
> Provided that this subsection shall not apply in relation to any uniform or decoration for the purposes of any bona fide stage, film or television production or military representation.

When I was in Harare in 2019, I noticed that civilians responded and interacted differently with army personnel than they did with police officers. There was less, in fact almost never an instance in which I noticed an individual talk back to another person dressed in camouflage and holding an AK47. With the policemen such as traffic officers, generally conversed or said something back, for example some civilians negotiated their way out of traffic penalties by sometimes paying a bribe to traffic police officers to avoid being charged. On one instance when I was using the public transport, a minibus which is referred to as a

combie, three police officers were negotiating to pay a lower price on their way to the central business district. The bus conductor agreed to let the police officers on the bus at a reduced fare, and when we arrived in a very busy station, the very same policemen interrogated a woman and arrested a woman on the streets for exchanging money on the streets at a lower rate than the official rate (at the time the government had declared that the Bond Dollar was to be exchanged at a one to one rate. The dynamics and switching of power between civilians and police officers are really quite interesting and happen regularly not only in Zimbabwe, but also in other spaces in Africa.

I recently (December of 2022) visited Bamako in Mali which has gone through at least two military take overs in the past ten years, and the civilians' interactions with law enforcement was similar with the context of Zimbabwe[50]. In Bamako civilians could argue and even bribe police officers with ease, but very few attempted to talk back to anyone who was dressed in an army outfit. I took a photograph of a soldier who was holding a gun in the artisan market, when he noticed this, he walked up to me and demanded that I delete it. I did not argue, I immediately deleted the image. He noticed I was not Malian and proceeded to ask questions about why I was in Mali to which I responded that I was an artist and art historian, and that I was attending the African photography biennial which has been happening in Mali since the 1990s. I also communicated to him that I was interested in monuments that were erected in honour of independence struggles, and to my surprise he was quite knowledgeable about this subject. He recommended that make sure to visit the first world war memorial (Figs. 3.9) that is constructed at the traffic circle in front of the Bamako District Museum[51]. The monument includes sculptures of soldiers and weapons of war, the point the soldier in the market was

[50] On 18 August 2020, Malian president, Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta, was removed from power by the military alliance which was led by colonel Assimi Goïta and colonel-major Ismaël Wagué following months of political and social unrest in Mali. There was another state takeover in May of the following year. On 24 May 2021 the Malian Army led by vice president Assimi Goïta captured president Bah N'daw, prime minister Moctar Ouane and minister of defence Souleymane Doucouré. For further analysis on the political situation in Mali refer to *Revolutionary Events in Mali, 2020–2021* (2022) by Andrey Korotayev and Alina Khokhlova and *The Force of Action: Legitimizing the Coup in Bamako, Mali* (2012) by Bruce Whitehouse.

[51] In Chapter Two of this dissertation, I analyse monuments and memorials that are constructed to commemorate independence in Zambia and Zimbabwe. One of the memorials I focus on is known as the National Heroes Acre (NHA) and is located in Zimbabwe. The NHA incorporates structures of army personnel dressed in military uniform.

making was that the army, and by extension camouflage as a military uniform, not only represents power, but it is also associated with order and discipline (Wadham and Hamilton 2009: 3)

Figure 3.9. First World War Memorial in Bamako Mali, 2022. Photograph by Gladys Kalichini. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Ben Wadham and Amy Hamilton in *Camouflage: Using Visual Arts and Sociology to Understand the Military* (2009) critically analyse the role of the army as a national institution responsible for the defence of a state and the protection of national interest and elucidate the meanings of the camouflage uniform. Nyaude (2019) is of the perception that camouflage has some form of power that makes individuals dressed in it feel empowered and indispensable to do anything without any legal repercussion. He says,

> There is a spirit that comes over people when they are wearing the army uniform. They can do what they would not usually do when they are not in uniform. Camouflage makes them feel powerful… And they can even beat up a woman, a mother, even an ambuya (an old woman) (Nyaude 2019).

The camouflage pattern in Nyaude's paintings (Figs. 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8) is employed in two main ways; firstly, the artist is interested in its properties as a material to conceal and uses it as a visual metaphor to reference the ways in which people usually communicate with higher socially ranking individuals such as elders or politicians. Secondly employs the carmouflage pattern as a way of staging a political protest (Nyaude 2022). During an online interview in

April 2022, Nyaude directed a question to me that stated, '*can you go to your father and say directly to his face that what he is wrong*?'. I paused for a while and responded something to the equivalent of, I would probably not look him directly and use the exact words 'you are wrong', and would consider rephrasing my words in a manner that would enable my father and I to have a conversation. '*Exactly*', Nyaude responded before proceeding to explain that within the cultural context of most parts of Zimbabwe it would be considered as disrespectful to speak to an elderly or authority in such a direct manner. Nyaude (2022) further explained that his work protests against social and political ills in post-independence Zimbabwe, and that it is executed and articulated in a careful manner to allow dialogue.

How one speaks about the state in Zimbabwe has to be carefully navigated because of the power structures in place. The proverb *zino irema rinonesekerera newarisingadi* is particularly important to Nyaude's artistic practice, as can be seen in his earlier works in which he often depicted a tooth like motif as the background of his paintings. This stylistic background has over time developed and become more abstract with parts of the motif of teeth gradually disappeared from some of his paintings and reappearing in others. Zimbabwe as a nation has for several years been characterised with censorship especially with regards to how the government and political leaders are portrayed in the media (Feltoe 2003). While one might imagine a Zimbabwe that has no freedom of speech in one vain, it is important to note the local communities are not docile as they are continually reimagining how to navigate oppressive measures that are designed to silence them. Th use of language and the way in which communities in Harare express their views is continuously evolving. There is a very rich use of slang, idioms, gesturing and coding in the ways in which communication transpires within given social groups.

Figure 3.10. Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude, *Mazai a Dimba ane Ngozi* (2017), oil on canvas, 250cm x 140cm. Image courtesy of the First Floor Gallery, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Mazai a Dimba ane Ngozi (2017) (Fig. 3.10) is a *ChiShona* proverb that can be understood in English as 'there is no sin without consequences', it is used to mean that no evil or wickedness goes unpunished. In *Mazai a Dimba ane Ngozi* (2017) (Fig. 3.10) Nyaude speaks back to authority by painting a semi abstract image of a bird looking into a screen of a television set. He cautions the people that are in authority to remember that no sin goes unpunished. The word '*Dimba*' in the title of the painting refers to the name of a species of birds that forms habitats on the banks of the Zambezi River. The Dimba bird survives by constructing its nests with tiny soft feathers from other bird species and lays its eggs in precariously hard to reach areas such as at the top of a tree in the middle of a crocodile infested water body (Dowsett, Aspinwall and Dowsett-Lemaire 2008). The word '*ngozi*' describes a negative consequence, an omen almost, and '*mazai*' means eggs. This proverb translates directly into English as 'the eggs of a *dimba*, have negative consequences' or 'perusing the eggs of a *dimba* is a dangerous activity in which one must be prepared to face the negative consequences of doing so'. The *dimba* bird is associated with qualities such as greed, cunning and exploitative in folklore because it literally builds its nest out of parts of other birds. It is also thought of in relation to poverty because it is such a tiny bird that does not have enough flesh (Ibid).

Mazai a Dimba ane Ngozi (2017) (Fig. 3.10) was produced in 2017 when Robert Mugabe was still the president of Zimbabwe. In 2017 there were ongoing debates about who would succeed Mugabe who was ninety-three years old at the time – these deliberations led to factions within the ZANU-PF itself. In a sense, the painting basically acted as a form of caution to those who were aiming for Mugabe's position as leader of a nation. In the later part of that very year, the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF) staged protest that demanded for the resignation of Mugabe as head of state (Hlongwane 2008, 93). Although the defence forces claimed that this was not a *coup d'état*, this intervention aimed for the same result - to seize power from the government. All over international media platforms visuals of crowds that comprised of soldiers in their uniforms and individuals were seen together calling for the president to step down. On the 19th of November Mugabe was demoted as the head of the ZANU-PF and was consequently accused of mismanaging the country and threatened with impeachment just as had been foretold by the title of Nyaude's painting – that no sin goes unpunished – Mugabe was forced to step down as president of the country. On the 21st of November Mugabe resigned with a letter that he sent to the parliament and the vice president Phelekezela Mphoko became the interim president of the country for a few days until Emmerson Mnangagwa was sworn in as the second president of Zimbabwe.

3.3. The Preservation of National History in the Second Era of Independence in Zimbabwe

Figure 3.11. Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude, *The Future is Bright* (2017), oil on canvas, 140 x 250cm. Image courtesy of Gresham Nyaude.

> There is nothing new about political violence. It is the original sin of politics. How to … establish and maintain … a system of order … is after all, what most politics is about (Apter 1997, vii).

2017 is a historically important year for Zimbabwe, it is the year in which perhaps for the first time since independence in 1980, the ZANU-PF considered changing its leadership. By 2017 Robert Mugabe was ninety-three years old and had been the president of Zimbabwe for thirty-seven consecutive years. As Mugabe grew older in age, his health deteriorated, and it became more evident that there was need for a new leader to emerge. Rumours that Mugabe hoped for his wife, Grace Mugabe, to succeed him emerged in articles of media companies such as Reuters (https://www.reuters.com/article/us-zimbabwe-politics-grace-idUSKBN1DH1C8) and USA Today (https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2017/11/10/gucci-grace-maneuvers-succeed-president-zimbabwe/852369001/). Despite the rumours and factions within the ZANU-PF, Mugabe denied allegations about him considerations of his wife to become the next Zimbabwean president (https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/09/robert-mugabe-

wife-grace-zimbabwe-head-of-state-south-africa). There were also other individuals such as Emmerson Mnangagwa within the ZANU-PF who expressed their interest in becoming the president of the political party as well as of Zimbabwe. In the latter part of 2017, President Mugabe ended his thirty-seven year rule, and for the first time since 1980 there was a change in the individual identified as the president of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

In the midst of the conversations about who the next Zimbabwean president was going to be, Nyaude produced the painting *The Future is Bright* (2017) (Fig. 3.11) which expresses his sceptical views about what laid in the future of Zimbabwe. For the artist, it would take more than a change of the president, in his words, 'for true liberation to come to Zimbabwe' (Nyaude 2022). 'The character in my paintings is always the same', says Nyaude (2019). He continues to state that 'In 2017 when there were discussions about who the next president will be and who will succeed Mugabe, all the candidates were from his political party'. Nyaude's concerns in the painting he rhetorically titled *The Future is Bright* (2017) (Fig. 3.11) are valid because the country had been under the leadership of the male dominated ZANU-PF since 1980, and over the years it had been accused of being corrupt and using the armed forces to control their freedom of expression. In some instances, the accusations were presented by some of its ex-members such as Margaret Dongo and Joice Mujuru[52].

Ex-combatant and independent politician Dongo (2022) in an interview on *In Conversation with Trevor* speaks about her experiences with corruption, censorship and the state. Dongo (2022) admits her own role in the curation of the news and history that was circulated in the 1980s and early 1990s in post-independence Zimbabwe. She states that when she was a member of the independence political party, she worked in the secret service where they produced policies that ensured the autonomy of the ZANU-PF. However, when she began to challenge some men members of the national parliament and the ruling political party, she was demoted from her usual duties and reassigned a small office where her task was to preview newspaper articles before they were published (Dongo 2022). The objective of her new role then, was to approve the news stories that advanced a narrative that cast the ZANU-PF in a heroic and patriotic light and discard the stories that countered this narrative (Ibid).

[52] See Chapter One for biographical information about Joice Mujuru and Margaret Dongo.

According to Dongo (2022), during the process of curating the news, the state would identify journalists who reported directly on occurrences that highlighted the deplorable social conditions within the nation or covered stories that high probabilities of exposing corrupt politicians whose allegiance was with the ruling political party. After the identification process, the government would then formulate policies and laws that would incriminate and silence views that depart from those prescribed by the state (Ibid). In *Repression Camouflaged as Law in Zimbabwe* (2003), Geoffrey Feltoe states that the post-independence political regime in the former Southern Rhodesian state asserted its control and power through the formulation of laws and policies. Feltoe (2003) argues that national regulations and laws are usually disguised tactics employed by the state to oppress and control individuals in the country. The use of national policies to censor and intimidate can be argued to be a form of violence (Žižek 2009; Apter 1997).

Violence, as political scientist David Apter (1997, vii) puts it in the opening quote of this subsection … *is the original sin of politics* … Philosopher and cultural theorist Slavoj Žižek in *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (2019) and *From Democracy to Divine Violence* (2011) discusses violence that is usually generated to create and maintain a specific hierarchical order. He critically examines various ways in which violence – as a pervasive phenomenon - is manifested. Žižek (2009) distinguishes between overt and direct forms of violence and, more invisible types of violence which he terms as "the dark matter". Apter (1997) outlines a never-ending cycle that describes how violence operates and how it is maintained over stretched periods of time. Apter (1997, 3) argues that political violence often commences from what he terms as a 'chance event' which is an interaction between two or more groups in which at least one party has not pre-conceived the possible negative outcomes of that particular interaction. For example, the arrival of white settlers in Africa was initially not perceived as negative by many Africans who received and welcomed them as illustrated in the account of Mbuya Nehanda provided in Chapter One of this thesis. The 'chance event' then results in some sort of conflict in which two or more parties do not see eye to eye, which consequently translates into confrontation. In the story of Mbuya Nehanda, the point of confrontation would be described as when locals in Mashonaland began to react to the injustices such as hut tax that were imposed by white settlers.
Confrontation then leads to what Apter (1997, 3) refers to as 'interpretive discourse' – referring back to the narrative of Mbuya Nehanda, this could be understood as the way in which conflict between the people in Mashonaland and the white settlers was negotiated. Of

course, the negotiating of the confrontation is not always fair as because there is usually one party (or side) that has less power. The interpretive step leads to some sort of resolution which again for the most part is usually unfair and just resets the process back to step one, the chance event, and the cycle continues. I submit that national memory is maintained in a similar routine described by Apter (1997), an event occurs at some point in time, it is then interpreted usually by the state in a manner which favours specific individuals and side-lines others. The marginalised at some point and in some way will have to engage with the national narrative by either protesting or agreeing. For contexts were state is autonomous, there is a high probability that the individual memories of the marginalised will be silenced likely with the use of oppressive measures.

Nyaude's (2019) statement that 'the character in my paintings is always the same', can be read as referring to the unceasing cycle of violence that Apter (1997) describes. In his statement and painting (Fig. 3.11), Nyaude (2919) draws our attention to the institutional violence that maintains the status quo in which a selected few are privileged and advantaged, while the masses remain oppressed. Žižek (2009) argues that although 'dark matter' (institutional violence) tends to camouflage itself within institutional frameworks, it almost always results into visible violence. Žižek's (2009) hypothesis about the relationship between visible and invisible violence can be applied to the situation explained by Dongo (2022) when she speaks about how the news on the media was curated in the past. The invisible violence relates to how the state formulated laws that were designed to essentially silence and intimidate anyone who would oppose the state, which translated into the overt violence of physically harming and arresting reporters and journalists.

As per Nyaude's reservations that are expressed through the painting *The Future is Bright* (2017) (Fig. 3.11), the changing of presidents in Zimbabwe did not yield much change, at least in relation to the maintenance of the dominant independence narrative. Based on the study in this dissertation that critically explores representations of women in visual portrayals of independence in the former Northern and Southern Rhodesian colonies, the dominant grand narratives about anti-colonial movements are formed and maintained by the independence political parties and the government in place at any given moment. For the context of Northern Rhodesia which became Zambia after independence, the dominant narrative focuses of the United National Independence Party (UNIP). For Southern Rhodesia, which is modern day Zimbabwe, the dominant liberation narrative is both focussed on and

preserved by the ZANU-PF which has been in power since 1980. Even after the resignation of Mugabe, the ZANU-PF maintained the presidency office.

After the resignation of Mugabe in 2017, the cycle of political violence was reset because power remained with the exact same political party that took over at the end of the second chimurenga. The government's power became even more apparent as they used direct force on civilians as mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, and employed less the tactics of formulating laws to control their citizens prior to 2017 (Feltoe 2003). For instance, when fuel prices in 2019 in Zimbabwe rose so high to the extent that it was near impossible for locals to afford it, violent protests broke out in which some civilians were allegedly battered by security forces (https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/1/18/zimbabwe-imposes-internet-shutdown-amid-crackdown-on-protests). Rather than formulating a new policy as they previously did, they just shut down the internet without any explanation and proceeded to blame the opposing political parties for the unrest in the country's capital (Ibid). It was violence then policy, rather than first formulating a policy that would exonerate state officials for their predetermined violent acts. This is not to say the government completely abandoned the previous system in which they maintained their authority, because in some instances the state still employs the same tactics. In 2019 the government introduced an economic law that stipulated that the exchange rate of the Zimbabwean Bond Dollar was one to one with the United States of America Dollar, and that exchanging money in the streets was illegal. Women, children and men who were accused of exchanging money were usually publicly beaten up; at the same time, it was not allowed to document these injustices. If a policeman or a soldier noticed anyone with a camera or phone directed to such occurrences, they would confiscate their property and beat them up or arrest them.

3.4. Refocusing on the Personal: *True Optimism* (2021) and *Grey Spaces* (2021)

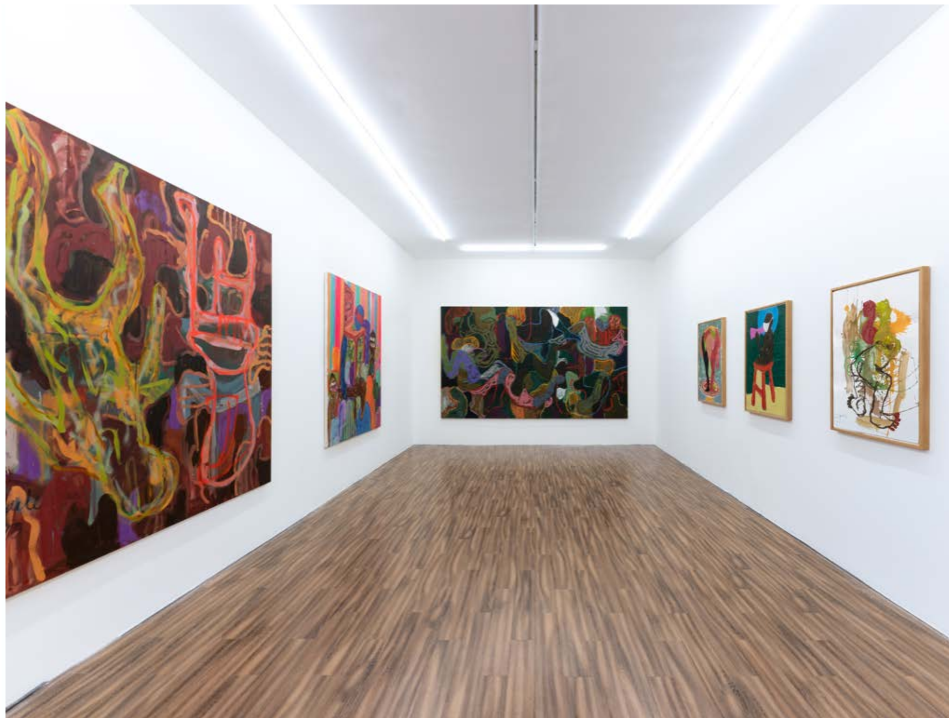

Figure 3.12. Installation view of True Optimism at the Vanguard Gallery in Shanghai (2021). Photograph courtesy of Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude.

