Muziki

Journal of Music Research in Africa

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rmuz20

Youth Popular Music, Waithood and Protest: Zimdancehall Music in Zimbabwe

Simbarashe Gukurume

To cite this article: Simbarashe Gukurume (2022) Youth Popular Music, Waithood and Protest: Zimdancehall Music in Zimbabwe, Muziki, 19:1, 44-64, DOI: 10.1080/18125980.2022.2144420

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/18125980.2022.2144420

Published online: 20 Dec 2022.

Submit your article to this journal

Article views: 119

View related articles

View Crossmark data

Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at
https://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?journalCode=rmuz20

Article

Youth Popular Music, Waithood and Protest: Zimdancehall Music in Zimbabwe

Simbarashe Gukurume
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2297-3693
Sol Plaatje University, South Africa
simbarashe.gukurume@spu.ac.za

Abstract

Dancehall music in Zimbabwe has become a very popular genre among urban youth. Since its emergence, this localised music genre has reconfigured urban public culture in complex ways. Drawing on popular musical forms (Zimdancehall), this article examines how urban youth use this musical genre to articulate and express their frustrations, grievances, and everyday existential struggles. This article critiques popular songs and lyrics of selected young Zimdancehall artists to show how their musical discourse can be viewed as alternative discursive spaces of counterhegemonic narratives and a critique of the excesses of the post-colonial state. I argue that Zimdancehall music has become a space where young people simultaneously articulate and navigate their existential frustrations and waithood. While marginalised from mainstream socio-economic and political processes, and detached from the corridors of power, young people use music to speak truth to power. They sing about their anxieties with the socio-economic and political injustices metaphorically and creatively. I assert that through music, young people have found a way of (in)directly addressing the political elites who are complicit in their everyday existential struggles. I argue that Zimdancehall lyrics should be read as ideological texts which articulate a specific type of being and becoming, epitomised by the politics of suffering and smiling.

Keywords: popular music; protest music; waithood; youth; Zimdancehall

UNISA university of south africa PRESS | Routledge Taylor & Francis Group

Muziki
www.tandfonline.com/RMUZ
Volume 19 | Number 1 | 2022 | pp. 44–64

https://doi.org/10.1080/18125980.2022.2144420
ISSN 1753-593X (Online), ISSN 1812-5980 (Print)
© Unisa Press 2022

Introduction

This article draws on the popular youth musical genre of Zimdancehall and the music of artists like Winky D, Seh Calaz, and Platinum Prince to examine the ways in which Zimdancehall music provides a discursive space for young people (the term "young people" refers to youths aged 18 to 35) to articulate their everyday aspirations, struggles, and agency. The article analyses Winky D's songs "Twenty Five" and "Ijipita," Seh Calaz's "Letter to the President," and Platinum Prince's "Ndeip President." These songs are used as a window through which to view young people's frustrations with and efforts to make sense of the country's protracted socio-economic and political crisis (Bond and Manyanya 2002; Gukurume 2015; Jones 2010) that has limited opportunities for upward mobility for many young people. The country's multi-layered crisis has affected many young people who struggle to get by in a context marked by dwindling employment and livelihood opportunities (Gukurume 2015; Gukurume 2019). The Zimbabwean crisis was marked by hyperinflation, deindustrialisation, and rapid informalisation. Scholars argue that this crisis was triggered by many factors, including the controversial land reform programme, the unbudgeted gratuities paid to war veterans, and the country's intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo war (Gukurume 2018b; Raftopolous 2013). It is this crisis that punctuates the frustrations of many young people as reflected in their music. The artists whose songs are analysed in this article were chosen because of their popularity and because their songs and lyrics resonate with the everyday lives and existential struggles of many young people in post-2000 Zimbabwe.

Zimdancehall music addresses a broad range of existential and everyday issues such as love, crime, drug abuse, violence, and peace among many other pertinent sociocultural issues in the postcolonial moment. However, for this article, I focus on the songs that speak to youth frustrations with the state of the country and the protracted economic decay. The themes that dominate Zimdancehall clearly highlight the direct influence of Jamaican dancehall music in many and complex ways. In fact, it should be underscored that the roots of Zimdancehall should be traced, in part, to Jamaican dancehall musicians whom Zimbabwean youths grew to love, such as Shabba Ranks, Yellowman, Buju Banton, Jah Cure, Demarco, Capleton, Simpleton, Christopher Martin, Vybz Kartel, and Bounty Killer, among others. Although singing in local vernacular, most Zimdancehall artists (especially the pioneers) tend to model themselves after Jamaican dancehall artists. Interestingly, some of the Zimdancehall artists also have a fascination with Jamaican Rastafarianism epitomised by patois language, dress codes, and colours. Similarly, even the way they arrange their music, both the instrumentals and the lyrics, resonates with Jamaican dancehall music.

The Emergence of Zimdancehall Music

Although many factors led to the development of Zimdancehall music, the background to the music in this article is framed in part by the protracted Zimbabwean economic crisis that gave traction to this genre of youth protest music. The emergence of locally produced dancehall music in Zimbabwe has radically transformed the Zimbabwean

music landscape. This music has attracted thousands of youthful fans and followers, mainly in urban areas. For many disgruntled youths, this genre of music has provided a space to articulate their disillusionment with the postcolonial crisis in the country. The rapid growth and popularity of popular music like Zimdancehall music must be understood within the broader context of the socio-economic and political processes (Chitando 2007; Kufakurinani and Mwatwara 2017). This article focuses on popular music and particularly a new genre of dancehall music in Zimbabwe, locally called Zimdancehall, and how it has become not only a space for youths to protest and express resistance but also a space to articulate their frustrations and anxieties about the future. Similarly, scholars like Makwambeni (2017) note that Zimdancehall music should be conceived as a site of resistance. In a context where the public sphere is "colonised" through elaborate censorship, Zimdancehall music has become an alternative space where young people articulate their anxieties, grievances, and waithood. Interestingly, some scholars contend that music has the force to disrupt and reconfigure ways of knowing, thinking, and articulating social problems in society (Ncube and Chipfupa 2017). For some scholars, music emerges from specific socio-economic, cultural, and political realities of the society in which it is produced. For instance, Chitando (2008) showed how social themes such as HIV and Aids radiate in Zimbabwean music articulating both pain and hope engendered by and through music. Vambe (2000) also noted that post-colonial musical genres have articulated the socio-political reality in ways that subvert official state narratives of independence and freedom.

