

Popular Music as a Mirror to the Zimbabwean Crisis

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Abstract

Zimbabwe has a decade (1998 - 2008) which it witnessed economic meltdown. It is during this period that the lives of the people changed for the worst due to various circumstances. The decade of crisis in Zimbabwe has seen various artists also coming up with popular music to raise awareness on the causes and effects of the problems they faced. The music also triggers people's feelings on the issues like unemployment, unfair treatment of the masses and survival of the fittest among others that concern them during that time. In this decade, people's lives were disorientated such that all these various dimensions of their existence came to be expressed through popular music. Against this background, the task of this paper is to exude how popular music has been used to mirror Zimbabwean crisis during the period (1998 - 2008). The researcher has employed content analysis in analysing the songs that have been selected in the paper. The research is informed by African popular culture model and ethnography of communication. The paper explores Zhakata's album 'Vagoni vebasa' as a projector to the crisis as it was released in 1997. It moves on to Chimbetu's Ndaremerwa which was a 1999 release and already the rat was already smelled as reflected in the album. Finally, Mapfumo's Mamvemve narrates the situation as it manifested during the time in question. The article observes that popular music is a powerful tool in articulating important and even sensitive issues to the people (those in power and the masses). It has been noted that even if it brings out pertinent issues like that, sometimes it ends up being art for art's sake for it does not solve people's problems except that it saves to record history of a people at a particular period in time. It concludes that while popular music managed to mirror Zimbabwean crisis during 1998 - 2008 possible or suggestive measures have to be provided as well.

Keywords: social, political, economic, crisis, music, unemployment, Zimbabwe, meltdown, survival of the fittest,

Introduction

This article is intended to explore popular music and show how it has been able to articulate and mirror issues that concern people during the decade of crisis 1998-2008 in Zimbabwe. Decade of crisis refers to the time when Zimbabwe experienced ten (10) years of economic, political and social hardships. In simple terms, it is the period in which Zimbabwe was hit by an economic collapse which affected people's lives in different ways. It is during this period that musicians were not also an exception in reciting the situation through their songs. It is important to

carry out such an investigation as it shows the role of the artists in addressing the burning issues of the day, (Achebe 1989).

In order to appreciate the idea of popular music as a mirror to the Zimbabwean crisis, the paper has to be grounded in some theoretical underpinnings. The researcher employs African popular culture concept and the ethnography of communication model as the analysis should take into cognisance people's culture. The researcher carried also some bit of content analysis as the lyrics of the music itself needed to be scrutinised closely. Usually music raises issues that affect the general public and this music becomes popular among the powerless in society as it raises issues that they cannot do anything to change. African popular culture in general is the work of Barber (1997), Mbembe (1997), Nyamnjoh (2005) and Willems (2005). It shows fight back by mocking the powerful. One agrees with Sparks (1992:24) when he says, "the issues raised by 'the popular' are at once easiest and most difficult in terms of cultural analysis". In this paper, the concept of popular culture which is the behaviours of people in a certain society is used in analysing popular music to understand the idea of fighting back the powerful as has been raised above. Ethnography of communication is also taken on board considering the way people interpret and view such music. The paper takes much interest in what Fiske (1992:49) regards as popular culture's ability to produce 'sceptical laughter' or pleasures of disbelief, the pleasures of not being taken in". However, this paper recognises that although music is polysemic, senses which listeners' makes of popular music depend at least in part on what musicians have actually written in the first place. (Sparks 1992:3)

The argument of the paper is that artists/ musicians have a role in communicating messages that concern people at a particular time. Usually considering the decade which is being referred to in this paper, much of the attention and focus is put on the public outcry to the powers that be so that their concerns will be addressed. In this regard, this type of music becomes popular as it represents ordinary people, ridicule the powerful and serves as the voice of the voiceless. (Mano 2007) This means that all facets of people's lives be it economic, social, or political are addressed in these songs. Thus Street (2001:254) alludes that, "music does not exist autonomously of other social, economic and political institutions. It follows that music as an artistic genre is also a cultural expression which sums up the products of human nature. This is best summarised by Dahlgren (1992:5) when he says:

The culture in cultural studies points to the sociologically and anthropologically grounded concerns with the practises and products of human activity. These are seen as socially constructed and cultural studies is very much directed towards analysis how it is structured, articulated and circulated in various settings.

This means that messages in the popular music can be socially constructed depending on the situation at hand. Meaning of these songs can be deduced from

different contexts in which they were done. Thus popular songs which were produced during the period under review were understood in the context in which they were sung.

The meaning of these songs might not be obvious and neither would those meanings be the preserve of the musicians. Street (1986:6) puts it right when he says,

A record is not just the sum total of the notes which compose it. Because people cannot be separated from the industry that produces it, understanding sound entails understanding the system that creates and propagates it. Record executives, lawyers, accountants, producers, engineers, publicity, sales personnel, radio programmers, disc jockeys, music journalist and host of others come between a songs' composition and its first hearing. A single is not a piece of pure art, it is the result of countless choices and compromises, using criteria that mix the aesthetic, the political and the economic.