In early 2020 there was an outbreak of a respiratory disease known as the Corona Virus (COVID-19) which led many countries across the world to close their borders and limit physical movements by human beings. Many governments cautioned people to stay at home and minimise physical contact with other human beings. In many countries such as the United States of America, Italy, South Africa and even Zimbabwe, the health systems were overwhelmed by the number of COVID-19 patients. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, there were protests across the globe that sought to highlight racism, discrimination, and racial inequalities experienced by black people (Black Lives Matter[53]) that were fuelled by the murder of a black American man named George Floyd (https://www.cbsnews.com/news/george-floyd-black-lives-matter-impact/). While the people

[53] For further analysis on the Black Lives Matter movement refer to Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor's *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation* (2016), Russell Rickford's *Black Lives Matter: Toward a Modern Practice of Mass Struggle* (2016) and Adam Szetela's *Black Lives Matter at five: Limits and possibilities* (2020).

all over the world were protesting as part of the Black Lives Matter movement, news emerged that in Zimbabwe the government was arresting activists and journalists who were reporting stories about COVID-19 related corruption and the poor conditions in health facilities in the country (https://rsf.org/en/five-zimbabwean-reporters-arrested-while-covering-coronavirus-lockdown). It was also reported that the Zimbabwean government was employing police force and violence to control the citizens activities, and this led to the formation of a movement known as Zimbabwean Lives Matter (Matsilele, Mpofu, Msimanga and Tshuma 2021).

The artworks presented as part of Gresham Tapiwa's solo exhibitions *True Optimism* (2021) (Figs. 3.12 and 3.13) and *Grey Spaces* (2021) (Fig. 3.14) were produced between 2020 and 2021, during the rise of the Zimbabwean Lives Matter movement (Matsilele, Mpofu, Msimanga and Tshuma 2021). *True Optimism* (2021) (Fig. 3.13) opened on the 12th of September 2021 at the Vanguard Gallery in Shanghai, and the opening of *Grey Spaces* (2021) (Fig. 3.14) was on the same day at the First Floor Gallery in Harare. Although separated by space, the paintings in the two exhibition spaces converse with each other and focus on how individuals cope emotionally and socially in trying times (Nyaude 2022). Collectively, the paintings included artworks that are reminiscent of the artists earlier paintings and some that reflected his personal experiences during the time of lockdown. In some paintings in these two exhibitions, Nyaude employs motifs such as camouflage, furniture and a masculine figure, but in others these motifs disappear or rather evolve and introduce new visual codes in his painting practice.

Figure 3.13. Poster of *True Optimism*, 2021. Image courtesy of Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude.
Figure 3.14. Poster of *Grey Spaces*, 2021. Image courtesy of Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude.

In the series of paintings titled *Covid Blues* (2020) (Figs. 3.15 and 3.16) and presented as part of *Poster of True Optimism* (2021), Nyaude departs from dramatic backgrounds and the use of the camouflage pattern that are indictive of many of his paintings. In *Covid Blues Part 1* (2020) (Fig. 3.15), he draws a black line figure with two legs bending forward against splashes of brown and orange paints, on a white background. The human-like figure here, raises its hands which are red and green. The figure in *Covid Blues Part 2* (2020) (Fig. 3.16) is completely covered with black paint and is wearing a white mask and holding a mauve megaphone. The figure is placed on a red seat and juxtaposed against a blue background with filled with capital letters which when rearranged spell out KORONA, CORONA and COVID-19. In both paintings, the camouflage pattern disappears and Nyaude introduces us to less chaotic backgrounds. Paradoxically, although the newer backgrounds are much less intense than some of his older paintings such as *The Future is Bright* (2017), (Fig. 3.11) and *Blessings of the Bedridden* (2019), (Fig. 3.6), they do not create a palatable sense of calmness, as a sense of struggle and chaos can still be sensed in the manner in which he arranges his compositions.

Figure 3.15. Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude, *Covid Blues Part 1* (2020), oil paint on paper, 70 x 100 cm. Photograph courtesy of Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude.

Figure 3.16. Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude, *Covid Blues Part 2* (2020), oil paint on canvas, 70 x 100 cm. Photograph courtesy of Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude.

The reason for the disappearance of the camouflage pattern and the change in the colour palette is unclear as Nyaude (2022) only explains that these are the colours he was drawn to at the time he was working on these paintings. During the lockdown period, he moved parts of his studio to his living spaces that he shares with his family. Nyaude (2022) notes that during this period he painted with the assistance of his son, Tavonga, which maybe explains why the paintings appear more child-like. Another noteworthy difference in the newer paintings is that the sex of the figure is more ambiguous than before particularly in *Covid Blues Part 1* (2020) (Fig. 3.15) where the toes on the right-hand side are painted crimson. Nyaude also does not associate any gender to the figures in the newer paintings. The gender ambiguity of the figures is more evident in the artworks that form part of the exhibition *Grey Spaces* (2021) (Fig. 3.14). In the paintings *Playtime* (2021) (Fig. 3.17) and *In the Sunshine of my Life* (2021) (Fig. 3.19) (part of *Grey Spaces* (2021), Nyaude draws skeletons and sex-neutral human-like creatures with black charcoal pencils. In these paintings, he also draws faces with eyes, mouths and sometimes noses and ears. The camouflage pattern returns in a playful manner in the stool and ribcage that are part of the composition of *In the Sunshine of my Life* (2021) (Fig. 3.18).

Figure 3.17. Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude, *Playtime* (2021), oil paints, charcoal and spray paint on canvas, 199 x 169.5 cm. Photograph courtesy of Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude.
Figure 3.18. Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude, *In the Sunshine of my Life* (2021), oil paints, charcoal and spray paint on canvas, 190 x 160 cm. Photograph courtesy of Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude.

3.5. Conclusion

Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude's paintings are evolving as they continue to respond to the complex social and political situation in post-independence Zimbabwe. The visual codes in Nyaude's embedded in his work are also developing, and perhaps a notable change is the transformation of the gender of the 'human-like' figure in his paintings from masculine to non-gendered. It is still very early to comprehensively understand or predict what he the newer figure will represent in Nyaude's work. However, this change is important in considering questions about possible future studies on visual representations of women in national memory. Does a shift in the gender of Nyaude's figure make women's perspective more visible or even more invisible than they already are? Why have representations of women been missing in his paintings thus far? Will the figure evolve to a point where it becomes female?

Chapter Four

Looking Past Dominant Historical Narratives: A Discussion of Selected Artworks by Kudzanai Chiurai

Figure 4.1. A portrait of Kudzanai Chiurai, 2020. Photograph courtesy of Ina Contemporary Art https://ina-contemporary.art/art/kudzanai-chiurai-art-tool-cultural-activist/.

The vinyls turn, long contemplative drags of a cigarette, interchanged with sips of beer. Occasionally catching some of the crackling lyrics, repeating them, breathing them out, while the rest stumble in my throat as the beer ferments and intoxicates them.

What else can we do? I respond to the music. We celebrated at independence, we rejoiced when every man had a vote, but that was a long time ago. Now we sit as men without the springs of youth and energy. The shadows from our past make us unrecognisable; we occupy our homes as phantoms, masked by confusion.

What else can we do? The seed of independence has produced a harvest we barely recognise. Stored outside on a dara surrounded by walls that prevent us from consuming it, it rots from the rain and crumbles in the sun, turning to dust, falling back to the earth from whence it came.

What else can we do?

I am not alone, as the clouds gather in my thoughts, swirling into a storm, engulfing the sounds and words around me. I try to distract myself by glancing at the paintings hanging on the wall, barely visible in the shadow, hinted at only by the glint of their gilded frames. A canvas of rolling hills, a rich and fertile landscape, uninterrupted views, no factory or buildings or roads

> in sight, inhabited only by distant, blurred figures the painter thought to include. Next to them, Christ hangs from a cross, his sacrifice for our sins. These were the stories we learnt at the missionary schools. They stare back at me, as if to mark a period in my life, as a reminder of the saviour so significant when I was growing up. He already saved me before, when I queued with the other boys to receive with eyes wide, the oil and water that would absolve us of our sins, the sins of our parents, and their parents before them. How will he save me now?
>
> What else can we do? It's a paralysing question to ask while sitting in the room, as the shadows make themselves at home, the music and paintings resting in their depth. As the storm brews, the thought of them fills my thoughts.
>
> While the harvest rots outside.
>
> (Kudzanai Chiurai, https://www.goodman-gallery.com/artists/kudzanai-chiurai#bio).

Zimbabwean artist, poet and activist Kudzanai Chiurai (Fig. 4.1) was born in 1981, the year following the attainment of Zimbabwean independence in 1980. He grew up in Zimbabwe and later relocated to South Africa where he studied for his bachelor's degree in Fine Art at the University of Pretoria. The poem that opens this chapter is extracted from Chiurai's biography on the website of the Goodman Gallery, which has been representing him since he completed his studies at the University of Pretoria. The poem highlights some of the topics Chiurai engages with in his artworks, which focus on social and political issues in southern Africa in the era of post-independence. Some of the recurring themes that Chiurai engages with in his work include colonialism, government corruption, xenophobia, displacement, inequality, and representations of women in historical narratives.

Chiurai's artworks and projects are realised in multiple mediums that range from film and photography to painting, installation, performance and text. His exhibitions and artworks are theoretically and conceptually interlinked such that his practice can be thought of as an ongoing multimedia series. Chiurai (Fig. 4.1) is the founder of a project space known as 'The Library of Things We Forgot to Remember' (2021) which is currently located at 44 Stanley in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Library of Things We Forgot to Remember (2021) is a travelling archive of materials such as vinyls, photographs, posters and paintings that are associated with the political histories of southern African states. In the latter section of this chapter, I contextualise and discuss further the contributions of The Library of Things We Forgot to Remember (2021) to the conservation on the preservation of stories about women.

Some of Kudzanai's solo exhibitions include *We Need New Names* (2017) at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe in Harare, *Madness and Civilization* (2018) at the Goodman Gallery in Cape Town, South Africa and *We Live in Silence* (2017) at the Goodman Gallery in Johannesburg and the Mariane Ibrahim gallery in London.

Chiurai has participated in group exhibitions across the world; his series of lithograph prints titled *Conflict Resolution* (2012) (Figs. 4.2 to 4.4) were shown at the 13th Documenta exhibition, which was titled *The Dance Was Frenetic, Animated, Clattering, Twisted, and Lasted a Long Time* (2012) by artistic director Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev. This iteration of the Documenta exhibition focused on the notion of eco-feminism[54] and was spread between Kassel, Germany – where this significant event traditionally takes place – Breitenau, also in Germany, and Kabul in Afghanistan. The underlying theme of Documenta 13 was *Zusammenbruch und Wiederaufbau* (Collapse and Recovery) – healing the trauma of war through art (https://www.documenta.de/en/retrospective/documenta_13). The series *Conflict Resolution* (2012) considers the varying understandings of both conflict and resolution in contemporary Africa (Chiurai 2022). Parts of *Conflict Resolution* (2012) were also shown alongside Chiurai's films in his solo exhibition *Harvest of Thorns* (2013) at the Goodman Gallery in Johannesburg. *Harvest of Thorns* (2013) is a survey of films, as well as lithographic and photographic prints that come together to mourn for victims of public acts of violence in South Africa as documented and represented in the media (https://www.goodman-gallery.com/exhibitions/359). Other notable exhibitions that Chiurai has participated in include *Figures & Fictions: Contemporary South African Photography* (2011) at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, *The Divine Comedy: Heaven, Purgatory and Hell Revisited* (2014) curated by Simon Njami at Museum für Moderne Kunst in Frankfurt and *Art/Afrique, Le nouvel atelier* (2017) at the Foundation Louis Vuitton in Paris.

[54] The concept of ecological feminism (eco-feminism) was coined by Françoise d'Eaubonne in 1974. Eco-feminism considers the principles of equality between genders, and the revaluation of non-patriarchal or nonlinear structures in connection to nature (Rae 2015; Wildy 2012: 1).

Figure 4.2. Kudzanai Chiurai, *Conflict Resolution* (2012), Lithographic Print, 64 x 45 cm. Photograph courtesy of Goodman gallery, Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa.

Figure 4.3. Kudzanai Chiurai, *Conflict Resolution* (2012), Lithographic Print, 64 x 45 cm. Photograph courtesy of Goodman gallery, Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa.

Figure 4.4. Kudzanai Chiurai, *Conflict Resolution* (2012), Lithographic Print, 64 x 45 cm. Photograph courtesy of Goodman gallery, Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa.

Archives, as discussed in the earlier sections of this dissertation, are designed to preserve memory, or rather to ensure that history 'does not disappear of chance external accidents' (Foucault 1972: 129). Archives, as spaces, objects or performances, represent a realm in which history and memory are intertwined. Memory is broadly understood as processes of acquiring, storing and retrieving information (Jewsiewicki and Mudimbe 1993), while history refers to the understanding of the past (Enwezor 2008). History is a perpetually incomplete phenomenon, and it is arguably impossible to have a complete image of the past. History (representations of the past) and the archive (as a structure) are interrogated, interpreted, reconfigured and even appropriated differently by various scholars and artists who engage with them (Enwezor 2008; Hamilton and Skotnes 2014). Although there are various engagements with the archive, a general consensus among multiple studies such as *Archive Fever: Photography Between History and the Monument* (2008) by Okwui Enwezor and *Uncertain Curature: In and Out of the Archive* (2014) by Carolyn Hamilton and Pippa Skotnes, is that because history by nature is never complete, it follows that one of the limitations of the archive is its inability to represent an unbiased memory that is fully representative of the past at a given point in time.

The archive is often thought of as an 'inert repository of historical documents' (Enwezor 2002: 11), however it is important to imagine it as being fluid and as a space that is constantly changing over time as various individuals come into contact with it (Hamilton and Skotnes 2014). Kudzanai Chiurai draws from various histories and archives (as retainers of memory) in much of his work, as such, this chapter discusses the use of archival materials in visual arts. More specifically, it focuses on discussing how selected visual art works and projects by Chiurai challenge histories that are often presented in a patriarchal manner. The works discussed in this chapter, such as *Harvest of Thorns* (2013), *Genesis [Je n'isi isi]* (2015) and *We Live in Silence* (Chapters 1–7) (2017) address the invisibility of women in history through the making of complex sequences of artworks that focus on narratives (both factual and fictive) about women.

To engage with nuances and complexities relating to representations of gender in Chiurai's works, I draw from Ruth Simbao's essay titled *Cleansing via the Senses As Eyesight Follows the Soul: Igshaan Adams' "Bismillah" Performance* (2015) which analyses the performance *Bismillah* (2015) by South African artist Igshaan Adams and his father Amien Adams. [55] The performance took place in a low-lit basement of the 1820 Settlers National Monument, which is constructed in the South African landscape in a town named Makhanda. The performance is an enactment of the Islamic ritual of preparing the body of a deceased relative for burial. In *Bismillah*, the artist's body lies on white bedsheets as his father washes, dries, perfumes and wraps it (Simbao 2015). In her essay, Simbao focuses on the need for a viewer of this performance, and in some ways a participant, to make use of all their senses during the intimate process in which Adam's father prepares his son's body for burial (Simbao 2015). Chiurai's work could be argued to be produced in a similar manner. The work that is discussed in this chapter draws our attention to what is missing, and encourages us to see beyond absence and engage with history using all our senses as Simbao has explained her experience in her essay.

[55] See Introduction.

4.1. Je n`isi isi (Back to the Very Beginning): UnGendering History

History will always be incomplete or biased. Regardless of whether the past is narrated by victors or victims, there is always going to be an individual, a group or a particular perspective that will be overlooked or forgotten. History can be told from an individual's predilection, or it can focus on a given collective. It is important to note that history can also be considered as an entanglement of truths and myths. In the photography essay *Genesis [Je n'isi isi]* (2018), Kudzanai Chiurai argues that the history of Africa and African struggles are largely written from a masculine perspective and a colonial vantage point that overlooks women. Chiurai's assertion of history being written from the perspective of the West is supported by Congolese philosopher and historian Valentin-Yves Mudimbe in some of his literary works such as *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge* (2020) and *Africans' Memories and Contemporary History of Africa* (1993) which is co-written by historian Bogumil Jewsiewicki. Much of Mudimbe's work focuses on the relationship between Western knowledge systems and anti- and postcolonial thought.

Africans' Memories and Contemporary History of Africa (1993) considers how Africa's past is conceptualised and reimagined from multiple perspectives by various thinkers, such as Senegalese historian Cheikh Anta Diop, Burkinabe historian, politician and writer Joseph Ki-Zerbo, as well as Aimé Fernand David Césaire and Leopold Sedar Senghor who are largely acknowledged for coining the concept of 'negritude'[56]. According to Jewsiewicki and Mudimbe (1993: 2), while the future of Africa is generally conceptualised on a similar basis of a glorious past, its history has been told largely from two angles; (i) a Western and colonial articulation and (ii) an anti-colonial perspective that considers Africa's history from the vantage point of Africans. The West's perspective of Africa's past is often related 'to a sort of descent into hell' that is 'deserving only to be forgotten', attest Jewsiewicki and Mudimbe (1993: 1), while proponents of anti-colonial thought such as Ki-Zerbo argue that there is more to explore and look into in relation to Africa's past beyond the invasion of the African continent by the Western world (Jewsiewicki and Mudimbe 1993). The discussion in

[56] Léopold Sédar Senghor defines the concept of negritude as 'the sum of the cultural values of the black world as they are expressed in the life, the institutions, and the works of black men' (https://press.princeton.edu/books/ebook/9781400867134/the-concept-of-negritude-in-the-poetry-of-leopold-sedar-senghor).

The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge (2020) is similar to the one in *Africans' Memories and Contemporary History of Africa* (1993). However, in this book Mudimbe focuses more on articulations of what it means to be African by both Africans and non-Africans. Kudzanai Chiurai's main concern in the photographic series *Genesis [Je n'isi isi]* (2016) is that African history is written in a manner that emphasises white male missionaries' discovery of the continent, and that it persistently marginalises women. Based on this theoretical foundation, Chiurai suggests considering the past from the very beginning as suggested in his title of the photographic series *Genesis [Je n'isi isi]* (2016). The title of Chiurai's photographic series is a combination of the Latin word '*Genesis*' and an Igbo phrase '*je n`isi isi'* which means 'to return to the very beginning before gender was created' (Chiurai 2018: 25 – 26).

Figure 4.5. Kudzanai Chiurai, *Genesis [Je n'isi isi] I* (2016), pigment ink on fibre paper. Image courtesy of Kudzanai Chiurai and the Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa.

Genesis 1:1 in the New Living Translation bible says, 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth'. Like the Igbo phrase *je n`isi isi*, the word 'genesis' in the English language is derived from the Greek word *gignesthai* which means 'to be born' and refers to

the beginning of time. The term genesis takes its root from the Hebrew *Bereshit*, that is summarised in the first three words of the Bible: 'In the beginning' (Niditch 1979). Within the Christian faith, the Book of Genesis is widely believed to be written by Moses[57] and narrated by God. The first section of the Book of Genesis focuses on a creation story and provides an account of the first man and woman created by God (Adam and Eve) who were eventually exiled from paradise because they disobeyed God's order to not eat from the tree of life. The later part of the book is a tale of two brothers known as Cain and Abel who are separated by greed The book also contains the story of Adam's descendant, Noah, who is said to have been so blameless that God chose him to build a giant boat to save himself and his family from a great flood (ibid). The Book of Genesis forms a starting point from which Chiurai's *Genesis [Je n'isi isi]* (2016) can be understood.