Indeed, several scholars have shown the centrality of music and art more broadly as an alternative tool for resistance, protest, and mobilising people against autocratic regimes (see Chitofiri, Mutasa, and Gwekwerere 2017; Gakahu 2017; Hirsch 2002; Mbembe 2001; Nyamnjoh and Fokwang 2005). In fact, Chitofiri, Mutasa, and Gwekwerere (2017) note that music aesthetics are deployed to expose and contest the growing entrenchment of corruption, neo-patrimonialism, political violence, and violation of human rights rampant in the post-colonial era. Similarly, Mbembe (2001) and Nyamnjoh and Fokwang (2005) have shown how political subjects utilise various forms of art, music included, to challenge the excesses of those in power. Many scholars have shown how music is deployed as a weapon to subvert hegemonic discourses of the state and political elites (Gueye 2013; Kellerer 2017; Koster 2013). This article contributes to this burgeoning body of scholarship by examining how Zimdancehall music is used not only as a space of protest but also as a way of voicing disenchantment with the prevailing socio-economic and political crisis.

Initially, dancehall music produced by local Zimbabwean artists was labelled as urban grooves music. As such, the contemporary form of Zimdancehall music is regarded as an offshoot of urban grooves music (Gukurume 2022; Tivenga and Manase 2019). Although dancehall music has a long history in Zimbabwe, the term Zimdancehall emerged around 2005–2006 from youthful artists and promoters. Local artists and Zimbabwean promoters based in the United Kingdom created a website that stored dancehall music produced in Zimbabwe, called Zimdancehall.com. This website gave

birth to the official name Zimdancehall, as the name was widely appropriated in the Zimbabwean dancehall landscape. In the past few years, backyard producers have provided space for Zimdancehall artists to record their music and popularise the genre among urban youth. All the songs discussed in this study are recorded, although some have been denied airplay because of state censorship which has deemed some of the songs to be politically subversive. Through Zimdancehall music, young people seek to make sense of the protracted socio-economic and political crisis in the country using the narrative of the songs.

Protest Music in Zimbabwe

Protest music in Zimbabwe is not new. Many scholars argue that protest music has a very long history that dates to the pre-colonial era (Chitando 2007; Chitofiri, Mutasa, and Gwekwerere 2017). Scholars like Dube (1996) assert that pre-colonial kingdoms had professional traditional singers who often became covertly subversive. Chitando (2007) notes that under such a scenario, protest music was articulated and performed in a veiled manner. Thus, through music, artists were able to speak truth to power. Furthermore, during the colonial era, protest music lamented the injustices of colonialism and the marginalisation of many black people due to the segregation policies of the Rhodesian government. Chitando notes that during colonial times and the liberation struggle, protest songs were composed that targeted the oppressive white minority and its surrogates. During the liberation struggle, protest music was created by freedom fighters challenging the colonial domination of whites. Protest music during this era became known as Chimurenga music (Pongweni 1982; Vambe 2011). Chimurenga music challenged the exploitation of black Africans by white colonialists and critiqued the subjugation of women in African patriarchal societies. This music sought to remind autocratic leaders of the temporality of their power (Chitando 2007). In light of the potential political threat posed by the protest musical discourse of Africans, especially African nationalists, the colonial administration sought to ban traditional musical performances. As such, during the Rhodesian era, the Smith regime imposed serious restrictions on African art forms, including music. Scholars note that the Rhodesian government imposed very strict censorship mechanisms to curb the burgeoning political dissent motivated by song (Pongweni 1982; Veit-Wild 1993). This political censorship was sustained in the post-colonial era and was deployed against artists and music deemed to be critical of the political status quo.

At a micro-level, protest music also revealed interpersonal dynamics such as family or marriage anxieties like violence, witchcraft, and conflicts. For example, Chitando (2007) points out that protest songs have always been used to articulate interpersonal conflicts between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law. Chitando notes that daughters-in-law would express themselves and convey their misgivings to a troublesome mother-in-law through song.

Youth and Music, Aspirations, and Waithood

One of the marked features of Zimdancehall music is the dominance of youthful artists, both male and female (Kufakurinani and Mwatwara 2017). Indeed, Zimdancehall is regarded as a predominantly youth genre. Although the concept of youth is contested and problematic and amenable to multiple and often conflicting interpretations, I use this concept as a category of analysis to unpack the lives and aspirations of young people. As Bennett (2007, 23) succinctly explained, "youth is now increasingly a discursive construct and, consequently, a term overlain with multiple and, in many cases, conflicting meanings." In the same vein, Frederiksen and Munive (2010) have shown how the definition of youth is socially constructed and contingent on political, cultural, historical, and spatial settings. In the Zimbabwean context, various documents have also defined youth differently. For example, the constitution of the country views youth as young people aged between 18 and 35 years.

Scholars have shown how youth in many African countries and beyond are experiencing waithood. Young people draw on this genre of music to articulate their grievances and frustrations with a protracted youth—a scenario that many scholars refer to as waithood (Honwana 2013; Singerman 2007). According to Honwana (2013), waithood is a condition in which young people are waiting for adulthood. This condition is epitomised by the protracted and extended period between childhood and adulthood. Under such debilitating conditions, youth live a life devoid of social recognition as adults, as well as the wherewithal to become independent adults (Singerman 2007). Waithood is akin to what Hage referred to as "stuckness: that is an experience of entrapment or "existential immobility" (Hage 2009, 97 cited in Maringira and Gibson 2020). Waithood is constructed as a liminal space between youth and adulthood, in which youth struggle to attain the social markers and attributes associated with being adults. The journey or transition to adulthood becomes protracted and sometimes elusive for many unemployed young people. Consequently, waithood becomes a form of extended entrapment. Most young people in post-independence Zimbabwe can be viewed as a "waithood generation": they confront multiple existential challenges such as skyrocketing unemployment, a repressive government, and limited opportunities for upward mobility.

Under such circumstances, young people have used popular music like Zimdancehall to articulate their deprivations, poverty, and unemployment, and their constrained dreams, aspirations, wishes, and hopes. A considerable body of academic work has shown how young people use popular music as a space through which to assert socio-political forms of expression. In Zimbabwe, the music of Winky D, a prominent and popular Zimdancehall artist, is illustrative, especially his album titled *Njema* (Handcuffs) and his song "Twenty-Five (25)." In the song, Winky D explains that growing up he imagined that by the time he turned 25, he would have a better life and have achieved many things, but for him and indeed many other young people, such a good life has been elusive and a pipe dream. The song chronicles the frustrations of young people like

him in their quest for upward mobility. Winky D also bemoans the arrested aspirations of young people that result from the prolonged economic decay. Winky D's "lyrics" capture the uncertainties and the emerging socio-economic landscape formed by the protracted economic and political crisis. As a result of the lingering economic meltdown, waithood has become a key feature of daily life for young people in the country. In fact, being unemployed and leaving the country has become an almost inevitable part of a young person's life-course in Zimbabwe and other African countries.

In the song, Winky D refers to *dhiri* and *zheti* to depict the multiple ways through which young people try to put food on the table. Indeed, *zheti* and *dhiri* (which is literally translated as deals) have become the dominant language in the urban hustle economy (Thieme 2018) in Harare. *Zheti* and *dhiri* relate to the multiple ways through which young people make ends meet in spaces characterised by economic constraints and where prospects for formal employment are not only elusive, but also bleak. *Dhiri* (dealing) is a way of making do and getting by that is akin to what Jones (2010) referred to as *kukiya kiya* mode or what Gukurume (2019) referred to as *kujingirisa*, which relate to multiple forms of making do often on the margins of formality and legality. As such, *dhiri* invokes notions of (il)licit and (il)legal survival strategies akin to what scholars have referred to as "hustling" (Thieme 2013, 2018). Scholars have asserted that hustling has become an increasingly pervasive, multidimensional, and precarious practice for many unemployed young people in Africa and beyond (Amankwaa et al. 2019; Jorgensen 2018; Mate 2021; Thieme 2018,). The practice of hustling denotes multiple ways of getting by, making-do, improvisation, and opportunistic income-earning livelihoods (Amankwaa et al. 2019; Thieme 2013). According to some scholars, hustling extends to cheating, manipulating, and misinforming others (Bolt 2012; Jones 2010; Mate 2021). In this article, I argue that dealing is a way through which young people try to make life meaningful and a way of navigating waithood that is engendered by the country's protracted socio-economic decay. Engaging in deals enabled some youths to accumulate wealth which in turn enabled them to attain markers of social adulthood. However, most deals for many ordinary youths tend to be about survival and do not always propel them up the social ladder. Often, many of them remain in survival mode. For instance, Winky D sings:

> *Chidhiri ichi Charamba saka zama ichi* (This deal has failed, so you can try this one)
> *Zuva nezuva ndirimo ini mu soccer bet* (Every single day I am in the soccer betting shops gambling)
> *Profit yacho idiki diki tiri four pazheti* (The profit is too small to be shared by four people involved in the hustle)

Winky D refers to gambling as one of the popular strategies through which urban youth hustle for money to make do and earn their living. For instance, in the last few years, betting shops have mushroomed throughout urban spaces in the country, and many unemployed young people patronise these betting shops. While some youth make do through betting and gambling, others have been further impoverished through the same practices. Winky D acknowledges in the song that gambling is a precarious way of

getting by. Oftentimes, young people pool their money to gamble, albeit for meagre returns which they must share if they succeed. Thus, Winky D's song unpacks the economic uncertainties and structural marginalisation that many young people confront in the country. For instance, Winky D shows how the political elites and the rich systematically exclude young poor people from the fruits and trappings of modernity. He sings:

> *Kune maguta hakuendeki nekuti vane mari vakatenga zicheni ndokuloka gedhi* (The rich have closed and locked the door of wealth and good life for the poor)
> *But gaffer ririku tryer ku cover gepi* (The urban youth are trying to survive)
> *Ndongoramba ndiripandima ndichishanda chete* (I will remain at work and continue to work hard)
> *Chishuwo changu ndechekugara patafura inefood fanika irimune yaChiyangwa plate* (My dream is to have a table full of food just like in Chiyangwa's[1] plate)
> *Ndazovhura meso ndawana dzidzo Hupenyu ifight* (I have opened my eyes, I have learned that life is a struggle)

Winky D's song represents a powerful cultural expression of youthful desires, frustrations, and aspirations. This song clearly shows how young people use popular music to express their concerns and frustrations with blocked futures and aspirations. Winky D bemoans the elusiveness of such aspirations for a good and decent life and a prosperous future. In the song, he shows how the elites monopolise access to wealth and how the fruits of independence and modernity are enjoyed by a few well-connected people while the majority continue to wallow in abject poverty. For instance, in post-colonial Zimbabwe, access to resources is mediated by very clearly defined patronage and clientelist networks. By wishing to have food on the table, Winky D clearly shows how difficult it is for young people to bring food to the table because of factors such as unemployment and economic challenges. Therefore, Winky D makes a conspicuous admission that life for many young people is an everyday struggle and that for many of them the future is too frightening to contemplate.

However, Winky D also shows how young people are not passive victims of their deplorable circumstances. In fact, he shows how these existential perturbations invoke multiple and creative ways of getting by, some of which are on the margins of legality such as gambling which is not only precarious but also uncertain and may have a backlash of reproducing poverty for the young people involved. In light of the foregoing, I content that this music genre thus goes beyond mere entertainment; instead, it describes the subjective experiences of youth in the poor townships—the so-called ghettos. This resonates strongly with observations made by Manase (2011) that musical cultural productions are produced as a representation of prevailing socio-economic and political realities. Young people's music highlights the complex ambivalence between

1 Chiyangwa is a popular Zimbabwean business tycoon who is well known for his lavish and ostentatious lifestyle epitomised by extravagant spending.

globally infused aspirations and locally experienced constraints which is echoed by many other scholarly works in Africa (see Archambault 2012; Hansen 2005; Mate 2012). Therefore, the production of Zimdancehall music should be understood as a response to and engagement with the frustrated desires and aspirations of youth. According to Kufakurinani and Mwatwara (2017), Zimdancehall music was incubated in the constraining circumstances wrought by the country's protracted socio-economic and political crisis that made it difficult for young people to access desirable global commodities.

Through song, young people seek to (re)configure the ways in which they both see themselves and are, correspondingly, seen by others, especially the elderly. Although young people are often stereotypically constructed as "born free," lazy, and idle, they contest such narratives and labels through music. Instead, they construct themselves as hustlers and resourceful actors who devise multiple ways to make ends meet despite constraining circumstances. As such, youth popular music not only demonstrates resilience but can also be imagined as a form of resilience as some young people prosper and become famous through Zimdancehall music. Therefore, Zimdancehall becomes part of the hustle economy.

Suffering, Waithood, and Social Navigation

By openly highlighting the social problems and the lived realities of everyday life, Zimdancehall artists call themselves ghetto prophets. Many scholars have looked at how rap or hip-hop music acts as a social critique of the prevailing socio-economic and political realities in society. Although there is a significant body of scholarship on music in Zimbabwe, much of it has focused on urban grooves music (Chari 2008; Gukurume 2017b; Manase 2011; Siziba 2009), gospel music (Chitando 2007), and Chimurenga music (Pongweni 1982) among others. Chiweshe and Bhatasara (2013) argued that popular music has become a space through which masculinities are displayed and affirmed. Similarly, in his study of male-produced "urban grooves" music, Chari (2008) noted that this music propagates negative discourses on and about women. This discourse is epitomised by the commodification of female bodies, violence, and denigrating stereotypes against women. This observation was also made by Naidoo and Pfukwa (2009) who argued that contemporary Zimbabwean popular music portrays a commercialised framing and image of women and femininity which celebrates beauty over intellect. In contrast, some scholars have noted that female musicians have used music to confront and subvert patriarchal ideologies. Chitando and Mateveke (2012) argued that although female musicians face myriad challenges to make it in the predominantly masculine musical landscape, they demonstrate great ingenuity in navigating these challenges. While this scholarship is insightful in how it resonates with the subjective experiences of many people, there is hardly any scholarship on recent Zimdancehall music in Zimbabwe. The few studies that have examined this new form of the genre have explored how it propagates a very specific militarised discourse and how the titles and persona of the artists themselves are also militarised (Mpofu and

Tembo 2015). Some scholars have explored how this dancehall music promotes the sexual objectification of women (Manase 2011; Naidoo and Pfukwa 2009). However, little is known about this new musical genre and how it interfaces with young people's subjectivities and how it is utilised to articulate their aspirations, hopes, frustrations, anxieties, and waithood. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this knowledge gap through an in-depth exploration of Zimdancehall music.