Chiurai's *Genesis [Je n'isi isi]* (2016) (Figs. 4.5 to 4.10) is a set of multicoloured photographs that reimagine colonial imagery by largely portraying black African women in roles that were historically performed by men, such as chiefs and guards, as can be seen in the photograph in Figure. 4.5. According to Chiurai (2018: 11), the photographic series *Genesis [Je n'isi isi]* (2016) examines the contributions and roles of Christian missionaries, such as David Livingstone, and the Church in facilitating the process of the colonisation of Africa by European settlers. Chiurai began working on the series following his encounter with a journal called *Men of Livingstone: A Brief Account of their Part in his Major Expeditions 1852-1873* (1955) by BW Lloyd and a set of reliefs that are housed at the David Livingstone Centre in Blantyre (the town where Livingstone was born), Scotland. The three reliefs that Chiurai references in *Genesis [Je n'isi isi]* (2016) are titled (i) *Truth, Expounding the Gospel*, (ii) *Mercy, Freeing a Slave Gang* and (iii) *Faith, Conflict with Superstition*. The David Livingstone Centre or museum is a collection of materials that memorialise the life of Livingstone from his birth in Blantyre in 1813 until his death in Zambia in 1873. *Men of Livingstone: A Brief Account of their Part in his Major Expeditions 1852-1873* (1955) is a collection of testimonies by men who knew Livingstone either through working with or for

[57] Moses is a Jewish prophet who is generally acknowledged for leading God's people (the Israelites) out of slavery in Egypt across the Red Sea and past the wilderness to freedom in the promised land. Moses was born when the Pharoah of Egypt had signed a decree that every male born Israelite was to be killed, his mother then wrapped him around pieces of cloth, placed him in a basket and placed him in the river. Baby Moses was then found by the Pharoah's daughter who decided to raise him as her own son (The book of Exodus).

him. The journal maps out Livingstone's journey through southern Africa from the time he arrived on the continent via Cape Town in 1841 up until the time he died in 1873. Some of the men who provide the accounts in the journal include individuals who ventured with Livingstone through Africa, such as other Europeans, porters, traders and men who carried his body home after his death. Many of the accounts in the journal describe Livingstone as having qualities such as courteousness, kindness and inflexible determination, and being committed to his faith and purpose (Chiurai 2022). All these qualities seemed to point to Livingstone as a leader of men and his role in the liberation of enslaved people of Africa (ibid).

In an online video interview I conducted, Chiurai (2019) said that at the time that he was producing the photographic series, he was intrigued by how the reliefs and the journal could function as a form of an archive that informs about the past just as photographs do. He went on to point out that what he noticed from all the stories about Livingstone's expeditions is the pervasiveness of a singular perspective of history. Chiurai added that the accounts, in a sense, idolise Livingstone as a man, and perpetuate the telling of history from a patriarchal point of view to an extent that they erase and overlook women, not only by not speaking of them, but also by excluding their voices.

Figure 4.6. Kudzanai Chiurai, *Genesis [Je n'isi isi] III* (2016), pigment ink on fibre paper. Image courtesy of Kudzanai Chiurai and the Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa.

Most religious practices can be argued to be gendered, for instance the Book of Genesis in the Bible can be said to provide a patriarchal account of a creation story of mankind as it

largely presents the stories of the patriarchs Adam, Abraham, Jacob and Joseph. Like Lloyd's *Men of Livingstone: A Brief Account of their Part in his Major Expeditions 1852-1873* (1955), the Book of Genesis focuses a historical account of the formation of Israelites by mapping out chronicles of patriarchs through the testaments of other men such as Cain, Abel and Noah. However, Christianity is not the only religion that this argument of being patriarchal can be associated with. The Muslim faith, which is the second largest religious group in Africa, also comprises some practices that highlight gender imbalances or reflects different roles performed by different genders. The ritual of preparing the dead for burial that Simbao (2015) writes about in her essay *on* Adams' *Bismillah* is one example. After death, it is close relatives of the same sex as the deceased who are permitted to perform *Ghusl Mayyit,* which is the purification of body. It should be noted that in the specific case of a spousal death permission can be granted for a widow or widower to cleanse the body of their late spouse (Moore 1993). Other than *Ghusl Mayyit, Ghusl Mas-hil Mayyit* (purification after touching a dead body), *Ghusl Janabat* (cleansing after sexual intercourse), other types of *Ghusl* such as *Ghusl Hayd* (performed after menstruation), *Ghusl Istihada* (cleansing for women with irregular bleeding) and *Ghusl Nifas* (performed after birth) are largely performed on women by other women. There is nothing particularly wrong with someone cleansing the body of another person who is the same sex, however I am of the opinion that washing or cleansing of bodies should be permitted for any sex, for example a mother should be able to wash the body of her dead son, or a father the corpse of his daughter. There is a separation of what gender performs which particular ritual within different religious and cultural practices. I state this not to argue that this separation is necessarily bad or good, but rather to highlight that gender is understood and acknowledged differently across a spectrum of various beliefs and ways of being.

The first photograph (Fig. 4.5) in the series *Genesis [Je n'isi isi]* (2016) portrays a black woman with white braids seated on a large wicker chair that appears to represent a throne or an authoritative position. The woman's body is only clothed on the bottom half by a piece of cloth, and her legs, arms and neck are adorned with beaded jewellery. Standing on the sides of her chair are two women with short hair who are dressed in contemporary styled suits. Seated on a smaller stool across the woman represented in a position of power is white man in khaki trousers, a white partially buttoned shirt and black boots. In the background is a floral wallpaper and a white triangle above two white pillars. The white structure is intrinsic to European influenced architecture that can also be seen in some buildings in Africa, such as

at the entrance of the Fine Art building at Rhodes University. A chequerboard floor, a lamp and silver and copper tea sets can also be seen in Chiurai's composition (Fig. 4.5). In the whole series, Chiurai does not merely replace figures of men with women, he also challenges the perspectives of gendered roles as understood within religious practices such as *ghusl* by placing, for example, a half-dressed woman directly in front of a man. Chiurai collages images of women against colonial iconography such as tea sets and white male explorers. The same woman in *Genesis [Je n'isi isi] I* (2016) reappears in different scenes in other photographs of the same series such as *Genesis [Je n'isi isi] III* (2016) (Fig. 4.6). In *Genesis [Je n'isi isi] III* (2016) (Fig. 4.6) her wicker throne is tilted more towards the camera, making her breasts more visible. The white man seated across from her in *Genesis [Je n'isi isi] I* (2016) is now replaced by a kneeling black woman in a white suit. Upon closer observation, one is able to see that the woman in a white suit in *Genesis [Je n'isi isi] III* (2016) (Fig. 4.6) is the same woman that is standing on the left hand-side of the wicker throne in *[Je n'isi isi] I* (2016).

The chequerboard flooring remains the same, while the wallpaper in the background changes from a floral pattern to an image of seven women dressed similarly to the woman on the wicker chair. The tea sets have also disappeared and been replaced with two white candles on silver stands and a wooden cross with a bronze miniature sculpture of Jesus Christ. There is a bronze wine glass that is traditionally used to hold red wine or juice (which represents the blood of Christ that was shed on the cross of calvary) and a bowl that holds the Eucharist (the body of Christ). The table is covered with a white cloth and a red runner.

The manner in which characters in the photographs of Chiurai's series *Genesis [Je n'isi isi] III* (2016) are depicted is interesting because when they appear in a different photograph, the role they represent changes, as in the case of the woman in the white suit (Fig. 4.6) while at other times it remains the same (Figs. 4.5 and 4.6). The woman in the white suit in Figure. 4.6 appears again *Genesis [Je n'isi isi] XI* (Fig. 4.7). This time she is wearing a black dress with a white collar and a white lace glove on her right hand. In her left hand she holds her other glove and a worn-out leather covered book. Her neck and left wrist are adorned with white pearls, while she holds a white rosary in her right hand. She stands against the same wallpaper in *Genesis [Je n'isi isi] III* (2016) (Fig. 4.7), but in this later photograph in the series (Fig. 4.7), the faces of three of the women in the backdrop are visible (Fig. 4.7). Also

visible are portraits of Jesus Christ framed in gold ovals and a black-and-white portrait of John Cecil Rhodes (Fig. 4.8) also in a gold circular frame.

There is something strikingly powerful in how the woman in black as the main subject of the photograph labelled as Figure 4.7, and some of the faces (the woman on the left hand-side, the eye of the woman to the right of the central figure, and Rhodes) all stare directly into the camera. They all look into the camera almost as if to assert and acknowledge their own presence. In an article titled *When the Camera Was a Weapon of Imperialism. (And When It Still Is)* (2019), Teju Cole quotes the words of Zimbabwean novelist Yvonne Vera: 'The camera has often been a dire instrument. In Africa, as in most parts of the dispossessed, the camera arrives as part of the colonial paraphernalia, together with the gun and the bible'. This can be used to suggest that the camera has been used as a colonial weapon to portray Africans as barbaric, as argued by scholars and curators such as Okwui Enwezor (2008) and Sibongile Oageng Msimango (2020).

In *Archive Fever: Photography Between History and Monument* (2008), Enwezor explicates the uses and importance of photography in the telling of history, and in *Collective Healing through the Archive: Nomusa Makhubu Inserting the Erased* (2020), Msimango grapples with the power dynamics between photographer and subject. Msimango (2020) asserts that in the past the camera has been used as a tool of framing Africa, she also argues that photography has some positive qualities and can be employed in unsettling hierarchies that have been employed in the oppression of marginal groups and their histories.

Figure 4.7. Kudzanai Chiurai, *Genesis [Je n'isi isi] XI* (2016), pigment ink on fibre paper. Image courtesy of Kudzanai Chiurai and the Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa.

Figure 4.8. The portrait of Cecil Rhodes that is used in the wallpaper in the photographs that make up the series titled *Genesis [Je n'isi isi] XI* (2016) by Kudzanai Chiurai. Photograph sourced from the African American Registry (AAREG), https://aaregistry.org/story/cecil-rhodes-born/.

Chiurai believes that there is an unequal and hierarchical relationship between God and man, and also between the coloniser and colonised (Chiurai 2018: 12). Chiurai is of the opinion that the dynamics of supremacy are such that God is presented as the most superior being, and that white men such as Livingstone are positioned closer to God more than anyone else in the hierarchy of power (ibid.). It is this same logic and framework that is employed in the construction and representation of history, in a manner that men become exalted above women, argues Chiurai (2018). 'The advancement of the masculine gender in the Judeo-Christian telling of the creation plays a significant role in defining Christian patriarchy and attitudes towards gender relations' (Chiurai 2018: 15). The women who stare back at the camera in the very same way Rhodes as coloniser in *Genesis [Je n'isi isi] XI* (2016) (Fig. 4.7) challenge the order of power that Chiurai (2018) argues exists. The photographic series *Genesis [Je n'isi isi]* (2016) (Figs. 4.5 to 4.9) questions and deconstructs dominant historical narratives that marginalise oppressed groups like women and the formerly colonised. For the

artist, this series represents an opportunity for him to rethink the knowledge which he acquired in the schools he attended, and to personally revisit the past so as 'to disrupt and overturn the colonial narrative … by imagining a different reading [and interpretation] of history' (Chiurai 2018: 15). *Genesis [Je n'isi isi]* (2016) makes visible Africa and its subjects, and by extension women.

Figure 4.9. Kudzanai Chiurai, *Genesis [Je n'isi isi] VIII* (2016), pigment ink on Fibre paper. Image courtesy of Kudzanai Chiurai and the Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa

4.2. Highlighting the Absence of Women in the History of Independence Movements in *We Live in Silence* (2017)

Figure 4.10 Kudzanai Chiurai, *We Live in Silence* (2017), Single channel film, 36:46. Image courtesy of the Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa and London, United Kingdom.

> We do not live in the post-independence [state] or post colonies, we live in colonial futures that are synchronised with the past … that have not reformed or that have not changed … We exist in [a] constant feedback loop that goes round and round, experiencing the same events time and time again (Chiurai, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2qRbSA-qR0&t=799s).

We Live in Silence (2017) comprises a photographic series of work and an approximately thirty-seven minute long film directed by artist and activist Kudzanai Chiurai. The ongoing photographic series includes digitally created images and stills of the film. This body of work follows *Genesis [Je n'isi isi] III* (2016) (Figs. 4.5 to 4.9) that is discussed in the preceding subsection and an earlier series titled *Revelations* (2011) (https://www.goodman-gallery.com/store/shop?ref_id=18450). *We Live in Silence* (2017) provides an alternative narrative of colonisation and explores the misrepresentation or erasure of women in the history and memory of independence movements that Chiurai argues are constructed through a masculine prism (Chiurai 2018). He maintains that many narratives of independence in Africa tend to pit a black man as a victim of colonisation, and also as the saviour and heir of the colonial state. *We Live in Silence* (2017) (Fig. 4.10) makes visual references to three main works: two by Italian painters – Michelangelo Merisi's (popularly known as Caravaggio) *Judith Beheading Holofernes* (circa 1598) (Fig. 4.11) and Artemisia Gentileschi's (Artemisia

Lomi) *Judith Slaying Holofernes* (1620-1621) (Fig. 4.12) and Mauritanian French film maker Med Hondo's black-and-white moving image *Soleil Ô* (Oh Sun) (1970) (Fig. 4.13).

Figure 4.11. Michelangelo Merisi (Caravaggio), *Judith Beheading Holofernes* (circa 1598), oil paint on canvas, 145 × 195 cm. Image courtesy of Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Rome, Italy.

Figure 4.12. Artemisia Gentileschi, *Judith Slaying Holofernes* (1620-1621), oil paint on canvas, 162.5 x 199 cm. Image courtesy of Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy.

Figure 4.13. Med Hondo, *Soleil Ô* (Oh Sun) (1970), film, 1.37:1.

The exhibition titled *We Live in Silence* (2017) first opened in two places in Johannesburg: the Goodman Gallery in Parkwood and Constitution Hill in Braamfontein. The photographic prints such as *We Live in Silence XIIII* (2017) were installed at the gallery, while the film of the same title as the exhibition was projected at Constitution Hill alongside a jazz performance by South African musician Tumi Mogorosi. The collaboration between Chiurai and Mogorosi, *We Still Insist,* takes its starting point from Max Roach's and Oscar Brown's

1960 album *We Insist! Freedom Now Suite*. The album is a collection of five sound compositions that collectively speak against white supremacy and racism.[58] The discussion in this subsection focuses on visual linkages between Chiurai's body of work *We Live in Silence* (2017) and the paintings *Judith Beheading Holofernes* (circa 1598) (Fig. 4.11) and *Judith Slaying Holofernes* (1620-1621) (Fig. 4.12) and the film *Soleil Ô* (Oh Sun) (1970) (Fig. 4.13) to discuss the absences of women in historical narratives.

4.2.1. Visualising Silence From Judith's Narrative

After living and working in South Africa for nearly twelve years, in about 2013 Chiurai relocated to Harare in Zimbabwe, the country of his birth. This relocation provided him with an opportunity to look at what was happening in Zimbabwe from the context of the inside, where he could experience first-hand the effects of colonialism in the post-independence state. Zimbabwe gained its independence from Britain in 1980, and the economy of the country has been declining at least since the early 2000s (Koech 2011). In Chapter Three of this dissertation, I liken the social and economic conditions in Zimbabwe following 1980 to the postcolonial state described in Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968). The characters of Armah's novel have to navigate a postcolonial society that is riddled with corruption as they attempt to create better lives for themselves. *We Live in Silence* (2017) is birthed out of a similar context; Chiurai (2018) notes that when he moved back home it was clear that the economic and social conditions were bad. Additionally, he felt as though there was a repressive silence that plagued society in the sense that many could not speak out about the dire conditions in which they lived. One had to carefully navigate political and social boundaries by being cautious of what they said in public or who they associated with. To Chiurai, it seemed as though people were being denied the opportunity or space to express their frustrations and anger with the disillusion of independence. Chiurai

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[58] For further information about the collaboration between Kudzanai Chiurai and Tumi Mogorosi, as well as the influences of *We Insist! Freedom Now Suite* (1960) on their work, refer to their interview in the Bubblegum Club magazine titled *'We Still Insist' by Kudzanai Chiurai and Tumi Mogorosi: Choruses on Black Resistance* (2017) (https://www.goodman-gallery.com/news/4582/pdf?file_attachment_id=103018) and the review titled *Kudzanai Chiurai and Tumi Mogorosi Breathe New Life into Jazz Classics* (2017) in the Art & Design section of *Business Day* (https://www.goodman-gallery.com/news/4581/pdf?file_attachment_id=103010).

(2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2qRbSA-qR0&t=799s) refers to this inability to express one's frustrations or to speak up as traumatic silence, or as the suppression of trauma.

There is a dominant liberation narrative in Zimbabwe, as well as in many other African states, that focuses on the heroic acts of selected men and that simultaneously excludes women's perspectives. Chiurai likens the exclusion or repression of women's stories in history to traumatic silence. As the first point of reference in visualising this silence that emerges from a place of trauma, Chiurai considers two visually similar paintings by two different artists, Caravaggio (Fig. 4.11) and Gentileschi (Fig. 4.12). Caravaggio's *Judith Beheading Holofernes* (circa 1598) (Fig. 4.11) visualises the story of God's deliverance of the Jewish people from the Assyrians, by working through a widow named Judith. This story is narrated in the Book of Judith, which can be argued to be very similar to the Book of Esther in the Old Testament. The story in the Book of Judith is that Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Assyria , directed Holofernes on an expedition to destroy Palestine. The Assyrian army, led by Holofernes, laid siege to the Jewish city of Bethulia. In this city, Holofernes was warned by another general named Achior of the possible negative consequences of attacking the Jews, but Holofernes did not heed this warning. In the following days, a Jewish widow named Judith went and foretold to Holofernes that he would be victorious over the Jews. Holofernes then invited Judith into his tent where she cut off his head as he lay in drunken sleep. Then Abra, the maidservant of Judith, wrapped Holofernes's head in a piece of cloth and packed it in a bag. Judith then took Holofernes's head as a sign of victory (Och 2014; Bal and Gentileschi 2005).

The tale of Judith is a story of courage; it positions a woman as a protagonist who impedes doom from ensuing on the people of her shared social linguistic grouping. Gentileschi's *Judith Slaying Holofernes* (1620-1621) (Fig 4.12) references a personal trauma. Artemisia was trained as a painter by her father Orazio who was a friend of Caravaggio (Fig. 4.11). When Artemisia was a teenager, she began working under the mentorship of another artist and acquaintance of her father known as Agostino Tassi. In 1612, Artemisia accused Tassi of raping her, and he was tried in court (Bal and Gentileschi 2005). Tassi was a well-known man, and he had colleagues and friends in high social ranks who helped him obtain a ruling in his favour. As Gentileschi could not be vindicated by the law, she opted to respond to the situation by making a realistic painting of herself beheading Tassi.

Gentileschi referenced Caravaggio's painting *Judith Beheading Holofernes* (circa 1598) (Fig. 4.11), however, a comparison between the two paintings reveals some differences. Because Gentileschi's pain and trauma came from a real and not imagined place, she painted her *Judith Slaying Holofernes* (1620-1621) (Fig. 4.12) portraying a more intense sense of violence. The elderly woman on the right-hand side of Caravaggio's painting (Abra) holds a piece of cloth as she looks at Holofernes's head being cut off by Judith. In Gentileschi's painting, Abra holds down Tassi's head as Gentileschi slays him. Tassi struggles to save himself and grabs onto Abra's blue dress while Gentileschi slits his throat open and his blood runs onto white beddings. Gentileschi also replaces the red curtain that is draped in the background of Caravaggio's painting with a dark background achieved with brush strokes that are coloured dark and brownish red.

Figure 4.14. Kudzanai Chiurai, *We Live in Silence XIIII* (2017), Pigment inks on fibre paper. Image courtesy of the Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa and London, United Kingdom.

The compositions in the photographic series *We Live in Silence* (2017) (Fig. 4.14) reference the two paintings *Judith Beheading Holofernes* (circa 1598) (Fig. 4.11) and *Judith Slaying Holofernes* (1620-1621) (Fig. 4.12). According to Chiurai (2018), his digital prints titled *We Live in Silence* (Fig. 4.14) explore what happens when a silence that has been suppressed for an extended period of time implodes. As noted earlier, when Chiurai returned to Zimbabwe he was confronted by a situation in which the society's frustrations had been suppressed for an extended period of time. There is a wide range of possibilities of the outcome of suppressed anger and trauma. It could result in violent outbursts as in the case of Gentileschi,

or if not released the pressure could continue building up internally. These two possibilities are of course not an exhaustive list of reactions that could arise in the breaking (or not) of silence.