Musanga (2017) underscored that popular music, as an integral part of popular culture, should be viewed as a critical space deployed by ordinary people to express their dreams, aspirations, desires, and identities. Therefore, for Musanga, music constitutes one of the most striking spaces in which hegemonic authority is contested, negotiated, and subverted. Similarly, scholars like Allen (2004) believe that popular music provides an alternative space for marginalised citizens to voice "who they are and who they want to be, what they believe in and what they want." Allen's findings resonate powerfully with Engleert (2008), who asserted that popular youth music in Tanzania gave young people the space and opportunity to amplify their visibility and voiceability in a contested public space, while simultaneously shaping and reshaping a very specific generational identity. In a Zimbabwean society marked by gerontocratic practices that suppress and silence younger voices, popular Zimdancehall music provides a discursive space through which young people reclaim their voices and contest their invisibility in political and economic matters. I assert that Zimdancehall has become a space where young people enact counter-hegemonic discourses. For instance, after overthrowing the long-serving president, Robert Mugabe, President Mnangagwa proclaimed his regime a "second republic" and a "new dispensation." This implied a paradigm shift from Mugabe's authoritarian leadership where the voices of young people were undermined and suppressed. However, such narratives were contested by Winky D's song titled "Ijipita," which is Shona for Egypt. In this song, Winky D caricatures the country as biblical Egypt and young people as living in perpetual captivity like biblical Israelites. For Winky D, young people can only escape from this captivity through emigration. Winky D speaks of the continuities of militarised authoritarianism that characterise the Mnangagwa regime and dispelled the initial hopes of deliverance that many people had after the overthrow of Mugabe in November 2017. In the song, Winky D sings of imagined futures and desired aspirations and the hope for a better future:

> *Mangwana ngaasiyane nanhasi* (Tomorrow should be different from today)
> *Ndoenda kusina mai* (I am going where my mother is not there/absent)
> *Handina mufudzi ndingori hwayi* (I am just a sheep without a herder)
> *Hupenyu makata hausi mutserendende* (Life is difficult, it is not easy)
> *Ndafunga kuyambuka ndobira dziva* (I have thought of migrating over the sea)

The lyrics and visuals of this song are laden with political undertones that depict the long-term socio-economic and political decay of the country. By claiming to be just a sheep without a herder, Winky D insinuates a lack of leadership in the country. The lyrics above encapsulate the everyday struggles of young people and the hard decisions they are forced to make to migrate far away from their families to make ends meet, get

by, and improve their livelihoods. Ironically, the alien and foreign space they migrate to, devoid of motherly love and often replete with xenophobic violence, is framed as Canaan—a land of milk and honey far different from home which is depicted as Egypt, a land of captivity and suffering. This relates to discourses about youth mobility and livelihoods in Africa where young people risk their lives migrating illegally to other countries in Europe. Scholars have shown how youth in Africa vote with their feet through risky and clandestine boat migration from Africa to Europe. In her study of illegal Senegalese youth migrants to Europe, Ifekwunigwe (2013) asserted that clandestine youth boat migration should be perceived as a form of gendered protest and as a strategic response to the real and perceived absence of economic opportunities for Senegalese male youth. For many young people, migration has become a key survival strategy or part of the logics of *kukiya kiya* (Jones 2010) or *kujingirisa* (Gukurume 2019). Winky D acknowledges that without hustling and migrating, life becomes an uphill task (*makata*) or an everyday struggle. Despite the risk of migrating often without proper documentation, Winky D is adamant and reiterates *ndoenda ndoenda ndoenda ndoenda* (I will go, I will go, I will go, I will go). Winky D's emphasis on wanting to leave the country demonstrates how difficult it is for young people to stay in the country, which offers very few opportunities for self-advancement and upward mobility. Thus, (il)licit migration shows bravery, determinism, resilience, but also desperation on the part of young people who are compelled by prevailing circumstances in their home country to migrate and seek greener pastures out of the country. Interestingly, Winky D deploys religious metaphors and symbolism in the visuals of the song, which powerfully appeals to young people's spiritual sensibilities. Winky D's creative use of biblical allegory was strategic given the fact that more than 70 per cent of Zimbabweans are Christians (Gukurume 2018a, 2020) and would relate to the song and its visuals.

Interestingly, in the video visuals Winky D constructs himself as the biblical Moses fighting to free the children of Israel, in this case Zimbabwean youths, from the oppression of Pharaoh (Mnangagwa). According to Bwanya (2020), the awful suffering of the children of Israel depicted in Winky D's video "Ijipita" resonates strongly with the prevailing excruciating political and economic pain and injustices that young people, in particular, and Zimbabweans, in general, have been subjected to under the Mnangagwa regime since it took over in 2017. For instance, many youth activists have been arrested and imprisoned, while many have been killed during protests. Consequently, since the November 2017 coup that toppled former President Mugabe, the democratic space of the country has shrunk to alarming levels (Oosterom 2019). Military deployment during protests and the abduction and torture of real and perceived political opponents has become commonplace. The shutdown of internet facilities before and during protests has led to a new form of "digital authoritarianism" that has closed the democratic space in the country.

This narrative was driven more emphatically in his other song on the same album titled "Njema" (Handcuffs). The song chronicles the complexity of everyday hardships of young people in and beyond the ghetto. Winky D argues that young people's dreams

are handcuffed or chained and therefore imprisoned. The metaphoric use of handcuffs and prison to describe the lives of young people is a powerful critique of the state's failure to provide opportunities for young people. In fact, at the launch of Winky D's album, which state security agents tried to stop, Winky D took to the stage in a prison uniform. Wearing the clothes worn by prisoners was a powerful symbolic act to depict the everyday existential struggles of young people in the country.