In the photographic print, *We Live in Silence XIIII* (2017), Chiurai references Gentileschi's *Judith Slaying Holofernes* (1620-1621) (Fig. 4.12) and replaces the two white women with two black women beheading a white man. One possible reading of Chiurai's ninth photograph in the series of prints titled *We Live in Silence* (2017) is that it draws from both Judith's and Gentileschi's narratives to provide an interpretation of what could possibly happen when the narratives silenced from a historical perspective of the colonial past, implode. Here, Chiurai visually subverts the notion of the black man as the sole victim and victor of the colony and recasts black women as liberators who cut off the head of colonialism, which is symbolised as the white man. The postures of all the three characters, that is the two black women and the white man, stage Gentileschi's composition, however their facial expressions resemble those of the characters in Caravaggio's painting. The woman with braids and a blue suit in Chiurai's photograph (Fig. 4.14) has a similar facial expression to Abra in Caravaggio's painting (Fig. 4.11), while the face of the black woman in a white suit mimics Judith's face.

What does is it mean to portray black women audaciously slaying a white man? Women, particularly black women, have been erased from history (Kalichini 2017). They have been overlooked, their bodies have been objectified while their narratives have been suppressed and silenced. With the exception of a few examples, black women have seldom been visually represented in such a position of power as Chiurai has depicted them in the image *We Live in Silence XIIII* (2017). Of course Chiurai is not the first and only artist to position black women from Africa as liberators or victors of colonialism. Artworks such as Kiluanji Kia Henda's *As God Wants and the Devil Likes* (2014) (https://www.artatsite.com/Afrika/details/Kia-Henda-Kiluanji-Queen-Nzinga-Luanda-Angola-ArtAtSite.html) and even my own work ... *these gestures of memory* (2020)[59] can be argued to do just that. However, what makes *We Live in Silence* (2017) remarkable is its consolidation in representing women as victors while simultaneously highlighting the violence that is associated not only with independence movements but also with the trauma of being silenced. The effects of trauma and violence

[59] See Chapter Five.

that are discussed by both Slavoj Žižek (2009 and 2011) and David Apter (1997)[60] are not romanticised in *We Live in Silence* (2017). Not to say that violence is glamourised and diminished in my own work or Kia Henda's, this is to point out that the vehemence of dealing with and responding to colonial oppression are overtly presented to the viewers of *We Live in Silence* (2017). In this way, the viewer is confronted with the reality of violence in a manner that they cannot avoid its consequences.

The inevitable result of violence is the descent into chaos (Žižek 2009 and 2011; Apter 1997). According to Apter (1997) the oppressed, the traumatised, and the silenced almost always eventually rise up and attempt to overthrow the power structures that have subdued them. Like the character of Tassi in the painting *Judith Slaying Holofernes* (1620-1621) (Fig. 4.12) by Artemisia Gentileschi, most oppressive systems fight back against the resistance of the oppressed, so when an uprising occurs the systems of oppression tend to become more aggressive. This push back and forth continues until one of the parties is defeated or succumbs to the other, or is beheaded, as in the case of the artworks *Judith Beheading Holofernes* (circa 1598) (Fig. 4.11), *Judith Slaying Holofernes* (1620-1621) (Fig. 4.12) and *We Live in Silence XIIII* (2017) (Fig. 4.14). The truth is that systems of oppression are not easily killed, and that there is always a possibility that they can reinvent their strategies of subjugation or that they can mutate into a different form.

There seems to be no finality or resolution to violence; in the case of Gentileschi, her portrayal of Tassi's death did not result in his physical death or in an actual guilty verdict for him, at least at the time. I can speculate as an art historian and make the argument that her painting may have been a response to her anger with Tassi and possibly the judicial system, but the reality is that violence did not stop, and it did not die. It continued, and Tassi probably remained a constant reminder of her past trauma. The lack of resolution is a matter that is pertinent to the questions that Chiurai (2018) raises in his work; What happens after the systems that have silenced women's narratives are beheaded? Do the systems re-set or do historical narratives become more representative?

[60] In Chapter Two, I discuss the definitions violence in relation to oppressive power structures by referencing Slavoj Žižek's *From Democracy to Divine Violence. Democracy in What State* (2011), *Violence: Six sideways reflections* (2009) and David Apter's *The legitimization of violence* (1997).

4.2.2. Voicing Silence through Moving Images

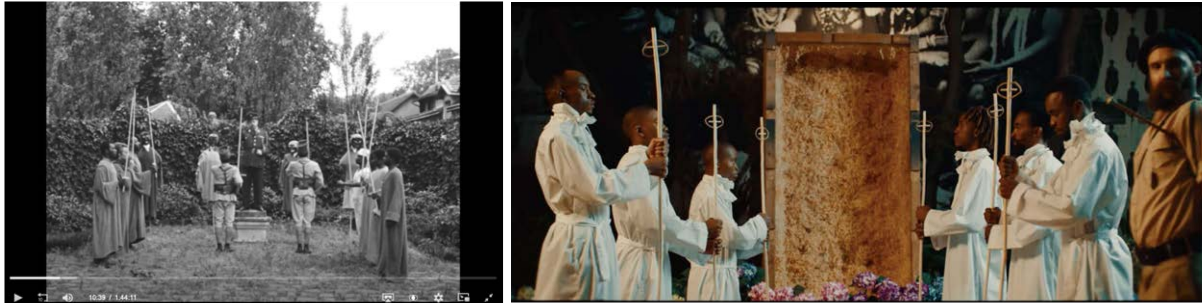

Figure 4.15 A scene from the film *Soleil Ô* (1970), film, 1.37:1. Image courtesy of Internet Archive, https://archive.org/details/soleil-o.

Figure 4.16 A scene from the film *We Live in Silence* (2017), Single channel film, 36:46. Image courtesy of the Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa and London, United Kingdom.

The film *We Live in Silence* (2017) (Fig. 4.10 and 4.16) tells an alternative narrative about colonialism in Africa and grapples with issues that relate to the politics surrounding representations of black women in historical narratives. It is divided into seven chapters of unequal lengths and follows a black woman as the protagonist, played by South African actress Botshelo Motuba. *We Live in Silence* (2017) combines historical footage from Associated Press (AP) Archives (http://www.aparchive.com) and scenes that reference the film *Soleil Ô* (1970) (Fig. 4.13 and 4.15) directed by Med Hondo.

Soleil Ô (1970) (Fig. 4.13 and 4.15) is a complex and multifaceted film, set at the dawn of independence in Africa and focuses on the experiences of African migrants who travelled to France in search of greener pastures. The film's protagonist is a Mauritanian man who leaves his home to join the labour force in France. However, when he arrives in Europe, he soon becomes disgruntled and disheartened by the hostile treatment he and other African immigrants are subjected to both from the institutions and citizens they come into contact with. The resentment the immigrants are faced with is echoed through a white male character in the middle of the movie who says, 'We gave them their independence, why do they have to come here?'. This statement reflects the notion of the other that is deeply entrenched throughout the film. 'The other' is what intrigued Zimbabwean artist Chiurai when he first saw the film in Berlin, he says that he found the movie captivating in the way in which it grapples with issues of migration and racism in a manner that is still relevant today (Chiurai 2018). Beyond that, Chiurai (2018) notes that he observed the absence of a black woman

protagonist in *Soleil Ô* (1970) which led him to raise questions around representations of black women.

We Live in Silence (2017) not only makes visual references to *Soleil Ô* (1970), but also adapts sections of its script. Chiurai resolves the absence of women by casting a black female lead who plays the role of an aristocrat and capitalist. This complicates how black women then become represented in the telling of independence in Africa; on one layer there is their absence and invisibility, which has been argued by multiple scholars such as Oyèrónké Oyěwùmí (1997), Sabine Marschall (2009 and 2010), Saidiya Hartman (2019) and even myself, Gladys Kalichini (2017), and on another layer it is the question of how they tend to be represented in the instances when they become visible. It is a question of how we look at and how we see women to even begin to respond to the gender bias in historical narratives. There is a tendency to associate women with specific categories; (i) as victims or damsels in distress who are either supposed to be saved or conquered (Fulop 2012),[61] (ii) as super beings capable of surviving and withstanding harsh conditions (Wallace 1999),[62] (iii) as villains (Eager 2016),[63] and (iv) in relation to domestic gender roles, as explained in the introduction to this dissertation (Lyons 1999 and 2004). When we are comfronted by Chiurai's protagonist who is both a black woman and a capitalist, it disrupts the categorical boxes in which narratives of women are generally organised and gives room for newer perspectives and questions to emerge. The African immigrants in *Soleil Ô* (1970) are faced with a situation in which they are rejected both by the system and by individuals, while *We Live in Silence* (2017) presents the question around the willingness and readiness of history and memory not

[61] Rebecca Naomi Fulop's PhD dissertation 'Heroes, Dames, and Damsels in Distress: Constructing Gender Types in Classical Hollywood Film Music' (2012) examines the construction of gender in films of the classical Hollywood era (1935–1960) and argues that women were mostly presented as victims.

[62] *Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman* (1999) by Michelle Wallace speaks about how women were marginalised by the patriarchal culture of Black Power by providing an in-depth analysis of some of the ways in which a female subjectivity is misconstrued through the advancement of myths about black womanhood.

[63] In the book *From Freedom Fighters to Terrorists: Women and Political Violence* (2016), Paige Wailey Eager discusses how women who participate in political activities are portrayed. Her argument is built on the theoretical assumption that women are rarely considered as participants of political violence, and that when they do engage in political activities, they are either seen as aberrations (exceptional) or as villains.

only to acknowledge women's presence but also to accept them in whatever form they present themselves.

Figure 4.17 A scene of a white man talking in the film *Soleil Ô* (1970), film, 1.37:1. Image courtesy of Internet Archive, https://archive.org/details/soleil-o.

Figure 4.18 Opening scene of the film *We Live in Silence* (2017), single channel film, 36:46. Image courtesy of the Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa and London, United Kingdom.

The films *We Live in Silence* (2017) and *Soleil Ô* (1970) have similar opening and closing scenes, albeit their protagonists have different genders. *Soleil Ô* (1970) begins with an animation of a black male personality along with two white male characters that transitions into an optic of eight men standing with arms crossed across their chests (Fig. 4.13). The men begin to walk towards a sculpture of Jesus placed on a rectangular table covered with a white cloth. When gathered around the table, the African men confess about speaking their languages to a priest who then absolves them of their sins. This imagery is accompanied by a monologue by a man who laments about the effects of colonialism in eradicating the culture and way of life of Africans. The opening script reads as follows:

> It is us, the Africans, who have come from afar

Hahahahahahaha [hysterical laughter for approximately 2 minutes]

We had our own civilisation

We forged iron

We had our popular dances and songs

…

Our commerce wasn't just barter

We made gold and silver coins

…

We had our own literature

We had our legal terminology, our religion, our science and teaching methods.[64]

We Live in Silence (2017) also opens with a monologue, but this time a woman speaks about how colonialism has affected her (Fig. 4.18). Chapter one of *We Live in Silence* (2017) (Fig. 4.18) parallels the prelude of *Soleil Ô* (1970) (1970) and a scene shown towards the end of the 1970 film in which a white man in a suit is seen walking towards the camera and utters the words, 'You are branded by white civilisation, you think white.' *We Live in Silence* (2017) opens with a black woman standing in the centre of the camera frame against the same backdrop as in the photographic series *Genesis [Je n'isi isi]* (2016) (Figs. 4.5 to 4.9) and differently coloured hydrangea flowers. Chiurai extends Hondo's script as the woman in the prelude of his film takes off her white gloves and says:

I began to study your graphs

To read your thoughts

To speak Shakespeare, or Molière, to cite Rousseau

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[64] Transcribed by Gladys Kalichini. The free copy of *Soleil Ô* (1970) on https://archive.org/details/soleil-o contains English subtitles.

Sweet France

I have been whitewashed by your culture

But, I am still as black as the day I was born

And I bring you greetings from Africa.[65]

There are two main differences that stand out between these introductory scenes; first is of course the gender of the narrator or speaker and second is the tone. The man in *Soleil Ô* (1970) outlines what he and other colonised people have lost, he speaks about what they had using the past tense. Chiurai's female protagonist on the other hand, acknowledges that she has been affected by colonialism but continues to state that although she has been whitewashed by the culture of her oppressor, she remains as black as the day she was born. In the final chapter of *We Live in Silence* (2017) (Fig. 4.10), the same woman is presented at the head of table in a scene that is reminiscent of the Biblical Last Supper mentioned in Matthew 26:17–29, Mark 14:12–25, Luke 22:7–38, and I Corinthians 11:23–25, and famously depicted by Italian artists Leonardo da Vinci in the mural *The Last Supper* (1495–1498). Chiurai's film concludes with black women feasting (Fig. 4.10) while their surroundings are imbued with chaos. Here Chiurai again parallels and draws from Hondo's film, which ends in a similar manner. In the closing scene of *Soleil Ô* (1970) the protagonist can be seen joining a white family for a meal on a table set in on the lawn that is outside of a house. The protagonist then stands up and runs into the nearby bush, while visuals of black men falling into water, a bush on fire and images of black civil rights icons such as Malcom X appear on the screen. These visuals are accompanied by the sound of a man screaming in anguish and the movement of the arms of a fast-paced clock. The protagonist sits down in the middle of the bush and breathes heavily after frantically running and screaming in the midst of trees, and finally, the phrase 'A SUIVRE' appears on the screen against a solid black background. *A suivre*, is French for 'to be continued'.

Again, just like the artworks *Judith Beheading Holofernes* (circa 1598) (Fig. 4.11), *Judith Slaying Holofernes* (1620-1621) (Fig. 4.12) and *We Live in Silence XIIII* (2017) (Fig. 4.14), violence in the films *We Live in Silence* (2017) and *Soleil Ô* (1970) is presented in a manner

[65] Transcribed by Gladys Kalichini.

that it culminates in chaos. Both films do not end with the othered group being accepted by the system that oppresses them; for Hondo, the African immigrants do not become any more accepted into the Western community, and for Chiurai, although *We Live in Silence* (2017) focuses on women, their narratives do not become part of the dominant liberation narrative but rather become new alternative narratives that then exist in parallel to the grander and more dominant independence narrative. The disarray that breaks out at the end of both films could be read as a resetting or the re-emergence of violence as argued by Žižek (2009 and 2011) and Apter (1997) in their texts. This subsection opened with the following quote by Chiurai,

> We do not live in the post-independence [state] or post colonies, we live in colonial futures that are synchronised with the past … that have not reformed or that have not changed … We exist in [a] constant feedback loop that goes round and round, experiencing the same events time and time again (Chiurai, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2qRbSA-qR0&t=799s).

The loop that connects the present, past and future that Chiurai (2018) refers to, can be related to the cycle of political violence that is described by Apter (1997: 3). In the second chapter of this thesis, I mention that Apter (1997: 3) defines the cycle of political violence as a never-ending phenomenon. Violence rarely manifests itself as a linear process that starts at one point and ends at another, it is like a closed spiral that goes round and round with no definite end point.

4.3. Reshaping Memory via The Library of Things We Forgot to Remember

Figure 4.19 The Library of Things We Forgot to Remember, 44 Stanley, Johannesburg, South Africa (2021). Photograph by Anthea Pokroy.

The Library of Things We Forgot to remember (Fig. 4.19) is a project conceptualised in 2017 by Kudzanai Chiurai. It is a collection of audio and visual materials that reflect on liberation movements in Africa and black resistance histories across the globe (https://kudzanaichiurai.com). The library developed from a collaborative project that Chiurai worked on with the Pan African Space Station live radio studio hosted by Chimurenga (a pan-African platform for literature, art and politics). This collaborative venture was first installed at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe in Harare as part of *We Need New Names* (2017), which is Chiurai's first solo exhibition in the country of his birth. The exhibition is curated by Candice Allison and takes its title from NoViolet Bulawayo's (Elizabeth Zandile Tshele's) novel with the same title *We Need New Names* (2013). The timing of Chiurai's *We Need New Names* (2017) was impeccable as it opened on 2 November 2017, in the midst of protests that were calling for the resignation of Robert Mugabe who had been Zimbabwe's president since independence in 1980. The first Zimbabwean president's term of office eventually came to an end on 21 November 2017, just nineteen days after the opening of Chiurai's exhibition. *We Need New Names* (2017) mirrors NoViolet Bulawayo's 2013 novel, which is also set during a moment of political revolution.

NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* (2013) narrates the chronicles of Darling, a fictional young African girl in Zimbabwe and the USA. Darling was born in Zimbabwe, and at quite an early age in her life, she experienced the conflict that unfolded in the country of her birth that disrupted her family's way of being. The men in Darling's community leave their homes in search of more economically viable options abroad while the military police remain attacking and destroying the homes in the community in which Darling resides (Bulawayo 2013). Because of the situation in her home country, Darling eventually travels to the USA where she finds that there are limited opportunities available to her because of the colour of her skin and gender (ibid.). The novel takes a humorous tone to complexly grapple with notions of social conflict, displacement and migration during and after a time of colonialism.

The state in Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* (2013) is plagued with social injustices and inequalities that are a result of the new government's greed and mismanagement of local resources and power. By the time of Chiurai's first solo exhibition in Zimbabwe, the social and political conditions in the country were eerily similar to the ones described by NoViolet Bulawayo within the context of her novel. The exhibition *We Need New Names* (2017) endeavours to trace and map out the trajectory of social and political revolutions in Zimbabwe by considering the influences of nationalism and Pan-Africanism[66] on liberation movements in Africa. It also endeavours to explore ideological connections between civil rights and Black Power movements[67] in the USA and independence movements in Africa. One of the focus points of the exhibition is a critical exploration of the potency of music and sound to perform as retainers of memories associated with the political history of southern

[66] Pan-Africanism is generally understood as an advocation for the liberation and unification of Africa. Although Pan-Africanism is often associated to the solidarity of political and cultural movements, it can take several forms such as alliances of religious groups, various economies and so forth. For a further understanding of the concept of Pan-Africanism refer to *Pan-Africanism and" Pan-Africanism": Some Historical Notes* (Shepperson 1962), *Where, What, Who, When: A Few Notes on 'African' Conceptualism* (Enwezor 1999) and *Dak'Art: The Making of Pan-Africanism and the Contemporary* (Konaté and Elliott 2013).

[67] The civil rights movement is said to have taken place between 1954 to 1968, and its main purpose was to abolish racial segregation and discrimination in the United States (Hartman 2019: 2-3). The Black Power movement began in the 1960s and it advocated for the economic, cultural, social and political empowerment of black people in institutions in the United States (ibid.). For a further analysis of the two movements refer to *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Rights-Black Power Era* (Joseph 2006).

Africa (https://contemporaryand.com/exhibition/kudzanai-chiurai-we-need-new-names/). The exhibition includes some of Chiurai's drawings and oil paintings, films and photographic prints shown in previous shows such as *We Live in Silence* (2017) (Figs. 4.10, 4.14, 4.16 and 4.18) and *Genesis [Je n'isi isi]* (2016) (Figs. 4.5 to 4.9). Chiurai's artworks were installed alongside some paintings that form part of the permanent collection of the National Gallery of Zimbabwe. The show also included newspaper clippings sourced from the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ-2) as well as political posters and vinyl records of speeches and music that Chiurai has been collecting over several years. The exhibition was accompanied by a four-day programme (from 9 November 2017 until 11 November 2017) in which the Pan African Space Station set up a radio studio inside the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, where live sessions and recordings that included music and conversations by artists, activists, writers and singers were aired (Fig. 4.20).

Figure 4.20 The Pan African Space Station (PASS) set up inside the National Gallery of Zimbabwe (2017). Photograph courtesy of the Pan African Space Station (PASS).

The discussions at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe that accompanied the exhibition *We Live in Silence* (2017) included Chiurai and the likes of the multidisciplinary artist Tinofireyi Aero5ol Zhou, and musicians such as Netsayi and the Monkey Nuts. Some of the sounds that were played during these sessions included speeches by African politicians and

music from albums such as *Varombo Kuvarombo*[68] (1989) by Thomas Mapfumo and the Blacks Unlimited (Fig. 4.21) and *Trouble in the Land of Plenty* (1999) by Stimela (Fig. 4.22). The concept of the of The Library of Things We Forgot to remember (Fig. 4.19) is mainly birthed from the exhibition *We Need New Names* (2017) (Fig. 4.20). Following its debut in Harare in 2017, the collection of vinyls and newspaper clippings shown as part of *We Need New Names* (2017) began to travel to different locations and to be exhibited as a library. The materials were later installed in South Africa at the Goodman Gallery in Cape Town and even abroad in France (Fig. 4.22). The library collection continued to grow and to diversify the range of its materials and the form it took. In some instances, the library is presented as a traditional library that one can visit and engage with, and be given informative materials, whereas at other times it is installed as an interactive art installation as in the case of the 2021 group exhibition titled *Ubuntu, a Lucid Dream* (*un rêve lucide*) at Palais de Tokyo in France (Fig. 4.23).

Figure 4.21. *Thomas Mapfumo And the Blacks Unlimited | Varombo Kuvarombo* (1989). Image courtesy of the Pan African Space Station (PASS).

Figure 4.22. *Stimela, Trouble in the Land of Plenty* (1999). Image courtesy of the Pan African Space Station (PASS).

[68] *Varombo* means ‘the poor’ while *kuvarombo* translates as ‘for the poor’. A combination the two forms the phrase ‘the poor to the poor’. It is an expression of solidarity among the poor. (A sense of community of the poor, separated from the rich) (Muvhuti 2022).

Figure 4.23. Kudzanai Chiurai addressing a group of people inside the installation of The Library of Things We Forgot to Remember during the exhibition Ubuntu, a Lucid Dream (*un rêve lucide*) at Palais de Tokyo in France (2021). Photograph by Daniela Ometto, photograph courtesy of Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France.

Regardless of in what shape or form Chiurai's The Library of Things We Forgot to Remember is installed, it always offers an interactive space that stimulates conversations about the understanding of the liberation struggle as a continuous and ongoing process of decolonisation (Chiurai 2021). The Library of Things We Forgot to Remember focuses on the fluidity of memory and considers some of the ways in which history can be reshaped. Whenever the library travels and is installed in different spaces, it shapeshifts to fit within different contexts and to speak to various topics that relate to the understanding of the political past of southern Africa. Sometimes its focus is on the role of archival material (be it sound, photographs or text) in the preservation of history, and at other times it emphasises the representation of women in history and memory, because gender remains one of the major concerns of Chiurai's professional artistic practice. In fact, one of the recordings that seems to be consistently present in many of the iterations of the library is the sound of words extracted from Oliver Tambo's 1985 speech titled *Render South Africa Ungovernable!* at the anniversary celebrations of the South African political party the African National Congress (ANC) (Bashi 2019: 1). The words are:

> I declare the year of the women and charge the entire democratic and patriotic forces of our country with the task of joining in the effort to mobilise our women to unite in struggle for people's power.

In 2018 the library was installed as part of the exhibition *Madness and Civilisation* (2018) at the Kalmar Konstmuseum in Sweden (Fig. 4.24). Here the library has a similar theoretical focus as it does within the context of the exhibition *We Need New Names* (2017) in Harare – it explores the constructions of history, memory and power. The exhibition at Kalmar Konstmuseum (Fig. 4.23) derives its title from Michel Foucault's *Madness and Civilisation: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (1964) which is manuscript that endeavours to elucidate our understanding of mental illness (or madness, as he puts it) by analysing historical documents. Chiurai's *Madness and Civilisation* (2018) comprises of some of the work previously shown in the exhibitions *We Need New Names* (2017), *We Live in Silence* (2017) and a series of newer mixed media drawings on paper such as *Pick n Pay* (2018) (Fig. 2.26).

Figure 4.24 Installation view of the Library of Things We Forgot to Remember in *Madness and Civilisation* (2018) at the Kalmar Konstmuseum (2021). Photograph courtesy of the Kalmar Konstmuseum.

According to psychologists Brendan Maher and Winifred, B. Maher (1982: 756) Foucault's script is a significant contribution to the broader practice of studying the past, because it provides a useful framework in which history and memory can be understood. They argue that one of the complications of contemporary explorations of historical studies is that they tend to consider the past in the light of the present, and this way of engaging with history

does not offer a very realistic ideas about the past (Maher and Maher 1982). Foucault's *Madness and Civilisation: A History of Insanity in the Age of* Reason (1964) does the opposite, it speaks about behavioural patterns in the past as they must have existed in their time, place and social context. The Library of Things We Forgot to Remember within the context of *Madness and Civilisation* (2018) draws from Foucault's text and creates an atmosphere that facilitates an intergenerational dialogue by placing materials that are associated with different eras in the same place. There are sounds recorded in the past and artworks produced in more contemporary times that are curated into the same exhibition.

The series of drawings that are debuted in *Madness and Civilisation* (2018) are mainly crayon scribbles above text presented as fictional letters and declarations signed by historical characters such as Ian Smith (Fig. 4.25.). The drawings not only stage conversations across various generations, but also give a sense of chaos similar to some of his previous work including *Genesis [Je n'isi isi] VIII* (2016), *We Live in Silence* (2017) and *We Need New Names* (2017). Chiurai's work is conceptually interwoven together such that it seems not to have a point of finality. Perhaps, as an ongoing project, The Library of Things We Forgot to Remember summarises Chiurai's artistic practice as one that keeps evolving and changing. The argument that seems to be presented in much of Chiurai's work is that religion, particularly Christianity, has played a major role in the facilitation of the West's colonisation of Africa and consequently in the writing of its history in a patriarchal manner.

Figure 4.25. Kudzanai Chiurai, *Pick n Pay* (2018), ink and crayon on Fabriano, 42 x 29.7 cm. Photograph courtesy of the Kalmar Konstmuseum, Kalmar, Sweden.

4.4. Conclusion

As a closing note to this chapter, I agree to a large extent that the way the past of Africa, and by extension its liberation chronicles, are narrated is patriarchal in that history tends to exalt men and to overlook women. I also agree that Christianity has indeed played a significant role in the establishment of colonialism and of course in the maintenance of patriarchal history. However, while I am of the view that Chiurai's work is meaningful, there are some theoretical and historical aspects which arguably need to be further unpacked and interrogated. Chiurai's work argues that the Christian Bible is patriarchal, based on an analysis of only the Book of Genesis while the Bible has seventy-three books for the Catholic and Anglican churches and sixty-six books for Protestant, Pentecostal and Evangelical Christian churches today. I am not arguing that the Bible is not patriarchal in the way it is written or interpreted or even in relation to how many women writers there are versus men, I am rather suggesting that Chiurai's argument of Christianity as whole being patriarchal could be substantiated more if his argument can be extended to the rest of the Bible. Chiurai also overlooks Sarah, or Sarai the wife of Abraham and mother of Isaac in his engagement with the Book of Genesis. In a manner of speaking, Chiurai does to Sarai what he argues history has done and continues to do to women.

Another aspect that was particularly intriguing about Chiurai's artistic work to me as an art historian is the way he references biblical stories to make his argument. In the photographic series *Genesis [Je n'isi isi] VIII* (2016) in particular, he references the Book of Genesis and the journal *Men of Livingstone: A Brief Account of their Part in his Major Expeditions 1852-1873* (1955) to argue that history is usually written and interpreted from the perspective of men to glorify men. Again, I agree with Chiurai's argument, and extend it to the accounts of Jesus's disciples in telling the story of Christ, which are presented in the New Testament. *Men of Livingstone: A Brief Account of their Part in his Major Expeditions 1852-1873* (1955) can be argued to actually mirror the accounts of Jesus's twelve disciples, who were all men.

Chiurai's work relates to the past, present and future. The point that Foucault makes in *Madness and Civilisation: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (1964), is that to understand any phenomenon, one has to consider it both within and outside of the context in which it occurs. For the exhibition *Madness and Civilisation* (2018) and the project The Library of Things We forgot to Remember, Chiurai seems to follow the advice of Foucault

by putting information that relates to different time periods in proximity to one another As a possible extension of Chiurai's work, I am intrigued to explore how the evolution of religious practices and beliefs in Zimbabwe, and of course on the African continent, impact the reading and interpretation of his work. There was a time when it was unheard of for women to preach in churches, but today women can be seen not only preaching in churches but also in leading churches (although there are still very few churches led by women). I have seen women administer holy communion to the congregation at the St Ignatius Catholic Church and St. Peter's Anglican Parish in Lusaka. I cannot say for sure whether this is something that happens within different geographical contexts. I am of the view that considering some of the ways in which Christianity is practised in different contexts will reveal even more interesting insights, in some cases it might even reveal how women, like Judith in Caravaggio's *Judith Beheading Holofernes* (circa 1598), Gentileschi's self-portrait in *Judith Slaying Holofernes* (1620-1621) and the two black women in Chiurai's *We Live in Silence XIIII* (2017), push back against remaining oppressed, silenced or invisible.

Chapter Five

Looking Within: The Embodiment of Absence and Presence in Gladys Kalichini's Artworks

Figure 5.1. A portrait of Gladys Kalichini (2021). Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

I begin this last chapter of my dissertation from a place of reflection and from a position of looking within. My name is Gladys Kalichini, and I am the art historian writing this dissertation as well as the visual artist and researcher whose work the discussion in this last chapter focuses on. In the first four chapters, I have largely situated myself as an art historian navigating and engaging with selected partitions of national archives and public independence monuments in Zambia and Zimbabwe, as well as analysing selected artistic works of Zimbabwean born artists Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude and Kudzanai Chiurai. Thus far I have looked in from the outside and looked out from the position of an insider. In this chapter, I look in from the inside as an art historian to critically reflect on my own practice as an artist.

In this chapter I perform multiple roles and position myself as belonging to multiple spheres (Tuhiwai Smith 2013). Beyond being the artist whose work this chapter discusses, as well as the art historian writing about my own professional art practice, I am also a black Zambian woman living and working in Lusaka, and in many ways a descendant of the histories and narratives of black women freedom fighters that this thesis explores. I recognise that writing

about my own work within the context of an art history doctoral dissertation could arguably be considered as unorthodox, however, I insist that it is important for me to write about my work. It is imperative that I critically engage with my own work within the context of this dissertation because I am a black woman artist whose artworks largely focus on narratives about women in relation to broader national narratives. It is also important that I mention that I am in a unique position in relation to the discourse on visual arts in Zambia where there are very few individuals who hold a postgraduate academic qualification specifically in art history. To be exact, there is currently only one art history PhD, Andrew Mulenga, who also studied at Rhodes University in South Africa under the supervision of Professor Ruth Simbao.

I am a Zambian artist (Fig. 5.1) whose work centres around notions of erasure and visibilities of women in colonial resistance histories. My artistic practice is focused on developing a concept about the invisibility of women within the structures that preserve memories, such as archives, monuments and personal recollections of the past. I obtained my Master of Fine Art (MFA) at Rhodes University in South Africa in 2018 and currently work and live in Lusaka in Zambia. My work has shown in exhibitions in Zambia and abroad including *Exhuming Histories* (2018) at the National Art Gallery in Livingstone, Zambia, *Feminine(S): Visualities, Actions and Affections* (2020) as part of the 12th Mercosur Biennial in Brazil, *Empowerment* (2022-2023) at the Kunstmuseum in Wolfsburg in Germany as well as *On Dispersals, Connectedness and the Performativity of Languages and Histories* (2022-2023) as part of the 13th Bamako Biennale of African photography in Mali. I have also participated in various art residencies including Fountainhead in Miami, United States of America, Künstlehaus Bethanien in Berlin Germany and Decoloniale, which is also situated in Berlin.

In 2015 I attended the fifth rendition of the Asiko International Workshop, which took place in Maputo, Mozambique. The Asiko International Workshop is an art residency founded by Nigerian curator Olabisi Silva as an innovative programme that endeavours to fill an educational gap within the arts industry on the African continent where, with the exception of South Africa, there are few art schools or fine art departments in institutions of higher learning. The Asiko International Workshop is a project conceptualised as part of the library at the Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA) in Lagos and happens in different countries under different themes yearly. The one I attended was titled *A History of Contemporary Art in Mozambique in Four Weeks* (2015).

This chapter unfolds from a place of self-awareness and from a disposition in which I understand my urgency and agency as a practising woman artist and centre my voice as an art historian. The investigative approach that I employ in the discussion of my work in this chapter resonates with what Linda Tuhiwai Smith in *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (2021) and Boaventura de Sousa in *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide* (2015) explain as decolonial approaches in the production of knowledge. Both of these books advocate for the recognition and validation of various ways of knowing and producing knowledge. In in *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide* (2015), Boaventura de Sousa explores a concept he terms as 'cognitive injustice' which he defines as the failure to acknowledge the different ways in which various groups of people create information about themselves and their understanding of the world. Throughout his book, he argues that cognitive injustice often privileges Western ideas of knowing in a manner that results in the marginalisation of epistemologies produced in the Global South (or Souths) (de Sousa 2015). Tuhiwai Smith's argument in *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (2021) can arguably be considered as an extension of de Sousa's book. Tuhiwai Smith (2021) focuses on discussing the methodological approaches involved in the acquisition of information and production of context-specific epistemologies. The book encourages approaches that are culturally sensitive and appropriate and posits that knowledge that is created from a position of within, or belonging, tends to be more meaningful because it takes into consideration the cultural and political nuances, or complexities that pertain to the specific context.

This chapter is structured as a dialogue between myself and my artistic practice, and also as a conversation between my work and women scholars, artists, art historians and curators who have engaged with some of my artistic projects and works, such as Ruth Simbao, Tanya Poole, Heidi Sincuba, Annett Busch, Marie-Hélène Gutberlet, Magda Lipska and Fadzai Muchemwa. Simbao (https://www.ru.ac.za/ruthsimbao/) is a professor of art history at Rhodes University and also supervised the theoretical component of my MFA as well as this doctoral dissertation. The artists Poole (https://www.everardlondon.com/artist/TANYA_POOLE/biography/) and Sincuba (https://mg.co.za/article/2020-04-14-the-politics-of-guilt-and-the-violence-of-the-archive/) supervised the practical component of my MFA submission. The two components of my MFA submission came together to critically explore the social and political narratives of two women, Julia Chikamoneka (Fig. 1.2) and Alice Lenshina (Fig. 1.4), to highlight and address

the under- and misrepresentations of women in the political history of Zambia as recorded particularly within the National Archives of Zambia (NAZ-1) and the United National Independence Party (UNIP) Archives. Chikamoneka was a member of the Zambian independence political party known as UNIP and is predominantly remembered for undressing during the 1960 protest against a British inspired constitution that took place at the old airport in Lusaka, in the then Northern Rhodesia (Figs. 1.11 to 1.15). Lenshina is a prophetess and founder of the Lumpa Church in Zambia and memories of her are often associated with the 1950s clashes between members of her church and followers of the UNIP (Fig. 1.22 to 1.30). The main objective of my MFA was to critically analyse how the narratives of these two women changed over time. The body of work which I produced over a period of two years forms my solo exhibition *Chamoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (2017). It consists of large-scale monochromatic paintings and installations made with video, text and fabrics.

Busch is an assistant professor in the Trondheim Academy of Fine Art at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (https://www.ntnu.edu/employees/annettbu); Gutberlet is a professor of film studies at the University of Zurich (Universität Zürich) in Switzerland https://www.khist.uzh.ch/de/chairs/moderne/forschung/mam/about-mam/members/gutberlet.html); and Lipska is a curator currently working with Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw in east-central Poland (https://curatorsintl.org/about/collaborators/5515-magda-lipska). These three women co-curated an ongoing research-based project known as *Women On Aeroplanes.* The project focuses on memory, history and gender and employs a non-static framework to explore the meanings of the concepts of independence and interdependence (https://woa.kein.org). Muchemwa is a curator currently working with the National Gallery of Zimbabwe (https://curatorsintl.org/about/collaborators/7353-fadzai-veronica-muchemwa). Muchemwa and Busch wrote the two texts in the catalogue of my debut solo exhibition in Europe titled … *these gestures of memory* (2020), which opened in June of 2020 at Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin. Busch contributed an essay titled *Textures of Erasure: Sidelined Stories of a Marginalised Narrative* (2020) and Muchemwa and myself collaborated on a piece titled *Complexities of Memory: A Conversation Between Fadzai Muchemwa and Gladys Kalichini* (2020).

The exhibition … *these gestures of memory* (2020) focuses on the duality of memory and history, and explores mourning and commemorative practices in relation to the remembering and forgetting of narratives of women freedom fighters in Zambia and Zimbabwe (https://www.e-flux.com/announcements/331366/gladys-kalichini-these-gestures-of-memory/). … *these gestures of memory* (2020) can be considered as an extension of my MFA exhibition *Chamoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (2017) as it considers the narratives of Chikamoneka (Fig. 1.2) and Lenshina (Fig. 1.4) as well as other women freedom fighters in Zambia and Zimbabwe, such as Elizabeth Mulenje (Nkomeshya Mukamambo), Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa (Fig. 1.3), Joice Mujuru (Fig. 1.5), Mbuya Nehanda (Fig. 1.6), Margaret Dongo (Fig. 1.7) and Amai Misodzi to mention but a few. The two exhibitions are connected in that they are produced on a similar theoretical foundation that argues that women's narratives, at least in the specific context of Zambia and Zimbabwe, exist in a continuous process in which they are being erased over time. The discussion of my work in this chapter is categorised into three sub-components that are not chronologically organised. The first subsection focuses on death and mourning, the second considers notions about animating archives and histories and ideas of pushing back against historical erasure, and the third category elucidates some of my video and photographic works that explore ideas of care (Muchemwa and Kalichini 2020).

5.1. Mourning Absence: Conceptualising Death as the Process Invisibility

Figure 5.2. Gladys Kalichini, *Retitled – Ifishimoneka* (the unseen) (2016), ink and oil paint on canvas ,170 cm x 370 cm. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Absence and erasure are concepts that are interrelated and can be understood in a similar manner and can even be defined using similar terms. However, it is important to note that they are not synonyms, as erasure refers to the deletion of something or someone (Kalichini 2017) while absence is the lack of presence (Elkins 1996). Both absence and erasure can be conceptually related to notions that explain the complex dynamics of blindness and seeing (Elkins 1996, Mirzoeff 201; Simbao 2015a and 2015b). Blindness as discussed in the introduction of this dissertation, is the opposite of seeing or the inability to form vision – which is to say when we cannot see we experience a form of blindness. However, sometimes we are incapable of perceiving some things or seeing some people not because we are blind, but rather that we might be looking at an absence, a gap or an empty spot.

In the introduction to my MFA thesis, *Fyamoneka: Exploring the Erasure of Women Within Zambian History* (2017) I narrate a personal encounter with absence inside the NAZ-1 and the UNIP Archives. In 2016, I went to the national archives in Lusaka in a pursuit of photographic visual representations of the two women that my study focused on, Julia Chikamoneka and Alice Lenshina. I found that there was very little information about either Chikamoneka or Lenshina in the NAZ-1; there were fewer than ten photographs depicting either Chikamoneka or Lenshina, a couple of newspaper articles reporting about the Lumpa movement and the arrest of Lenshina, as well as only a book titled *Blood on their hands* (1998) in which Kampamba Mulenga writes about the political influences in the destruction of Lenshina's Lumpa Church. When I went to the UNIP Archives in the following days, I found that the archival materials had begun to rot and be destroyed, and the surviving material had been placed in boxes and stored away in an office inside a building along Chachacha Road[69] in the business district of Lusaka (Kalichini 2017). The NAZ-1 presented an absence of visual representations while the UNIP Archives quintessentially illustrated what erasure is.

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[69] Chachacha Road in Lusaka is named to commemorate a period in Zambian history referred to as the *Cha-Cha-Cha* era. This is the period spanning between the 1950s and 1960s that was characterised by intense local support for the nationalist party, UNIP. It is also, the peak of conflict between Africans and Europeans (the struggle for independence), as well as internal conflicts within Northern Rhodesian society (Macola 2007; Gewald, Hinfelaar and Macola 2011).