Similarly, Seh Calaz's song "Tsamba kuna President" (Letter to the President) foregrounds the plight of young people who are sinking deeper into abject poverty. Seh Calaz starts by highlighting that he is proud to be a Zimbabwean but bemoans the neglect of young people and ordinary Zimbabweans by the country's leadership. He implores the president to listen to the song so that he can get a glimpse of and understand the everyday challenges confronting young people in the country. Unlike Winky D, Seh Calaz highlights that migrating to another country is not an option for him and that he is determined to stay in the country despite the mounting existential challenges. Calaz asserts that he would rather die in his own country. He sings:

> *Handingatize kunokwira ndege, ndinotofira imomu mu Zimbabwe* (I cannot run away to board the flight, I will die here in Zimbabwe)
> My letter to the president, I am just a nobody from the ghetto
> *Tererai, mwana asingachemi anofira mumbereko,* (Listen a baby who does not cry will die in the mother's backpack)
> *Haunganyare uchitemwa nematombo* (You cannot be shy when you are stoned)
> *Tirikutumira zvirikusvika here zvichemo* (Are you getting the grievances we are sending?)
> *Hakuna rugare kwedu kuno, manyepo* (There is no good life here, it is all lies)
> *Tafa nenzara, misha yaparara, nema drugs ma youth ese aparara, ha takwangwaya, makakongonyarara* (We are in poverty, families are breaking, young people are into drugs, we are struggling, yet you are still silent)

Asserting that he is a nobody from the ghetto while being a popular celebrity musician living a life that is much better than that of other ordinary youths, Seh Calaz gravitates to be the "voice of the voiceless" and appropriates the responsibility of speaking for other young people from the ghetto, albeit also humbling himself before the president, the recipient of his message. Therefore, the musical open letter represents an attempt to engage in a public dialogue with political leaders (Künzler and Reuster-Jahn 2012). In his song, Calaz brings to the fore the existential struggles and grievances of young people that remain unresolved and consequently push them into drug abuse. Calaz decries skyrocketing cases of divorces and broken families, deepening abject poverty and unemployment. In the chorus, Calaz bemoans the lack of opportunities for talented young people. Indeed, talent and academic qualifications in Zimbabwe no longer guarantee a job or a good life.

> *Ndakungoswera ndiriraini, asi inga wani ndinechipo* (I am always idle in the neighbourhood, but I have a talent and qualifications)

Ndakaenda kuchikoro ndaishaya kana zororo (I went to school, and I didn't even have free time)
Ndakamboedza kunyora tsamba, pamwe ndakafona pa wrong number (I tried writing you a letter, maybe I called you on the wrong number)
Ndakamboedza kunyarara asi nhamo yakaramba (I tried keeping quiet, but poverty is forcing me to speak)
Ndachema hangu (I am crying right now)

In the song "Tsamba: Letter to the President," Seh Calaz critiques Mnangagwa's inactions and silences over the country's deteriorating socio-economic situation. Calaz laments how entrenched structural poverty and inequality (re)produce conditions of marginality and erode livelihood opportunities for young people. Indeed, Calaz's critique of Mnangagwa's "new" political dispensation is based solidly on its blatant failure to address the deepening of poverty, unemployment, and inequalities. Although at his inauguration after the November 2017 coup Mnangagwa promised jobs to young people, the reality on the ground is that unemployment has worsened under his administration. Consequently, Calaz calls the President's attention to the deplorable situation and the failure of his government to deliver its promises to youth. Seh Calaz laments the degree of youth drug abuse: *nema drugs ma youth ese aparara* (the youth are being damaged by drugs) / *honai takuvara nemusombo ne guka*[2] (see now drugs are killing us) / *taneta nenhamo aiwa tvaabho* (we are fed up with living in poverty, it's enough). A meticulous discourse analysis of Seh Calaz's song reveals that the young artist not only sings truth to power, but also engages in creative protest through artistic forms. Calaz asserts that his dream is for his message to reach the president as it is "undiluted" and for the president to urgently address the aforementioned grievances and improve the lives and livelihoods of young people. Calaz's open letter to the president resonates strongly with Künzler and Reuster-Jahn (2012), who argued that through open letters, young urban musicians publicly and directly address political elites, protest corruption and lack of accountability, and demand fair and honest dialogue.

Subversion, Protest, and Resistance

Winky D and Seh Calaz provide an open and brutal subversion of the ZANU-PF regime with their songs "Ijipita" (Egypt), "Njema" (Handcuffs), and "Letter to the President." Interestingly, in spite of the risk of speaking truth to power in Zimbabwe, these youth artists use humour and playfulness to communicate their message. In fact, Seh Calaz concluded his song by saying *togona kungoswera takudziirwa muna June* (we might end up getting warm in June). This statement is often used for someone who might end up in trouble. In this case, all the youth artists knew very well the risk they were taking in critiquing the powers that be in Zimbabwe. However, both acknowledged that the situation on the ground compelled them to take the risk and address the president. This resonates with Butler's (1990) concepts of performativity and subversion, in which

2 Guka is street lingo for drugs such as crystal meth used by young people in Zimbabwe.

young people creatively use their music to express themselves in terrains that silence them.

In his song titled "Ndeip President," Platinum Prince also calls the President's attention to the squalid conditions in which most people live in high-density residential areas. Platinum Prince decries the state of urban roads, particularly in the high-density areas or former black-only residential spaces which he refers to as the "ghetto." Platinum Prince shows how roads in these areas are littered and riddled with potholes and how basic service delivery in these areas is poor or, at worst, non-existent. Platinum Prince rhetorically asks the president in the song if he is aware of the deplorable conditions symptomatic of these poor communities. Platinum Prince foregrounds the service delivery crisis by noting that raw sewage is everywhere in areas like Chitungwiza, such that when people are walking, they are always jumping like frogs. Platinum Prince sings:

> *Ndeip yenyu baba vaBona* (How are you Bona's father?)
> *Ndanzwa vanhu Vachiseka kuti makadonha* (I heard people laughing saying that you fell)
> *Havana kukwana, tikatarisa pavakadonha imimi penyu pashoma* (They are crazy because if we were to check the number of times they have fallen, your falling may not count)
> *Ndeip President* (How are you President?)
> *Ndangoti ndikumhoresei, murisei President* (I just thought of greeting you, how are you, President?)
> *Ndine nyaya nezvichemo kwamuri President* (I have issues/concerns and complaints to tell you President)
> *Ndangoti ndikumhoresei, murisei president* (I just thought of greeting you, how are you President?)
> *Makatibata bho kubva 1980* (You have treated us well since 1980)
> *Izvezvi ndakura ndava kuma 20* (Now I have grown up, I am over 20 years old)
> *Honai Economy President* (Look at the Economy Mr President)
> *Mabasa hakuna handina kana cent* (There are no jobs, and I don't even have a penny—broke)
> …
> *Imbondipai tip, munomwira bhawa ripi?* (Can you give me a tip, which bar do you go for drinking?)
> *Mozoenda neni handichada kunwa hwahwa huri cheap* (I want you to go with me I am tired of drinking cheap beer)
> *Kanzuru haisi kushanda yaka easer makamboenda here ku Chitungwiza* (The council is not providing services, have you ever been to Chitungwiza?)
> *Ma sewage akazara pese vanhu vakufamba vachijambajamba kunge hwiza* (Sewage is everywhere and people around jump like grasshoppers)
> *Ndeip President* (How are you President?)
> *Ndangoti ndikumhoresei, murisei President* (I just thought of greeting you, how are you Mr President?)
> *Ndine nyaya nezvichemo* (I have problems/concerns and complaints)

In starting his song, Platinum Prince sarcastically refers to Mugabe's fall at the Harare International Airport while disembarking from the plane. This ironically speaks to Mugabe's old age. Given that artists who have mocked or challenged Mugabe in Zimbabwe have always faced arrest and imprisonment, Platinum Prince is clever to tone down his earlier chant and reference to Mugabe's fall, which went viral on social media, some coming up with memes about his fall. Platinum sings that even though the president fell, many people do fall several times as well. However, while continuing to ask "Murisei President" (How are you feeling, president?), Platinum appears to insinuate the President's ill health, which led him to visit doctors in Singapore and other countries on several occasions. While Mugabe himself and the state-controlled media have always portrayed him as a superhuman who remained largely "fit as a fiddle" despite his old age, his fall at the airport in full view of the public and cameras confirmed his failing health and questioned popular narratives of his invincibility (see Maringira and Gukurume 2022; Siziba and Ncube 2015).