My initial reaction to the absence and process of erasure that were exhibited by the NAZ-1 and the UNIP Archives was similar to when I hear about the passing of someone. It is also crucial to note that at the time I was in the process of mourning the passing of my younger brother, who had died the previous year. When I returned to South Africa, my artistic practice began to draw from social practices that are performed surrounding death as a metaphor to engage with erasures, gaps and invisibilities that pertain to historical stories about women (Kalichini 2017; Busch 2020). Dead bodies within the context of my work at the time represented narratives of women and death was employed as a metaphor for erasure. I define the process of dying as a complex and non-linear transitioning between the states of being visible and invisible (Kalichini 2017: 21). I am a Christian who has been taught that all individuals are made up of a physical body and a soul which can sometimes be seen or not by the physical eye. I believe that when someone dies their body and soul separate, as in the painting *Retitled – Ifishimoneka* (the unseen) (2016) (Fig. 5.2). Death is not final, it is a point of transition in which beings can exist in the form of a spirit, as such the bodies of women that are portrayed in the course of dying in the series of paintings titled *Spectacles of Erasure* (2016 – 2017) (Figs. 5.2 and 5.3) reflect their process of being erased in the archives, and consequently from memory.

Figure 5.3. Gladys Kalichini, *A Spectacle of Death – Her Untitled Silence* (2016), oil, staples and fabric on canvas, 260 x 165 cm. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.4. Some members of the Lumpa Church killed during the shooting of Lumpa members in August (1964). Photographer unknown. Photograph courtesy of The National Archives of Zambia.

Erasure like death, can happen in a peaceful manner and at other times it can be abrasive. Both erasure and death can also be violent, as pictured in the images in Figures 5.3 and 5.4. *A*

Spectacle of Death – Her Untitled Silence (2016) (Fig. 5.3) is a painting of a human body covered with pieces of thick black cloth that is stitched and stapled onto the canvas. The body lies horizontally across a white background and a black shadow. The painting references an archival photograph of dead bodies of women and children following the attack on the members of Lenshina's Lumpa Church in 1964 (Fig 5.4) (Gordon 2012). The UNIP and the Lumpa Church had different ideologies that resulted into violent clashes among their followers, which culminated in the raiding and attacking of one of the villages where Lenshina resided by police officers who had been directed by UNIP and British colonial administrations (ibid.). [70]

Historical erasure can be manifested in various ways; a memory can fade over time due to the lack of diversity in the way it is stored, for instance, if information about a specific event is stored only in the memory of an individual it can be lost when that individual experiences memory loss or dies. Sometimes erasure happens when an event is curated out of a specific recollection, when some details that pertain to the event are altered or even recontextualised by historians (Hamilton and Skotnes 2014). Although the erasure of history can happen in several ways for various reasons, it is generally perceived as violent because it is thought to silence and marginalise some perspectives of the past by rendering them invisible or absent (Mudimbe-Boyi 1999: 10; Miller 2017). More often than not, the erasure of memories that relate to the past involves violent means such as negligence, forced removal and in some instances, it is manifested by means of demonising particular historical characters.[71]

The way in which Lenshina's chronicles (Figs. 1.4 and 1.21 to 1.29) are presented inside the NAZ-1 and the UNIP Archives is perhaps a good example that highlights the way in which memory can be erased through disparaging a collective of people and their beliefs. Information that relates to Lenshina and the Lumpa Church inside the NAZ-1 is not curated

[70] I provide more detailed information about the Lumpa Uprising in the 1950s in the first chapter of this thesis, specifically in the subsection that focuses on Alice Lenshina's story.

[71] For further readings on the subject of erasure as a form of violence refer to Elisabeth Mudimbe-Boyi's article 'The State, the Writer, and the Politics of Memory' (1999) in *Studies in 20th Century Literature* and the book chapter written by Kim Miller and titled 'The Pain of Memory and the Violence of Erasure: Real and Figural Displays of Female Authority in the Public Sphere' (2017) in *Public Art in South Africa: Bronze Warriors and Plastic Presidents* (2017).

into the segment of the archive that focuses on Zambia's independence. It is rather situated in the section of the archive that focuses on religious and cultural movements, where it is written about as a cult. The few pieces of information provided by the archive through newspaper clippings and quotations of photographs focus on accusing the church of participating in occultic rituals such as drinking urine and eating human waste. In the first chapter I write about how such allegations against Lenshina and her church are employed to make her a villain. *Spectacles of Erasure* (2016–2017) is a series of paintings of women's bodies that are in the process of dying; although death can occur in a peaceful manner, these paintings focus on corpses that have been brutally killed, and narratives that are erased through violent processes. I recognise that portraying women's bodies in such a state of dying in my paintings (Figs. 5.2 and 5.3) could be argued to be an act of violence in and of itself. However, it should be noted that the action of painting of bodies and partially covering them with pieces of cloth, references the process of preparing a dead body for burial.

Figure 5.5. Gladys Kalichini stitching a piece of black bark cloth onto the painting titled *Empty Graves – Unarchived Narratives* (2017). Photograph by Philiswa Lila. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.6. Gladys Kalichini, *Mortician's Diary – entry* I (2016), oil paint and fabric on canvas, 250 x 150 cm, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

The ways in which corpses are prepared for either burial or cremation varies across geographies, beliefs and even time periods. In the essay *Cleansing via the Senses As Eyesight Follows the Soul: Igshaan Adams' "Bismillah" Performance* (2015), Simbao explains that in the Muslim faith the body of a deceased person is prepared by a close relation. She states that the body is washed, anointed and wrapped with white fabrics before it is buried (Simbao 2015b). The process of preparing a body for burial within the Zambian context is somewhat similar to the one explained by Simbao (2015b). When someone is proclaimed dead in

Zambia, their body is taken to the mortuary where it will be prepared for burial. The corpse is usually washed by a mortician in the presence of a close relative. If the individual died in a manner that some of their parts became disfigured or relocated, the morticians usually mould them back into place. Sometimes this involves stitching some parts of the deceased person's body back together. After washing the body, the mortician then embalms it and dresses the dead in clothing selected by the family before placing the corpse inside a casket or coffin. It is very important that the eyes of the dead are closed so that they appear to be asleep (Fig. 5.6).

Many of the images which I referenced in painting the series *Spectacles of Erasure* (2016 – 2017) (Figs. 5.2 and 5.3) are photographs of people who were killed during the attack on the Lumpa Church members in the 1950s in Northern Rhodesia. Many people were killed, and their bodies were not accorded the opportunity to be prepared in a respectful manner, they were instead piled into large holes in the ground and buried. Some of them are buried in unmarked graves. My paintings (Figs. 5.2 and 5.3) do not objectify women's bodies or make a spectacle of violence, they rather engage with narratives about women that are in the process of being erased and attempt to restore some stories back into history in a careful and respectful manner which is exemplified through my process of producing the series *Spectacles of Erasure* (2016 – 2017) (Figs. 5.2 to 5.6). In Figure 5.5, I am seen stitching pieces of bark cloth onto a ten-metre painting titled *Empty Graves – Unarchived Narratives* (2017), and in *Mortician's Diary – entry I* (2016) (Fig. 5.6), I carefully cover a portrait of a figure with closed eyes and with black cloth.

5.1.1. Mourning for Erased Memories of Women Freedom Fighters

Figure 5.7. Gladys Kalichini, *Burial: Erasing Erasure* (2017). Video still. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.8. Gladys Kalichini, *Burial: Erasing Erasure* (2017). Video still. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

> *Tulelila abanesu abo twalinabo nabafwa,* (we are mourning, the ones we were with have died)
>
> *Lesa wesu wa maka yonse uba pale.* (Almighty God, bless their souls)
>
> *Imfwa.* (Death)
>
> *Imfwa wa ba msango shani iwe?* (Death, what is your nature?)
>
> *Iwe imfwa,* (you, death)
>
> *Wa isa wa tusendela*
>
> *Wa isa wa tusendela ba* [insert name of deceased person] (you have come and taken from us [name]).
>
> *Tulelosha abo twalinabo,* (we are mourning the ones we were with)
>
> *Nomba bali tusha,* (who have gone to rest)
>
> *Lesa wesu wa maka yonse uba pale.* (Almighty God, bless their souls)
>
> (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ts24xEkPPMM).

Mourning is a crucial aspect of dealing with loss. Grieving is not only important for comforting the living, but also it shows the dead how much they are loved. Death is a universal reminder of the corporeal vulnerability of life. This subsection discusses notions about mourning in relation to processes of engaging with stories about women that are in the process of becoming invisible and considers performances of female bodies in the processes of mourning that follow death (Butler 2004, 19). Quoted above is an iciBemba Catholic hymn titled *Tuleibukisha Abanesu Aba Fwa* (we remember the souls of those who are dead) that is sung during funerals and memorial services. Among many socio-linguistic groups in Zambia, the bodies of the living perform in various ways in the process of mourning and celebrating the life of the dead. During funerals, women announce their arrival by audibly weeping. Songs and hymns are used to comfort mourners and also to communicate with the souls of dead as they transition from this world into another realm. *Burial: Erasing Erasure* (2017) (Figs. 5.7 and 5.8) is a silent video projection of me in a chitenge and black shirt that I wore for my brother's funeral. The approximately four-minute video is a slow-paced slideshow of thirty-six photographs. In the video, I restage a funerary practice known as *chimbuya* in which selected mourners are covered with a white powder or mealie meal. The specific meaning and purpose of this practice within the specific context of funerals in Zambia remains largely unknown to me as an artist. There is a broader history of practices of using some white powder on people's bodies or on the ground in burial practices and also in relation to communicating with ancestors (Simbao 2006). The meanings and functions of *chimbuya* in Zambia vary from time to time, sometimes the powder is poured onto relatives of the deceased, or the individuals funding a funeral and at other times mealie meal is decanted onto friends and associates of the individual who has been announced as dead.

According to Judith Butler (2004), a life with value is one that one that will be celebrated and mourned after death. Butler (2004), begins and concludes the text *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (2004) with three questions that are useful in thinking about the relationships between mourning, violence and politics. The questions are: 'Who counts as human*?* Whose lives count as lives? And, what makes for a grievable life? (Butler 2004: 20). There are obviously a multitude of responses that can be provided as answers to these questions. For me as an artist and art historian, I do not think I could possibly answer these questions as they are as complex as death is. Death is inevitable, and I understand that within religious and spiritual contexts it is argued to function as a transition point from the world of the living into spiritual spheres. Having said that, I also do not fully understand the

process or purpose of death. I recall an intriguing conversation that I had with my cousin Mutale Charity Musadabwe at my aunt's funeral, which highlighted that I was not the only person that is grappling with understanding death. This conversation began with Mutale saying that she wished that death did not exist, and that people would walk into the horizon when it was time for them leave this world, or that they would just ascend to heaven like Enoch and Elijah in the Bible.

I am of the opinion that death is a mysterious phenomenon that is perhaps better understood by the dead. Beyond highlighting the complexity of death, Butler (2004: 20) raises these questions to challenge the pervasiveness of violent acts against the female body (or in her terms 'brown female bodies') and discusses ideas about mourning as a task that is performed following death, which she argues is the ultimate consequence of violence. Butler's (2004) discussion focuses on a notion of corporeal vulnerability in relation to the fragility and temporariness of the body and also in terms of the body as a political site. According to feminist art historian Griselda Pollock (2018), Butler's (2004) notion of vulnerability also plausibly speaks to the conditions in which the body performs particular political actions. She argues that when human beings participate in public social conventions such as protests, they put their bodies into the public space in a condition of vulnerability (Pollock 2018). It is critical to note that Butler's and Pollock's use of the term vulnerability is not to describe women as weak, but rather it is used in relation to their susceptibility to violence from various systems of oppression. In line with this definition of vulnerability, Pollock (2018) gives an example of some of the violent response that Indian artist Sonia Khurana was met with during some of her performances of *Lying Down on the Ground* (2006-2012) (Fig.10).

Lying Down on the Ground (2006-2012) (Fig. 5.9) is a series of performances in which Khurana lays her body down in public spaces in different cities. The first performance was enacted and filmed in Barcelona, Spain in 2006, and was a sort of response to some personal loss that the artist was experiencing at the time; she felt an urge to lie down on the ground for some relief (Pollock 2018). After this initial performance, Khurana lay on the ground in various cities including Paris and Delhi (Fig. 5.9) and of course it follows that the implications of what it means for her brown body lying down in public then varies from one

context to another. In Europe one might read her work through a framework of gender and race, and in India through class, religion and of course race.[72]

Figure 5.9. Sonia Khurana, *Lying Down on the Ground* (2006-2012). Top row: Place de la Bastille, Paris, France (2010); Bottom row: Place de la Bastille, Delhi, India (2009). Images courtesy of the e-flux Journal.

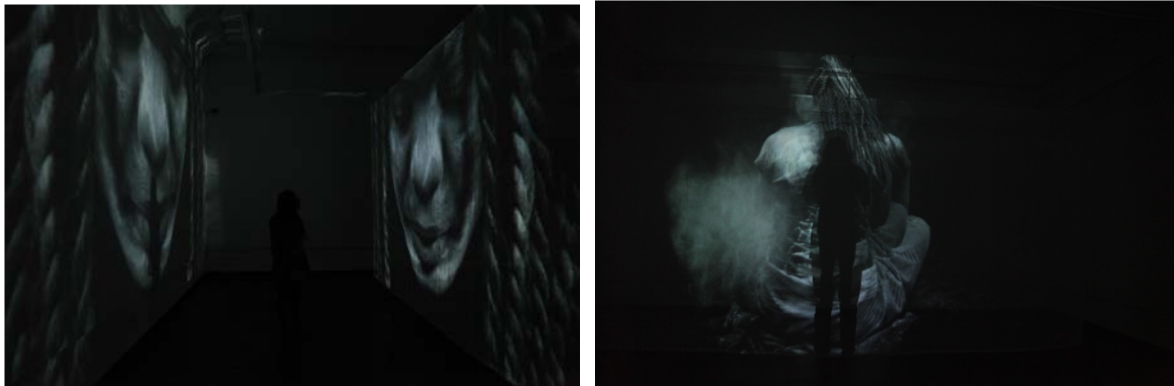

Figure 5.10. Installation view of *Burial*: *Erasing Erasure* (2017) at the Albany History Museum in Makhanda (2017). Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.11. Installation view of *Burial*: *Erasing Erasure* (2017) at the Albany History Museum in Makhanda (2017). Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

My work *Burial: Erasing Erasure* (2017) (Figs. 5.7, 5.8, 5.10 and 5.11) and *Baroque: Seeing Through Shut Eyes* (2021) (Figs. 5.12 to 5.14) critically explores the notion of vulnerability

[72] South African artist Gabriel Goliath also has an artwork or performance piece in which a body covered with a blanket lies on the ground. Goliath's piece is titled *Stumbling Block* (2019) and engages with isues of visibility in relation to the violence of post-apertheid South Africa (www.gabriellegoliath.com/stumbling-block).

as discussed in Pollock's (2018) lecture and Butler's (2004) thesis, in relation to the female black body within the context of the historicisation and memorialisation of liberation movements. The underlying theoretical assumption of *Burial: Erasing Erasure* (2017) and *Baroque: Seeing Through Shut Eyes* (2021), as it is in much of my work, is that narratives that focus on or that are about women are marginalised from the dominant narrative of liberation movements and national independence. My argument is that narratives about women are more invisible because history and memory as recorded in state facilitated institutions and structures, such as archives and monuments, are curated in such a manner that they tend make more visible narratives about men politicians. In *Burial: Erasing Erasure* (2017) and *Baroque: Seeing Through Shut Eyes* (2021) I place visual representations of my body within public spaces and buildings to perform the task of mourning for the forgotten and erased stories of the women who I argue contributed to the liberation struggles of their countries.

Burial: Erasing Erasure (2017) (Figs. 5.7, 5.8, 5.10 and 5.11) is a video that is designed to be installed in a low-lit room as a projection onto a piece of translucent white voile cloth and a white wall so as to create an intimate space of mourning. The installation draws from a personal loss and blurs boundaries between personal and collective mourning. This work was first installed along with the series of paintings titled *Spectacles of Erasure* (2016 – 2017) (Figs. 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 and 5.6) inside the gallery space on the first floor of the Albany History Museum in Makhanda, South Africa. When a viewer walked into the room where *Burial: Erasing Erasure* (2017) was installed, they saw a digital likeness of my body floating on the fabric and heard the sound of silence rather than my voice, as the video has no sound. As viewers walked around the room, their shadows were cast onto my body in the projection of the video. The more audiences interacted with the installation *Burial*: *Erasing Erasure* (2017) the more shadows they cast onto various surfaces in the room and like Khurana in *Lying Down on the Ground* (2006-2012) (Fig.10) I lose my subjectivity (Pollock 2018) as I become less and less the main subject of the mourning ritual in my own work. My intimate space of mourning becomes public and in some ways my body then becomes no longer just my own. Butler writes:

> The body implies mortality, vulnerability, agency: the skin and the flesh expose us to the gaze of others, but also to touch, and to violence, and bodies put us at risk of becoming the agency and instrument of all these as well. Although we

> struggle for rights over our own bodies, the very bodies for which we struggle are not quite ever only our own. The body has its invariably public dimension. Constituted as a social phenomenon in the public sphere, my body is and is not mine (Butler 2004, 26).

Baroque: Seeing Through Shut Eyes (2021) (Figs. 5.12 to 5.14) is a site-specific public intervention in which I use thick black fabric to covered the poles of the lights that are along the path leading to a historic building known as Schloss Friedrichsfelde (Friedrichsfelde Palace) in Berlin, Germany. Thereafter I invited audiences to join me in wrapping the poles with pieces of black bark cloth. This work was developed within the context of the exhibition *zurückgeschaut | looking back* (2021) at the end of the Dekoloniale artists residency programme in Berlin in 2021. *Zurückgeschaut | looking back* (2021) revisits the first German colonial exhibition that took place in Treptow Park in 1896 in Berlin. The 1986 exhibition was structured as a trade fair in which the German Empire exhibited itself as a colonial power by displaying human beings who had been uprooted from German colonies (https://contemporaryand.com/exhibition/dekoloniale-and-c-berlin-residency-2021/). The residency identified several public spaces within Berlin that served as memorial markers of German colonialism in Africa and elsewhere including the Schloss Friedrichsfelde where I installed *Baroque: Seeing Through Shut Eyes* (2021).

The Schloss Friedrichsfelde was constructed in the 1600s by architect Johann Arnold Nering and later extended in the 1700s by another architect, Martin Heinrich Böhme (Rawlins 2019). The building is designed in the baroque style and historically functioned as a residency for white men such as Margrave Albert Frederick of Brandenburg-Schwedt who was a Lieutenant General in the army of the Electorate of Brandenburg-Prussia and Grand Master of the Order of Saint John (ibid.). What particularly interested me about the Schloss Friedrichsfelde was the way the history of its construction erases women, not just black women who probably worked in there as servants, but also white women who lived with the men of the Schloss as the years progressed (op cit). There is arguably no history written about women that engaged with the Schloss Friedrichsfelde from the 1600s when it was constructed. *Baroque: Seeing Through Shut Eyes* (2021) grapples with the question of mourning absence. In both *Burial: Erasing Erasure* (2017) (Figs. 5.7, 5.8, 5.10 and 5.11) and *Baroque: Seeing Through Shut Eyes* (2021) (Figs. 5.12 to 5.14), my body, or the likeness of it

in public spaces performs the daunting task of mourning. I use the word daunting because mourning or placing my body in public in a state it might be subjected to violence is not something that I as an individual particularly look forward to doing.

Figure 5.12. Gladys Kalichini, *Baroque: Seeing Through Shut Eyes* (2021), public intervention, Tier Park, Berlin, Germany. Photograph by Daniela Inconato. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.13. Gladys Kalichini, *Baroque: Seeing Through Shut Eyes* (2021), public intervention, Tier Park, Berlin, Germany. Photograph by Daniela Inconato. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.14. Gladys Kalichini, *Baroque: Seeing Through Shut Eyes* (2021), public intervention, Tier Park, Berlin, Germany. Photograph by Daniela Inconato. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

5.2. Public Sites of Mourning: Transforming Photographs into Ephemeral Monuments

In Chapters One and Two I discuss the importance of archival photographs and monuments in shaping social processes of remembering and interpreting historical events. In the first chapter, I reconstruct stories of six Zambian and Zimbabwean women by closely reading a selection of photographs that are associated with their political and social activities. Most of the photographs included in Chapter One were sourced from public archives in both Zambia and Zimbabwe. In the second chapter I critically analyse two monuments that are situated in the capital cities of Zambia and Zimbabwe that were constructed to memorialise and historicise independence. In this subsection I discuss the potency of monuments and photographs to function as retainers of memory and also their ability to represent historic events as explored in three of my multimedia installations: *Retitled: Untitled* (2018), *... these wreaths are laid in honour of her memory* (2020) and *... these moments were spent in listening to her silence and seeing her invisibility* (2020).

The three installations discussed in this subsection are ephemeral monuments made largely with transient or perishable materials such as fabric, paper and wood. Another commonality among the artworks is that they are designed as monuments that honour women who participated in ant-colonial movements and performances that contributed in small or grander ways towards the liberation of their countries. On one hand these installations investigate the fluidity and non-linearity of memory and history, and on the other hand they consider the entanglements and contestations between history as a representation of the past and memory which is understood as the process of remembering or forgetting the past (Nora 1989: 8). The three main points of this discussion are (i) performances and practices that take place within and around monuments and memorials, (ii) symbolic gesticulations performed by the state during national mourning and (iii) anonymity inside archives and monuments as a form of erasure.

The relationship between history and memory has been critically explored and discussed by multiple thinkers, such as Jacques Derrida in *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (1996) and Pierre Nora in *Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire* (1989), and more recently by scholars and curators like Robert Vosloo in his essay *Archiving Otherwise: Some Remarks on Memory and Historical Responsibility* (2005), Okwui Enwezor in the essay *Archive Fever: Photography Between History and the Monument* (2008) and Carolyn

Hamilton and Pippa Skotnes in the book *Uncertain Curature: In and out of the Archive* (2014). Although history and memory tend to be considered based on an affiliation to one another in representing or misrepresenting the past, the general consensus in all the works listed here is that history is not memory and, vice versa, memory is not history. The two are not synonymous with each other such that they sometimes actually contend against each other.

Nora (1989), Derrida (1996) and Hamilton and Skotnes (2014) focus on the fluidity (a proneness to be altered) of memory, arguing that it is fallible as it not only changes and evolves over time, but that it does so frequently. Arguably, they consider memory using similar terms to those that Butler (2004) and Pollock (2018) use to discuss the notion of vulnerability in relation to the body's susceptibility to acts of violence within the public space. Vosloo (2005) and Enwezor (2008) argue that history sometimes focuses on certain perspectives based on who it is written, organised and curated by. When the writers and makers of history change, it also becomes prone to change just as much as memory is argued to change based on the individual who does the recollection. In the same way, there are multiple memories that can be related to a given event in the past, just as there are numerous histories that can be associated to the very same event. Fluidity and multiplicity, whether in relation to memory or history, is what intrigues me as an artist in the installations *Retitled: Untitled* (2018), *... these wreaths are laid in honour of her memory* (2020) and *... these moments were spent in listening to her silence and seeing her invisibility* (2020). As stated frequently in this dissertation, in my MFA thesis as well as in seminars in which I discuss my work, I am of the view that women's narratives are largely marginalised from history and memory, or more specifically social and political actions performed by women are sidelined from national narratives about independence and liberation. The proneness to change offers me an opportunity as an artist, to reimagine the past and to consider roles performed by women in the attainment of independence.

5.2.1. Countering Historical Absence: Laying Flowers for Women Within Memorial Spaces

Figure 5.15. A photograph of two undressed women in a crowd holding up a hand-written sign. The woman holding the sign on the left-hand is Julia Chikamoneka, on the right-hand side is Emelia Saidi, and standing behind Chikamoneka is Mandalena Mumba (1960). Photograph by L. A. Titchener. Photograph courtesy of the Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) Archives.

Figure 5.16. Installation view of ... *these wreaths are laid in honour of her memory* (2020) at Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, Germany (2020). Wooden swings and paper flowers. Photograph by Arthur Debert. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.17. Gladys Kalichini, ... *these wreathes are laid in honour of her memory* (2020), installation view, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, Germany (2020). Wooden swings and paper flowers. Photograph by Arthur Debert. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

The installation ... *these wreaths are laid in honour of her memory* (2020) (Figs. 5.15 and 5.16) draws from the practice of laying flowers at monuments and memorial sites as an act both of tending to grave sites and honouring the dead. The installation comprises thirteen black and two white rectangular wooden blocks that are arranged as nine swings, which are then spread across two rooms (Fig. 5.17). The first room (Fig. 5.16) consists of two swings that each contain two black blocks (double swings) and one swing that comprises a single black block. There are six swings that hang in the second room: three double black swings, one double white swing and two single black swings. Names printed in vinyl are stuck onto the front and back of all of the black wooden blocks, while the white swing has no name embedded on any of its surfaces. These are names of six women whose narratives are discussed in chapter One of this thesis and an additional three women whose images I found inside the national archives in Zambia: Julia Chikamoneka and Mulenga Nsofwa (Fig. 1.2), Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa (Fig. 1.3), Alice Lenshina and Lubusha Mulenga (Fig. 1.4), Joice Mujuru (Fig. 1.5), Charwe Nyakasikana and Mbuya Nehanda (Fig. 1.6) and Margaret Dongo (Fig. 1.7). Other names include Emelia Saidi and Mandalena Mumba who also undressed in the 1960 protest along with Chikamoneka (Fig. 5.15), as well as Nkomeshya Mukamambo II and Elizabeth Mulenje, who is the chieftainess of the Soli people in Chongwe in Zambia and is popularly known for her facilitation of the Chakwela Makumbi rain making ceremony (Simbao 2014; Kalichini 2017).

The swings that consist of two wooden blocks, with the exception of the swing that bears Mumba's and Saidi's names, represent the same person who is identified by the two names shown on the blocks. My analysis of women's narratives about their participation in political activities reveals that majority of the women changed their names or took on additional names for various reasons. As described in the first chapter of this thesis, Chikamoneka, for example, changed her name from Mulenga Nsofwa to protect herself from being arrested and also to proclaim that the reason for black people's suffering colonial oppression would be revealed in the future. Lubusha took on the name Lenshina to proclaim herself as a prophet and Mujuru received the nickname Teurai Ropa (to spill blood) as an acknowledgement of shooting down a helicopter in the 1970s during the Rhodesian Bush War. Nkomeshya Mukamambo and Nehanda are titles that are held by individuals. Nkomeshya Mukamambo is

the ruler of the Soli people, and Elizabeth Mulenje is the second individual to hold this title.[73] Nehanda is the spirit of a woman who is believed to have belonged to a royal family in the past,[74] and *Mbuya* is a Shona word for grandmother. Charhwe Nyakasikana is a woman who lived in Mazoe in Zimbabwe in the 1800s before it was colonised by the British.

The installation ... *these wreaths are laid in honour of her memory* (2020) (Fig. 5.17) visually references three main sources, which include the 1960 archival photograph of the protest in which Chikamoneka, Saidi and Mumba undressed in public (Fig. 1.15), the arrangement of the black granite graves that are situated at the burial grounds at the National Heroes Acre in Harare, Zimbabwe (Fig. 5.18), and a photograph of Kankasa's (Fig. 1.3) children and their spouses laying wreaths on her grave at Memorial Park in Lusaka (Fig. 5.19). The first room of the installation depicted in Figure 5.16 and on the right-hand side of Figure 5.17 reflects on an interview I carried out in which Chibesakunda Kankasa speaks about Chikamoneka's and her own involvement in the liberation of Zambia. The interview begins with Chibesakunda Kankasa speaking about events surrounding the archival photograph in Figure 5.15.[75]

Figure 5.18. Graves at the National Heroes Acre, Harare, Zimbabwe (2019). Photograph by Siphiwe Sibeko. Photograph courtesy of the Lusaka Times Newspaper.

Figure 5.19. Freedom fighter Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa's children and their spouses laying wreaths on her grave at Memorial Park in Lusaka (2018). Photograph courtesy of the Lusaka Times Newspaper.

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[73] For further reading about her royal highness chieftainess Nkomeshya Mukamabo II refer to Ruth Simbao's essay 'Cosmological Efficacy and the Politics of Sacred Place: Soli Rainmaking in Contemporary Zambia' (2014) in the journal *African Arts*.

[74] The history of Nehanda is explained in the article 'Nehanda' (2022) by Diana Jeater and Ruvimbo Rusike in the *Oxford Encyclopaedia of African History*.

[75] See Chapter One.

The artwork *... these wreaths are laid in honour of her memory* (2020) (Fig. 5.17) includes black and white flowers made out of crepe paper and then placed on each swing according to the matching colour (black flowers are placed on black swings, and white flowers are placed on white swings). I have attended some funerals in Zambia where I have observed the process of burying a deceased person. A burial service in Zambia usually begins with mourners gathering at a place such as a church, temple, chapel, hall or house where the body of the dead person being mourned will be taken to be viewed for the last time by mourners. The progression of viewing the body usually begins with friends and colleagues of the dead and ends with the family and closest relations of the individual being mourned. The casket is the closed and locked and escorted to the burial site where various rituals (depending on the social linguistic grouping and spiritual beliefs of the dead and those mourning) will be performed.

The casket is usually placed in two positions, again depending on the social linguistic grouping and spiritual beliefs of the dead; it be positioned in such a manner that the head of the corpse either faces the sunrise or the sunset. After the casket or coffin is placed in the ground and buried, fresh flowers will be placed on top of the grave as in Figure 5.20, forming a heap. The process of laying wreaths begins with the closest relations and ends with friends and colleagues of the deceased (the opposite order of the process of body viewing). Afterwards a prayer is said, and water is poured on the grave and the stems on the flowers are broken off to avoid theft. After a while the flowers dry up and after an unspecified period there is a memorial service in which the tombstone is revealed and again flowers are laid as in Figure 5.21. When the body dies, the soul lives on. Flowers, unlike souls, die. Flowers begin as a seed that grows into a plant that eventually blossoms. When plucked, flowers either eventually wilt and dry up to form a solid yet fragile sculpture, sometimes, when they are replanted, they grow their roots and multiply to produce even more flowers.

Figure 5.20. The Women's Fellowship of the United Church of Zambia (UCZ) placing flowers on my aunt's grave (2022). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini. Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.21. My aunts placing flowers on my grandfather's tombstone (2022). Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

5.2.2. Mourning National Heroes: Lowering flags

A day or period of national mourning is traditionally designated by the government of a given country. It is period marked out to mourn distinguished individuals or people who are recognised for contributing towards the pride of a nation, such as freedom fighters, presidents, historic icons and even musicians in some cases. During the period of national mourning flags are lowered, or they fly at half-mast, in countries all over the world including Zambia, Zimbabwe and even South Africa. The origin of the act of lowering flags during mourning can be traced back to the 17th century and was historically used to signify that death had occurred (Legault 2012: 4). Legend has it that national flags were lowered to make room for the invisible flag of death (ibid). The Zambian and Zimbabwean national flags were first hoisted or raised at midnight on the dates of their respective independence to proclaim victory from the British government. The Zambian flag was raised on 23 October 1964, while the current Zimbabwean flag was first hoisted on 18 April 1980.

My installation *... these moments were spent in listening to her silence and seeing her invisibility* (2020) (Fig. 5.22) is the second and also middle piece that connects *... these wreaths are laid in honour of her memory* (2020) (Fig. 5.17) which the preceding subsection deliberates on and *... these practices are done in sharing her stories* (2020 – 2022) (Figs. 5.16–5.19) which is discussed in the section that closes this chapter. On one layer *... these moments were spent in listening to her silence and seeing her invisibility* (2020) explores

national signifiers of the occurrence of death, and on another it maps out the evolution of the Zambian and Zimbabwean flags as signifiers of national identity. It considers the lowering and raising of flags as the continuous cycle of life and death – each time the administration of these two southern African countries changed, the previous flag that represented the previous state was lowered and a newer flag was adopted and publicly raised.

Figure 5.22. Gladys Kalichini, *... these moments were spent in listening to her silence and seeing her invisibility* (2020), steel poles, bark cloth, crepe paper and voile fabric. Installation view, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, Germany (2020). Photograph by Arthur Debert. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.23. A photograph of the Zambian flag at half-mast following the death of a freedom fighter known as Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa (2018). Photograph by Andresmh. Image sourced from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Zambia_flag_at_half-mast.jpg.

From 1953 to 1963, the countries known as Zambia and Zimbabwe in this present day formed two thirds of British colonial state known the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland or the Federation of Central Africa.[76] Zambia was referred to as Northern Rhodesia, Zimbabwe as Northern Rhodesia and current day Malawi, which formed the one third of the federation was known as Nyasaland. The territory of the federation was represented by a flag that has a blue background with a representation of a British flag on the left-hand side top corner and a coat of arms in the centre of the left half portion of the flag (Fig. 5.24). This flag was taken down in 1963 when the federation was dissolved as the Malawian state broke away and obtained independence. The following year Zambia gained independence and adopted a

[76] See Historical Context in Introduction.

new flag that has an eagle on a green background and three stripes (red, black and orange) on the bottom left corner (Fig 5.25), and Southern Rhodesia became known only as Rhodesia under Ian Smith and was represented by a light blue flag similar to that of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (Fig. 5.26). In 1979 Rhodesia adopted a green and white flag with an image of a coat of arms on it which was adopted in 1968 (Mawere 2015) (Fig. 5. 27). In 1980 a new Zimbabwean flag with colours similar to that of the Zambian flag was hoisted on Independence Day (Fig. 5.28). The Zimbabwean flag that was raised in 1980 consists of seven stripes (two green, two yellow, two red and one black) in the right-hand section and a triangle with a white area on the left. Inside the triangle is a representation of a red star and a bird which is popularly referred to as the Zimbabwe Bird.

Figure 5.24. Flag of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (1953 to 1963). Image courtesy of Britannica www.britannica.com.

Figure 5.25. Flag of the Federation of the Republic of Zambia (1964). Image courtesy of Britannica www.britannica.com.

Figure 5.26. Flag of Rhodesia (1964 to 1979). Image courtesy of Britannica www.britannica.com.

Figure 5.27. Flag of Rhodesia (1979 to 1980). Image courtesy of Britannica www.britannica.com.

Figure 5.28. Flag of Zimbabwe (1980). Image courtesy of Britannica www.britannica.com.

To produce ... *these moments were spent in listening to her silence and seeing her invisibility* (2020) (Fig. 5.22) I referenced a photograph of the Zambian flag at half-mast following the death of Kankasa (Fig. 1.3) who was accorded a state funeral (Fig. 5.23). The installation consists of three poles spray painted black and three rolled large pieces of bark cloth and voile cloth on which I stuck multiple pieces of paper. The making of this installation

stretched over several months, as the two fabrics (the flags) it is comprised of involved intricate processes that in some ways can be considered as a metaphor for the process of building or making of nations.

The first fabric (Fig. 5.29), which is bark cloth, was sourced from an artisan in Kampala Uganda. It is made from the bark of *mutuba* (*Ficus natalensis*) tree which is harvested after the rainy season. The bark is then beaten into a pulp, which is simultaneously flattened and stretched until thin before the water evaporates (Nakazibwe 2005). Once the flattened pulp is dry, it results into a brown, coarsely textured fabric. My friend and colleague at Rhodes University, Claire Nalukenge and I then coloured the fabric black. To do this, we placed about ten litres of boiling water inside three large buckets where we had poured in natural black dye. We placed the fabrics in the solution and stirred until the brown bark cloths were completely submerged in the hot liquid before covering the buckets with lids. We left the materials to sit in the solution overnight before rinsing them and hanging them to dry.

According to Venny Nakazibwe's doctoral thesis *Bark Cloth of the Baganda People of Southern Uganda: A Record of Continuity and Change from the late Eighteenth Century to the Early Twenty-first Century* (2005), in Uganda bark cloth was historically used in coronation and healing rituals, as well as a shroud for wrapping dead bodies of distinguished individuals or members of royal families for burial. The use of bark cloth in Uganda has evolved over time; at one point it became less popular because of the introduction of fabrics brought in by Arab traders and superstitions surrounding death. The production of bark cloth then re-emerged not only within the context of rituals within the social context of the Baganda but also in the creative sector where artists and fashion designers began working with it (ibid). For me as an artist, bark cloth as a material symbolises the process of dying and being reborn, or more precisely in the context of *... these moments were spent in listening to her silence and seeing her invisibility* (2020) (Fig. 5.22) it is symbolic of the dying and birthing of new states.

The second set of fabrics are reconstructed bark cloths (Figs. 5.30 and 5.31). To produce them, I began by cutting thousands of about two square inches of black and white crepe paper which I then painted with black acrylic paints. I set these on flat surfaces to dry and then soaked them for the second time in water and the third time in a liquid glue mixture. After this I separately made two rolls of voile cloth, approximately ten metres each. I then began to

collage the two square inch pieces of paper on voile cloth. Once I had completed gluing the pieces of paper onto the cloth, I painted the whole fabric surface with a light coat of paint.

Figure 5.29 A close view of the bark cloth included in ... *these moments were spent in listening to her silence and seeing her invisibility* (2020). Photograph by Arthur Debert. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.30. Detail of reconstructed bark cloth that is part of ... *these moments were spent in listening to her silence and seeing her invisibility* (2020). Photograph by Arthur Debert. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.31. Detail of reconstructed bark cloth that is part of ... *these moments were spent in listening to her silence and seeing her invisibility* (2020). Photograph by Arthur Debert. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

5.2.3. Pushing Back Against Archival Anonymity

The production of much of my artwork usually begins by referencing archival photographs of specific women I have some knowledge or piece of information about such as their name or a particular historic event they are associated with. However, unlike most of my artworks, *Retitled: Untitled* (2018) (Fig. 5.35) departs from a point of anonymity as it references a series of archival photographs of women I cannot identify by name (Fig. 5.32). When I was searching inside the national archives in Harare and Lusaka for visual representations of the six women whose narratives I write about in the first chapter, I came across a multitude of photographs that had been placed in the digital files and filing cabinets that were labelled as 'Women in the Struggle for Independence' (Figs. 5.32 to 5.34). The photographs were not captioned and there was no information about who the women were nor what political party they ascribed to. No information relating to dates or event was available.

Figure 5.32 Archival photographs of unidentified women standing with placards (undated). Photographer unknown. Photographs courtesy of the National Archives of Zambia.

Although there was an absence of information about these photographs (Figs. 5.32 to 5.34) inside the archives, some of the women in the photographs expressed themselves using text written on the cardboard they are holding up (Fig. 5.32). Beginning from the top left to top right, then to bottom left and finally to bottom right, the text on the cardboard placards reads as follows:

(i) Hone you have sold Africa,
(ii) Tshombe the murderer of Lumumba,
(iii) Black continent will deal with Welensky accordingly,
(iv) Tshombe Welensky Dog.

Based on these textual clues I was able to deduce that the women in the series of photographs in Figure 5.32 were possibly from either 1961 or later than 1961 because Patrice Lumumba was assassinated on 17 January 1961. Additionally, the name Hone in the first photograph and the name Welensky in the bottom row of Figure 5.32 are addressed in a similar manner of disdain in the handwritten placard held by Chikamoneka and Saidi in the 1960 photograph of the protests at the airport (Fig. 5.15). Chikamoneka's and Saidi's cardboard banner reads:

> UNIP says Kaunda knows democracy
>
> Welensky and Hone mean Nazism
>
> Support Kaunda by one man one vote

Roy Welensky was the prime minister of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland from its inception in 1953 until it was dissolved in 1963, and Evelyn Hone was the chief secretary to the governor of Northern Rhodesia from 1957 to 1959 and later became the governor in 1959. Moïse Kapenda Tshombe was a Congolese businessman and politician who served as the prime minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 1964 to 1965 and Kenneth Kaunda was a Zambian politician who became the first republican president of Zambia after independence in 1964 until 1991.

Figure 5.33. Archival photographs of women undressing and weeping in public (undated). Photographer unknown. Photographs courtesy of the National Archives of Zambia.

The second set of photographs (Fig 5.33) pose a challenge in terms associating them with a specific event and date in history as there is no text in them or elsewhere. However, from the photograph on the right I was able to identify Kaunda and to deduce that the photographs depicted a political event. The women are undressed similarly to Chikamoneka, Saidi and Mumba in Figure 5.15 while they weep and lie on the ground in public, where their bodies are performing the daunting task of protesting and mourning in a state of dereliction as Butler (2004) and Pollock (2018) have argued.