Furthermore, Prince also refers to the plummeting economy which has gone unabated in the past two decades. Similarly, Prince also deprecates the skyrocketing unemployment and the fast-depleting employment opportunities which affect many young people like him. Prince is also quick to highlight his aspirations for upward mobility and acquisition of the trappings of modernity, such as expensive designer suits which the president and his ZANU-PF henchman always wear. For Prince and many other young people these aspirations remain elusive due to the prevailing socio-economic and political realities. Prince's lyrics lament the deepening poverty and suffering that epitomise life in the ghetto, the former black-only residential areas. Although Prince drew on the example of Chitungwiza, such existential perturbations are widespread in many other places in Harare. Therefore, Prince's song is an insightful political satire and social commentary on the state of "being" in Zimbabwe. Prince uses humour and sarcasm to ridicule Mugabe's leadership and the government's failure to improve service delivery and the wellbeing of the people. Throughout the song, Prince speaks out in plain language and constantly defies the etiquette associated with addressing authority. Prince uses words like "Ndeip president" to creatively collapse the gap between the presidential and the ordinary citizens and thereby reducing the person of the president to a colleague.

Prince challenged the president to visit the dormitory town of Chitungwiza, located a few kilometres from the capital Harare, to witness the growing decay of urban life and infrastructure. By asking the president when he had last visited high-density areas like Chitungwiza, Prince shows how the political elites are out of touch with people's problems at the grassroots level. Although ZANU-PF was formed in the high density and former black-only spaces, upon the attainment of independence, many senior politicians relocated to affluent former white-only residential areas like Borrowdale, Mount Pleasant, and Glen Lorne, to mention but a few. After their relocation, high-density areas have been blatantly neglected in terms of service delivery and infrastructure development. As such, Prince's song shows how the political elites in

Zimbabwe, Mugabe included, reneged on their pre-independence promises of delivering growth with equity (*Gutsaruzhinji*). Instead, they resorted to the politics of self-aggrandisement at the expense of the masses, particularly the youths who bear the brunt of massive unemployment and a deepening economic crisis and its attendant immiserations. When Prince released the song in 2015, there were massive retrenchments in the country; thousands of workers were laid off in a few months (Madzingira 2015; Muza 2015; Ruziwa 2015). These job cuts coincided with company closures and a serious cash crisis. Prince's lyrics thus offer a veiled critique of the Mugabe regime and the actions and inactions of the former president and his political henchman. The song provoked fascinating discussions and debates about service delivery, corruption, and poor governance among Zimbabweans in general and played a critical role in energising the youth to vociferously demand accountability, transparency, and service delivery during the 2016–2017 mass protests inspired by social movements like #Tajamuka and #ThisFlag (Chitanana 2020; Gukurume 2017a, 2022).

Through the creative use of satire, it should be noted that Prince's lyrical discourse chides Mugabe for failing to address the ongoing socio-economic ills facing the country over the past 20 years (Arts Reporter 2015). For example, Prince reminds the octogenarian that he has failed to address the country's economic crisis that has characterised his almost four-decade reign. Therefore, in light of the above, I argue that Prince's music reflects the everyday experiences of young people and most urbanites.

In many cases, the state deployed a range of strategies to diffuse the power of popular songs such as those discussed above. For example, the state often ordered state-controlled radio stations to stop playing those songs that appeared subversive to political elites. Additionally, the state has also co-opted some popular Zimdancehall artists to sing songs that praise and valorise political elites, especially those in the ruling party. As such, it is important to note that not all Zimdancehall artists and music is critical of the establishment. Instead, there is also pro-establishment "Chimurenga" Zimdancehall which foregrounds a patriotic history and ZANU-PF propaganda. The pro-establishment Zimdancehall artists enjoy frequent airplay and often perform at ZANU-PF political rallies and national events for a fee. Zimdancehall artists like Souljah Love composed and sang songs that celebrated political elites like the late former President Robert Mugabe. For example, Souljah Love composed a birthday song for President Mugabe titled "Happy Birthday Baba Mugabe." Apart from this, Souljah Love's songs such as "Simudzai Mureza" (Lift the Flag) based on a patriotic history of ZANU-PF in which the party and its political elites are framed as the beginning and end of Zimbabwean politics. After the November 2017 coup that ousted Mugabe from power, Souljah Love also composed a song titled "Garwe" that praised the new President Mnangagwa and his deputy Constantino Chiwenga. Interestingly, when Souljah Love died in 2021, he was declared a provincial hero by the government led by ZANU-PF. Indeed, several Zimdancehall artists have been co-opted in the ZANU-PF establishment to spread the ZANU-PF government's patriotic history and propaganda through music.

Conclusion

The foregoing discussion used the songs of young, popular Zimdancehall artists to examine what their music tells us about the existential struggles, waithood, agency, and imagined futures of young people in Zimbabwe, and the nature of the post-colonial state in Zimbabwe. Their music aptly depicts the everyday struggles, anxieties, and frustrations of young people on the margins of the political and economic domains. I have shown how their music demonstrates the continuities of authoritarianism, brutality, and suffering not only of young people but of the majority of ordinary Zimbabweans in the postcolonial era. Certainly, their music highlights how the gerontocratic, class, corrupt, and spatial legacies of Mugabeism endure post-November 2017. I have argued that the Zimdancehall artists discussed are transforming the musical landscape into a space in which to articulate their frustrations, waithood, and protest, as well as critique the post-colonial state, transforming theirs into a genre that entertains and critiques hegemonic power simultaneously. Indeed, the "margins" and the "ordinary" personified by the genre of Zimdancehall have developed into powerful terrains for the production of counter-hegemonic discourses.

References

Amankwaa, E., F. Esson, and K. V. Gough. 2019. "Geographies of Youth, Mobile Phones, and the Urban Hustle." *The Geographical Journal* 186: 362–74. https://doi.org/10.1111/geoj.12354

Archambault, J. S. 2012. "'Travelling While Sitting Down': Mobile Phones, Mobility and the Communication Landscape in Inhambane, Mozambique." *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 82 (3): 393–412. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0001972012000307

Arts Reporter. 2015. "Platinum Prince chides Mugabe." NewsDay, August 26, 2015. www.newsday.co.zw/2015/08/platinum-prince-chides-mugabe/.

Allen, L. 2004. "Music and Politics in Africa." *Social Dynamics* 30 (2): 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/02533950408628682

Bolt, M. 2012. "Waged Entrepreneurs, Policed Informality: Work, the Regulation of Space, and the Economy of the Zimbabwe-South African Border." *Africa* 82 (1): 111–30. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0001972011000751

Bond, P, and M. Manyanya. 2002. *Zimbabwe's Plunge. Exhausted Nationalism, Neoliberalism and the Search for Social Justice.* Second edition. Pietersburg University of Natal Press.

Butler, J. 1990. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity.* New York: Routledge.

Bwanya, M. 2020. "Zimbabwe: Winky D's Ijipita Surprise Video Laden with Political Undertones." AllAfrica, 4 March 2020. https://allafrica.com/stories/202003040583.html.

Chari, T. 2008. “Representation of Women in Male-produced ‘Urban Grooves’ Music in Zimbabwe.” *Muziki* 5 (1): 92–100. https://doi.org/10.1080/18125980802633045

Chitanana, T. 2020. “From Kubatana to #Thisflag: Trajectories of Digital Activism in Zimbabwe.” *Journal of Information Technology and Politics* 17 (2): 130–45. https://doi.org/10.1080/19331681.2019.1710644

Chitando, E. 2007. “‘Come Down, O Lord!’ Music, Protest and Religion in Zimbabwe.” *Scriptura* 96: 334–47. https://doi.org/10.7833/96-0-1161

Chitando, E. 2008. “Songs of Pain and Hope: HIV and AIDS in Zimbabwean Music.” *Muziki* 5 (1): 62–74. https://doi.org/10.1080/18125980802671466

Chitando, E., and P. Mateveke. 2012. “Challenging Patriarchy and Exercising Women’s Agency in Zimbabwean Music: Analysing the Careers of Chiwoniso Maraire and Olivia Charamba.” *Muziki* 9 (2): 41–52. https://doi.org/10.1080/18125980.2012.742234

Chitofiri, K., D. E. Mutasa, and T. Gwekwerere. 2017. “Fighting for Justice and Freedom Through Music: The Case of Thomas Mapfumo, Hosiah Chipanga and Leonard Zhakata, ca. 1988–2015.” *South African Journal of African Languages* 37 (1): 59–73. https://doi.org/10.1080/02572117.2017.1316927

Chiweshe, K. M., and S. Bhatasara. 2013. “Ndezve Varume Izvi: Hegemonic Masculinities and Misogyny in Popular Music in Zimbabwe.” *African Media Review* 21 (1): 151–70.

Dube, C. 1996. “The Changing Context of African Music Performance in Zimbabwe.” *Zambezia* 23 (2): 99–120.

Frederiksen, B. F., and J. Munive. 2010. “Young Men and Women in Africa: Conflicts, Enterprise and Aspiration.” *Young* 18 (3): 249–58. https://doi.org/10.1177/110330881001800301

Gakahu, N. 2017. “Lyrics of Protest: Music and Political Communication in Kenya.” In *Music as a Platform for Political Communication*, edited by Uche Onyebadi, 257–73. Hershey: IGI Global. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-1986-7.ch014

Gueye, M. 2013. “Urban Guerrilla Poetry: The Movement Y’ en a Marre and the Socio-Political Influences of Hip Hop in Senegal.” *The Journal of Pan African Studies* 6 (3): 22–42.

Gukurume, S. 2015. “Livelihood Resilience in a Hyperinflationary Environment: Experiences of People Engaging in Money-Burning (kubhena mari) Transactions in Harare, Zimbabwe.” *Social Dynamics* 41 (2): 219–34. https://doi.org/10.1080/02533952.2015.1069492

Gukurume, S. 2017a. “#ThisFlag and #ThisGown Cyber Protests in Zimbabwe: Reclaiming Political Space.” *African Journalism Studies* 38 (2): 49–70. https://doi.org/10.1080/23743670.2017.1354052

Gukurume, S. 2017b. “Singing Positivity: Prosperity Gospel in the Musical Discourse of Popular Youth Hip-Hop Gospel in Zimbabwe.” *Muziki* 14 (2): 36–54. https://doi.org/10.1080/18125980.2017.1403862

Gukurume, S. 2018a. “Navigating Precarious Livelihoods: Youth in the SME Sector in Zimbabwe.” *IDS Bulletin* 49 (5): 89–104. https://doi.org/10.19088/1968-2018.176

Gukurume, S. 2018b. “New Pentecostal Churches, Politics and the Everyday Life of University Students at the University of Zimbabwe.” PhD diss., University of Cape Town.

Gukurume, S. 2019. “Navigating the Crisis: University of Zimbabwe Students’ Campus Experiences During Zimbabwe’s Multi-Layered Crisis.” *African Identities* 17 (3–4): 277–97. https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2019.1670620

Gukurume, S. 2020. “Investing in the Future Generation: New Pentecostal Charismatic Churches in Harare, Zimbabwe.” In *African Initiated Christianity and the Decolonization of Development*, edited by Philipp Öhlmann, Wilhelm Gräb, and Marie-Luise Frost, 267–83. London: Routledge.

Gukurume, S. 2022. “Youth and Non-Violent Resistance: #ThisFlag Movement in Zimbabwe.” In *Youth and Non-Violence in Africa’s Fragile Contexts*, edited by Akin Iwilade and Tarila Marclint Ebiede, 137–62. London: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-13165-3_7

Hage, G. 2009. “Waiting Out the Crisis: On Stuckedness and Governmentality.” In *Waiting*, edited by Ghassan Hage, 97–106. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

Hansen, K. T. 2005. “Getting Stuck in the Compound: Some Odds Against Social Adulthood in Lusaka, Zambia.” *Africa Today* 52 (4): 3–16. https://doi.org/10.1353/at.2005.0039

Hirsch, L. 2002. *Amandla! A Revolution in Four-Part Harmony*. Documentary film. US/South Africa: ATO Pictures/Kwela Productions.

Honwana, A. 2013. *Youth, Waithood, and Protest Movements in Africa*. London: International African Institute.

Ifekwunigwe, J. O. 2013. “‘Voting With Their Feet’: Senegalese Youth, Clandestine Boat Migration, and the Gendered Politics of Protest.” *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal* 6 (2): 218–35. https://doi.org/10.1080/17528631.2013.793139

Jones, J. L. 2010. “‘Nothing is Straight in Zimbabwe’: The Rise of the Kukiya-kiya Economy 2000–2008.” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 36 (2): 285–99. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057070.2010.485784

Kellerer, K. 2013. “Chant Down the System ’til Babylon Falls: The Political Dimensions of Underground Hiphop and Urban Grooves in Zimbabwe.” *Journal of Pan African Studies* 6 (3): 43–64.