Figure 5.34. Archival photographs of women holding weapons (undated). Photographer unknown. Photographs courtesy of the National Archives of Zimbabwe.

The third set of photographs (Fig. 5.34) depicts women holding weapons such as bazookas. I found these photographs as printed copies on paper inside a filing cabinet that was labelled 'Women in the Chimurenga' inside the pictorial room at the national Archives of Zimbabwe. As I have stated earlier in this very subsection, there were no dates available, so to make meaning of the images I had to read the visual codes provided by the photographs themselves. The weapons the women are holding in Figure 5.34 were used by Zimbabwean guerrilla fighters in the Second Chimurenga which occurred between the 1960s and 1970s, therefore these photographs should have been taken around that period.

Figure 5.35. Gladys Kalichini, *Retitled: Untitled* (2018), ink and water colour on voile fabric, outdoor installation, Arts Lounge, Rhodes University, Makhanda, South Africa. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Retitled: Untitled (2018) (Figure 5.35) is a continuation of *Burial*: *Erasing Erasure* (2017) (Figs. 5.7, 5.8, 5.10 and 5.11). Together these two artworks explore ideas of protesting erasure. *Retitled: Untitled* (2018) (Figure 5.35) consists of pieces of variously sized voile cloths that are stained with black inks. To produce this artwork, I began by making black ink and watercolour drawings of female bodies onto voile fabrics that referenced archival photographs of unnamed women (Figs. 5.32 to 5.34). I then hung the pieces of cloth on the washing line where they were rained on for several days until the paints and inks ran through the fabric. While the fabrics were still wet, I crumpled them together and placed them inside

basins and then proceeded to dry them on the washing line on a sunny day. *Retitled: Untitled* (2018) was installed outside the Arts Lounge at Rhodes University, where it stayed for the 10 days of the National Arts Festival. As the days went on by, this artwork shifted depending on the weather conditions; on sunny days the work changed slightly, while on more windy and rainy days the changes were more noticeable. Memory is born out of events; it is then carried through time by various gestures that remind us of the past, such as photographs. Sometimes memory fades and we forget, but at other times, we do remember, and memory receives new life which in turn, like the flowers in *... these wreaths are laid in honour of her memory* (2020) (Fig. 5.17) produces multiple historical narratives. The gestures portrayed through my artworks honour and pay respect to multiple histories that are associated with women.

5.3. Women Sharing Stories about Women Through Cleansing Rituals

Figure 5.36. Gladys Kalichini, *... these practices are done in sharing her stories, videos I and II* (2020 – 2022) video, 04:25, installation view, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, Germany (2020). Photograph by Arthur Debert. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Verse

Tiku yamikani (We thank you)

Tiku tamandani (We praise you)

Tiku pepezani (We apologise[77])

Tiku lemekazani (we respect you)

Inde (Indeed)

Perekani ulemu kumwamba (respect the heavens)

Chorus

Perekani ulemu indeni (respect the heavens indeed)

Perekani ulemu kumwamba, sezani mtendere pa dziko (respect the heavens, so that peace may reign in the earth)

Inde (indeed)

Perekani ulemu kumwamba (respect the heavens)

Perekani ulemu indeni (respect the heavens indeed)

Perekani ulemu kumwamba, sezani mtendere pa dziko (respect the heavens, so that peace may reign in the earth)

Inde (indeed)

Perekani ulemu kumwamba (respect the heavens)

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1kDxZpH-1w)

The words that that open this concluding section of this fifth chapter of my dissertation are the lyrics of a chiChewa Catholic hymn titled *Perekani Ulemu Kumwamba* (Respect the Heavens). This hymn is used as a soundtrack that plays on loop in the video and photographic installations of my artwork ... *these practices are done in sharing her stories* (2020 – 2023) (Fig. 5.36). This body of work consists of ten videos of an equal duration of four minutes and twenty-five seconds, and a series of photographic prints. The videos document women washing either their hands, feet or faces, while the digital photographs are recordings of women performing interventions in which they sit in public and intimate spaces were spiritual activities occur such as churches and altars in homes.

[77] The direct translation of the chiChewa word *pepezani* is to apologise, however it should be noted that it means come to repentance.

As a visual project ... *these practices are done in sharing her stories* is an exploration of remembrance that considers a notion of care as analysed by Zimbabwean curator Fadzai Muchemwa in her currently ongoing Master of Arts dissertation. The installation explores the function of cleansing in spiritual rituals such as the blessings, baptisms, anointing and the washing of bodies after birth and death. What does it mean to care? The concept of care is often associated with welfare and maintaining the well-being of someone or something. As a concept, it is often associated with community work and with women's roles with the domestic space. Although this is part of it, Annet Busch (2020) argues that the concept of care encompasses much more than this, as caring means paying serious attention and consideration in order to avoid damage or, in the context of my work, complete erasure. Busch (2020) writes that:

> To care, daring to care, is much more as it describes an intellectual practice or artistic activity which is … interconnected by research that pays attention to details, sideways, bifurcations … to construct a much more populated and complex picture of history … Caring can be understood as a mode of resistance, as a counter-concept to erasure (Busch 2020: 48).

I began filming the first four videos that form part of ... *these practices are done in sharing her stories* (2020 – 2023) in early 2020 and had initially planned to work with actresses who would stage the performances. However, I was unable to work with models because of the lockdowns and stay at home policies that were developed to curb the spread of COVID-19. I eventually began working with three of my female friends, Claire Nalukenge, who had assisted me to dye the bark cloths in ... *these moments were spent in listening to her silence and seeing her invisibility* (2020) (Fig. 5.22), Pamella Mqolweni and Bathandwa Makehle who I was quarantining with. At that particular period much of the media was reporting on the numbers of people who were dying as a result of contracting COVID-19; in a way there was so much death occurring nearly everywhere in the world. The idea of the work then evolved and developed to focusing on ways of coping in precarious times by performing intimate and shared acts of caring, healing through relationship and empathy.

The first installation of ... *these practices are done in sharing her stories* (2020 – 2022) was at Künstlerhaus Bethanien as part of my solo exhibition ... *these gestures of memory* (2020).

In its debut, videos I and II were projected onto dark-grey walls at a ninety-degree angle (Fig. 5.36), while videos III and IV were displayed on screens that were placed side by side. All the videos are looped and synchronised so that they all began and ended at the same time as the hymn *Perekani Ulemu Kumwamba.* Video I begins with Nalukenge in the far left of Figure 5.37 placing her hands inside the grey basin situated in the centre of the frame. Then one at a time, Mqolweni and Makehle also place their hands in the basin. Nalukenge then picks up a white bar of soap and lathers her hands and passes it on to Mqolweni who does the same and passes the soap to Makehle. When done, Makehle passes the soap back to Mqolweni, who then passes it back to Nalukenge to place it on the ground. They then rub their hands in unison and proceed to rinse them. When done Nalukenge then passes white cloth towels to her fellow performers, and they wipe their hands before anointing them with an oil. As the video comes to an end, they fold the white cloths, which they place on their laps. When the music stops, they all put their hands on top of the white towels in unison.

Figure 5.37. Gladys Kalichini, ... *these practices are done in sharing her stories video I*, (2020), video, 04:25. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.38. Gladys Kalichini, ... *these practices are done in sharing her stories video II*, (2020), video, 04:25. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.39. Gladys Kalichini, ... *these practices are done in sharing her stories video III*, (2020), video, 04:25. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.40. Gladys Kalichini, ... *these practices are done in sharing her stories video III*, (2020), video, 04:25. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

In video II (Fig. 5.38), Mqolweni mirrors her own actions in Video I and in Video III (Fig. 5.39) Makehle washes her feet and hands while in Video IV (Fig. 5.40) they wash each other's hands. It is important to note that all the videos begin with women seated with their hands on their laps and end the same way. In continuing the production of this series in Zambia, I collaborated with women I am closely related to, such as my mother, aunts, sisters, cousins and grandmother. I invited women to participate in intimate rituals of cleansing and share in conversations that focused on women liberation heroes and the ways in which women's social groups such as the Catholic and Anglican Women's Leagues practised care among each other. When a member of the Women's League passes on, her fellow women escort her body to the mortuary where it will be washed and dressed. At her funeral they prepare the church by covering the tables with white cloths and candles and adorn a portrait of the deceased with flowers. They sing and they cry, and they carry her casket as she is laid to rest (Figs. 5.41 to 5.43).

Figure 5.41. The Women's Leagues at Aunt Edna Musadabwe's funeral service (2021). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.42. The Women's Leagues adorn Aunt Edna Musadabwe's funeral portrait with flowers (2021). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.43. The Women's Leagues escort Aunt Zelippa Malasa's casket out of the church (2022). Photograph by Gladys Kalichini.

The visual project ... *these practices are done in sharing her stories* (2020–2023) documents women performing rituals of care and enactments of communion amongst women. Beyond and above that, these cleansing rituals speak to the sharing of histories and to real and intimate experiences of mourning and creating memories. Videos V to VII (Figs. 5.44 to 5.47) and the public interventions (Figs. 5.48 and 5.49) also speak about personal loss, they honour some of my family members such as my younger brother, aunts and grandmothers who have passed on. In Video V (Fig. 5.44), my elder sister, Monica Kalichini washes her hands and in video VI (Fig. 5.45) my mother's sisters, Betina Nyalugwe and Betty Mubanga, wash each other's feet. In Video VII (Fig. 5.46), my younger cousins, Mwansa Sati and Ruth Chanda, cleanse Charity Mubanga's (my grandmother's sister) feet while in in Video VIII (Fig. 5.47), I, Gladys Kalichini, wash my face. In ... *these practices are done in sharing her stories video – public intervention I* (2022) (Fig. 4.48), Charity Mubanga sits in silence outside her home in Kamwala, Lusaka and in ... *these practices are done in sharing her stories video – public intervention II* (2022) (Fig. 5.49), my aunt, Nkaka Chipopola Nyalugwe sits outside the St. Ignatius Church in Rhodes Park.

Figure 5.44. Gladys Kalichini, ... *these practices are done in sharing her stories video V*, (2021), video, 04:25. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.45. Gladys Kalichini, ... *these practices are done in sharing her stories video VI*, (2021), video, 04:25. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.46. Gladys Kalichini, ... *these practices are done in sharing her stories video VII*, (2022), video, 04:25. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.47. Gladys Kalichini, ... *these practices are done in sharing her stories video VIII*, (2022), video, 04:25. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.48. Gladys Kalichini, ... *these practices are done in sharing her stories* – public intervention I (2022). Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 5.49. Gladys Kalichini, … *these practices are done in sharing her stories* – public intervention II (2022). Photograph courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

5.4. Conclusion

I conclude this last chapter of my dissertation in the same way that I began in the preface, which is on a personal note. I have learnt that erasure and absence are complex paradoxes from this process of tracing and looking for stories about women. When I began this journey, I was under the impression that memories about women were absent and that they had died. My initial response to the invisibility of visual narratives about women in relation to the official memorialisation of the independence struggle triggered emotions similar to hearing about the passing of someone. It was a feeling of loss, and of devastation. I felt a strong urge to mourn for these stories. In the process of mourning, I learnt that erasure can be violent and sometimes it might not be as aggressive as I initially thought, but more importantly I now know that complete erasure is impossible. Even though some stories about some women might be invisible and absent in some places like archives, monuments and history books, their memories like the soul of a human being are not dead. I have learnt that silence can speak loudly if we listen intently and carefully, and that we can see the invisible if we dare to look beyond absence.

Conclusion

Peripheral View: Looking Back to See Marginalised Narratives About Women

How do narratives about women become visible or imperceptible over time? How do we engage with stories that have been forgotten or erased from our subconsciousness? This conclusion summarises this dissertation and highlights ongoing conversations with regard to visual studies on issues relating to gender and memorialisation for possible further research. This study explores a notion of invisibility – as the process of either becoming visible or invisible over time – in relation to visual narratives about women's participation in liberation movements in Northern Rhodesia/Zambia and Southern Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. It focusses on three visual categories: archival photographs, independence monuments and contemporary art. This dissertation argues that memories about women are side-lined from a broader national narrative of independence and provides some insights that plausible explain some of the reasons as to how some stories of women appear to be marginalised.

The first argument is submitted in the introduction and relates the definition of a freedom fighter as one who participates in movements and efforts that aim for the liberation of a nation. The second argument, in chapter one, deals with how history is photographically documented and curated within national archives. The third argument, which is discussed in the second chapter, is that the interpretation of the past through public monuments largely valorises heroic narratives about men above those of women. In chapters three, four and five, I expound on how narratives about women are marginalised through the politicisation of memory.

To make the first argument, which relates to how freedom fighters are conventionally defined, I began with the question: 'Am I setting a table for a dinner party or laying a foundation of a building?'. I asked this question as a means of highlight how roles within a given society can and are sometimes divided along gender lines in different geographical and social contexts. Within the context of historic times in Zambia and Zimbabwe, roles performed by women are primarily associated with domestic spaces such as homes and to notions of care that explain the provision of services for the well-being of children, husbands,

the poor and also the elderly. I submit that, even in contemporary times, the division of roles in such a manner is still applicable to many of the religious and social linguistic groupings within the two countries where women are generally described using terms that relate to motherhood or nurturing. I acknowledge that men can also be described in terms that relate to fatherhood, however I insist that they are more generally associated with actions that are believed to require physical strength, such as a building a house, lifting heavy equipment and fighting in war. To illustrate this argument, I requested the reader of this dissertation to participate in an exercise of creating two mental images that relate to the same woman. In the first image, the woman assists her husband before he goes to war and when he dies, and she raises her children while the war continues. In the second image, the woman goes to war where she is killed along with other guerrillas and buried in a mass grave. I then requested the reader to place the two images side by side, and further requested them to think about which of the two women they imagine would be acknowledged as a freedom fighter by future generations.

The woman in the second image is arguably more likely to be to be considered as a freedom fighter by virtue of her participation in the war as a soldier, and there is a much lesser probability that the woman in the first image will be acknowledged for her contribution to the attainment of independence. One of the reasons for this is that the war, in and of itself, is likely to be included within the broader discourse of national independence struggles, which means there is a higher probability to associate the woman in the first image with the liberation of her respective country. Also, because the woman in the second image goes to war in the capacity of a soldier and physically participates in actions that are most associated to the struggle for independence there is a higher chance to describe her as a freedom fighter.

My argument is that many women participated in liberation movements in Northern and Southern Rhodesia (Zambia and Zimbabwe) in numerous ways that are not always included in the conventional definition of a freedom fighter. The independence movements in Northern and Southern Rhodesia, Zambia and Zimbabwe occurred in nuancedly complex ways – parts of it were public and other aspects of it happened in less public spaces. Some women like Joice Mujuru went to war, others like Julia Chikamoneka, Emelia Saidi and Mandelena Mumba, undressed in public to protest against the British colonial government. Some like Bessie Chibesakunda Kankasa hosted meetings for political fighters in their homes.

Chapter One deliberates on the erasure of women within national memory and history by considering the curation of photographic independence collections in five key archives in Zambia and Zimbabwe. This chapter argues that history within the five key archives is recorded (largely through captioning of images) in such a manner that it focusses on a few selected men, such as the first republican presidents. As a means of redressing the archival erasure of women, the first chapter (re)constructs a visual archive that focuses on the stories of six different women who participated in the independence struggle in various capacities. The visual archive presented in this chapter is a collection of re-captioned archival photographs from various sources that are accompanied by short stories about the six women it focuses on.

Chapter Two argues that histories relating to women's involvement in the struggle for independence are also erased through public monuments that communicate dominant historical narratives in which women are cast only as supporters of men and largely focus on historicising independence political parties as the major players in the attainment of independence. The discussion in this chapter centres around the National Heroes Acre in Zimbabwe and The Freedom Statue in Zambia. In this chapter I submit that narratives about roles performed by the independence political parties in Zambia and Zimbabwe, are valorised and like public statues, are raised up in such a manner that they cast shadows on other histories that relate to independence.

In chapters three, four and five, I focus discussing how selected visual artists engage with independence narratives and representations of women in national history and memory. The artists include Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude, Kudzanai Chiurai and Gladys Kalichini. All the artworks discussed in these chapters are produced on the basis of a theoretical assumption that memory and history about Zambian and Zimbabwean liberation that are stored in government institutions such as archives and monuments that are political produced because they are shaped, curated and maintained largely by the state, from the perspective of the state.

In Chapter Three, I analyse selected paintings by Nyaude to discuss the state's role in maintaining a singular national narrative that casts only selected individuals as heroes of history. Nyaude's paintings respond to political and social issues in post-independence Zimbabwe and grapple with how violence is employed as a tool in forming and maintaining state power. Some of the motifs of Nyaude's paintings include a dismembered male figure,

which he says represents the state and its ability to efficiently run the country. Other motifs include items such as televisions, radios and furniture which symbolise tools that are employed by the state to communicate their agendas in terms of forming and maintaining political narratives. Nyaude also uses metaphors and slang to portray how language can be employed as a tool to express society's frustrations with the social, economic and political conditions within the post-independence state - he considers the potency of language in subverting power and countering violent systems of oppression.

Continuing from the discussion of Nyaude's paintings in Chapter Three, the fourth chapter focuses on the violence of silence as interrogated in some of Chiurai's artworks that focus on representations of women in historical narratives. Chiurai develops a notion he terms as traumatic silence, which is defined as the suppression of frustrations and trauma. In his work Chiurai relates the chaos that often erupts as a result of suppressing trauma to the violence associated with the silencing and erasing of memories about women. Similar to Nyaude's paintings, Chiurai's artworks respond to a situation in which directly speaking out against national institutions can, and often has, resulted in negative consequences. Consequently, there is a tendency for the society to suppress their views for fear of being subjected to acts of violence by the state. When trauma is suppressed for extended periods of time, it tends to result into violence. According to Chiurai's work, women's narratives have been silenced for so long that to become visible, they might have to use violence to fight back against the systems that have oppressed and suppressed them.

The ultimate consequence of violence is death: in the fifth chapter I consider themes about death and mourning as explored through my own artistic practice. I focus on the vulnerability of the body in relation to the susceptibility to erasure of stories about women, and processes of mourning in relation to remembering. My artistic practice is formed on the theoretical foundation of mortality – that bodies eventually die, and that memory is fickle because it almost always fades away. My artwork primarily focusses on mourning rituals as an aesthetic strategy of slowing down the process of erasure and attempts to excavate and preserve traces of stories of women that I come across in my own journey of engaging with absence.

This study was done for the specific context of the memorialisation of the liberation struggle in Zambia (Northern Rhodesia) and Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia). It gives insight into some of the processes and ways in which stories about women are erased from dominant

liberation struggles. There is arguably an infinite number of reasons that could explain various ways in which women's stories are erased within the specific context of Zambia (Northern Rhodesia) and Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia) that need to be further studied. This study can also be extended to include other locations as there are different political and social nuances that might be specific to different contexts. On a more personal note, I am interested in further extending this study to critically explore the notion of invisibility for the specific contexts of Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi which are nations that are former members of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, as well as other countries in the southern region of Africa.

This thesis can be viewed as a document that raises further questions the memorialisation of liberation movements and narratives about women. One of the questions arising from this study is the nature of collective on the African continent and within the context of individual states in Africa – how is information about the past formed and transmitted into the consciousness of the public? How does the public engage with memory markers such as monuments and archives? To what degree does accessibility to monuments and archives impact various societies' perceptions of national and political memory? Another question which is partially responded to in this dissertation addresses the visibility of women and their political affiliations. Are women who were appointed political positions such as cabinet ministers or members of parliament within government institutions, as invisible as women who are not? In what ways are women in such positions able to assert their own agency and urgency in the writing of their narratives? What are the similarities and differences of history writing among African states? Although some of these questions are reflected on in this dissertation, they remain too complex to be answered within the parameters and scope of this study. As such rather than being an ending of a discussion, this conclusion can be perceived as a pathway into multiple research questions for further studies.

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