Koster, M. M. 2013. “The Hip Hop Revolution in Kenya: Ukoo Flani Mau, Youth Politics and Memory, 1990– 2012.” *Journal of Pan African Studies* 6 (3): 82–105.

Kufakurinani, U., and W. Mwatwara. 2017. “Zimdancehall and the Peace Crisis in Zimbabwe.” *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review* 7 (1): 33–50. https://doi.org/10.2979/africonfpeacrevi.7.1.03

Künzler, D., and U. Reuster-Jahn. 2012. “‘Mr. President’: Musical Open Letters as Political Commentary in Africa.” *Africa Today* 59 (1): 89–113. https://doi.org/10.2979/africatoday.59.1.89

Madzingira, Fadzai. 2015. “Terminating Employee Rights: A Discussion of Nyamande and another v Zuva Petroleum.” OxHRH (Blog), 11th August 2015. Accessed November 09, 2022. https://ohrh.law.ox.ac.uk/terminating-employee-rights-a-discussion-of-nyamande-and another-v-zuva-petroleum.

Makwambeni, B. 2017. “Zimbabwe Dancehall Music as a Site of Resistance.” In *Music as a Platform for Political Communication*, edited by U. Onyebadi, 238–56: Texas: IGI Global Publishing. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-1986-7.ch013

Manase, I. 2011. “The Aesthetics of Winky D’s Zimbabwe Urban Grooves Music and an Overview of His Social Commentary on the Post-2000 Experiences in Harare and other Urban Centres.” *Muziki* 8 (2): 81–95. https://doi.org/10.1080/18125980.2011.631300

Maringira, G., and D. Gibson. 2020. “Youth Violence and Resilience in Africa.” *Politeia* 39 (1): 1–10. https://doi.org/10.25159/2663-6689/8337

Maringira, G., and S. Gukurume. 2022. “Youth Political Mobilization: Violence, Intimidation, and Patronage in Zimbabwe.” *Political Psychology* 743 (6): 1027–41. https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12799

Mate, R. 2012. ‘Youth Lyrics, Street Language and the Politics of Age: Contextualising the Youth Question in the Third Chimurenga in Zimbabwe.” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 38 (1): 107–27. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057070.2012.642722

Mate, R. 2021. “‘Looking for Money’: Hustling, Youth Survival Strategies and Schizoid Subjectivities in Zimbabwe’s Crisis.” *African Identities* (published online 24 May 2021). https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2021.1913095

Mbembe, A. 2001. *On the Postcolony*. Berkeley: University of California.

Mpofu, Phillip, and Charles Tembo. 2015. “Militarising Music and Demilitarising the Military: Making Sense of ‘Musoja’ in Zimdancehall Music.” *Muziki* 12 (1): 103–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/18125980.2015.1031453

Musanga, T. 2017. “Perspectives of Zimbabwe–China Relations in Wallace Chirumiko’s ‘Made in China’ (2012) and NoViolet Bulawayo’s ‘We Need New Names’ (2013).” *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 29 (1): 81–95. https://doi.org/10.1080/13696815.2016.1201654

Muza, Omen. 2015 “Labour Ruling Favours Employers.” NewsDay, November 2, 2015. Accessed November 9, 2022. https://www.newsday.co.zw/opinion-amp-analysis/article/98834/labour-ruling-favours-employers.

Naidoo, S., and C. Pfukwa. 2009. “Representations of Women in Zimbabwean Contemporary Music.” *Muziki* 6 (2): 145–53. https://doi.org/10.1080/18125980903248180

Ncube, B., and G. Siziba. 2017. “(Re)membering the Nation’s ‘Forgotten’ Past: Portrayals of Gukurahundi in Zimbabwean Literature.” *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 52 (2): 231–47. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021989415615646

Ncube, G., and D. Chipfupa. 2017. “Outspoken Cynics? Rethinking the Social Consciousness of Rap and Hip-Hop Music in Zimbabwe.” *Muziki* 14 (1): 103–22. https://doi.org/10.1080/18125980.2017.1322470

Nyamnjoh, F. B., and J. Fokwang. 2005. “Entertaining Repression: Music and Politics in Postcolonial Cameroon.” *African Affairs* 104 (415): 251–74. https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adi007

Oosterom, M. 2019. *The Implications of Closing Civic Space for Sustainable Development in Zimbabwe*. IDS, University of Sussex.

Pongweni, A. J. C. 1982. *Songs that Won the Liberation War*. Harare: College Press.

Raftopoulos, B. 2013. “The 2013 Elections in Zimbabwe: The End of an Era.” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 39 (4): 971–88. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057070.2013.862101

Ruziwa, Matthias. 2015. “Unpacking Supreme Court Ruling on Job Termination.” The Herald, 22 July 2015. Accessed November 09, 2022. https://www.herald.co.zw/unpacking-supreme-court-ruling-on-job-termination/.

Singerman, D. 2007. “The Economic Imperatives of Marriage: Emerging Practices and Identities among Youth in the Middle East.” Middle East Youth Initiative Working Paper No. 6. Brookings, OR: Wolfensohn Center for Development and Dubai School of Government. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1087433

Siziba, G. 2009. “Redefining the Production and Reproduction of Culture in Zimbabwe’s Urban Space, the Case of Urban Grooves.” *CODESRIA Bulletin* 3 (4): 19–27.

Siziba, G., and G. Ncube. 2015. “Mugabe’s Fall from Grace: Satire and Fictional Narratives as Silent Forms of Resistance in/on Zimbabwe.” *Social Dynamics* 41 (3): 516–39. https://doi.org/10.1080/02533952.2015.1106124

Thieme, T. A. 2013. “The ‘Hustle’ Amongst Youth Entrepreneurs in Mathare’s Informal Economy.” *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 7 (3): 389–412. https://doi.org/10.1080/17531055.2013.770678

Thieme, T. A. 2018. “The Hustle Economy: Informality, Uncertainty and the Geographies of Getting By.” *Progress in Human Geography* 42 (4): 529–48. https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132517690039

Tivenga, D. R., and I. Manase. 2019. “Language Syncretism and the Expression of Youth Identities in Zimbabwe Urban Grooves Music.” *Journal of Black Studies* 50 (5): 484–503. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021934719848979

Vambe, M. T. 2000. “Popular Songs and the Social Realities in Post-Independence Zimbabwe.” *African Studies Review* 43(2):73–86. https://doi.org/10.2307/524985

Vambe, M. T. 2011. “Rethinking the Notion of Chimurenga in the Context of Political Change in Zimbabwe.” *Muziki* 8 (2): 1–28. https://doi.org/10.1080/18125980.2011.631290

Veit-Wild, F. 1993. *Teachers, Preachers, Non-believers: A Social History of Zimbabwean Literature*. Harare: Baobab Books.