This eventually means that the interpretation of the meaning of the music lies with the listener. The artists do not tell the listeners how to listen and interpret the song that is why when some lyrics are interpreted as being subversive to the authorities, the musician can stand his or her ground to explain otherwise. This brings in the ethnography of communication model which is also vital in the paper looking at how different lyrics of the songs are interpreted by the people.

On ethnography of communication, Carbaugh (1989) defines it as an approach, a perspective and method to and is the study of culturally distinctive means and meanings of communication. The concept of ethnography of communication relates ethnography, the description and structural functional analysis of society and culture with the language. Hymes (1974: 9) states that "the starting point is the ethnographic analysis of the communication conduct of community". This means that the way people conduct themselves in various communities have to be analysed through music as it is a tool which mirror people's day to day living in their communities. Their way of life is depicted in that music thus the need to interpret the meaning of the lyrics in the songs. Communication conduct is what people do when they communicate with each other. Researchers could use his methods to study this communication systematically.

Since Zimbabwe has people from various cultural backgrounds, it follows that even popular music produced for these people is also determined by their environments especially in terms of language and culture. The same idea is also accommodated in Hymes' (1974) model when he says, to study the communication of a particular culture, the proposed basic units that indicate which area of the culture one is most interested in examining. He sets units which are speech

community, speech situations, speech event, communicative act, style a way of speaking. These help the researcher in this paper to take on board the interpretation of the meaning of specific songs analysed in the paper. In support, Ray and Biswas (2011) advocate that ethnography of communication is an approach to understand society and culture and its reconstruction of an ethnic group in particular and nation in general. To be able to do this, language designed and structured by pattern of culture, acts as a communicative tool. Their language comes and transmits social cultural traits through generation.

In the 21st century, exclusively ethnography of communication is considered a qualitative method in the field of communication as well as cultural anthropology. The theory has also been deciphered as the model of analysing the use of language and communicative process. (Ray and Biswas 2011). In the communicative process it is quite logical that the process involves the sender of the message and the recipients. Their understanding again is determined by the kind of speech being put across and type or class of people being addressed thus the relationship between speech and social class is also discussed and ethnographic research provided. The main argument is that research in the ethnography of communication presupposes the acknowledgement of the inextricable link between language and the extra linguistic cultural context. Thus popular music is aligned to a certain group of people who understand it in their own capacity as the powerless.

More so, the theory seeks to understand human behaviour with its own social settings. This means that when the message is being put across through music, it is imperative to understand the social background of the writer, singer or anybody behind so as to have a clear understanding of the message being put across hence the implied development agenda. In the case of the time being referred to in the paper, the decade of crisis, the agenda behind popular music mostly was to mirror the status quo. Searle (1969) says that the ethnography of communication model the basic unit of analysis is considered "communicative event" and meanings are conveyed through speech acts. In this case people grasp messages differently because of different circumstances hence Itavilond (1996) postulates that individuals tend to vary in the way they use language. Social variables such as class and status of the speaker will also influence their use of language and their understanding of issues conveyed through music in particular.

Factors that lead to the Zimbabwean crisis

The period 1998 – 2008 in Zimbabwe was a culmination of many issues which include the involvement of Zimbabwe in the DRC peace keeping agenda. Although the exercise was a mere respect of the SADAC protocol to assist a member state in times of aggression but it implicated negatively on the economy of the country.

This exercise saw a lot of the armed forces leave the country for that exercise and as result that strained the economy in terms of costs to cater for casualties, arsenal among other things. As if it was not enough, the government embarked on giving the war veterans some fifty thousand dollars as compensation fee to resuscitate their lives after having participated in the liberation struggle. The exercise coupled with land reform to satisfy the needs of the war veterans was a necessary evil to the government as the land issue was the key grievance which made these veterans participate in the liberation struggle. The effort by the government destabilises the economy as the funds were taken from the government coffers. The continued talk of the redistribution of land to the black majority saw the country receiving a lot of sanctions from the West such that the political, social and economic lives of the nation changed. The imposition of these sanctions also had an effect largely on the political environment of the country. The sanctions in Zimbabwe came as a result of the redistribution of land where the agreements made at the Lancaster house peace talks were not met and yet land imbalance issue had to be addressed. The way the Zimbabwean government took land from whites did not go down well with the Western world as it was viewed as violation of human rights thus the introduction of sanctions. All these difficulties which the people were facing necessitated the room for the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) to gain more support from the people.

The animosity between the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU-PF) and the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) has resulted in violence and heightened political tension in the country over the past decade especially between 1999 and 2005. It is during this period that the opposition MDC has lost to ZANU PF twice 2000 and 2005 harmonised elections although in 2005 it won majority parliamentary seats. While ZANU-PF has always cherished the idea of the one-party state, Zimbabwean citizens have actively resisted this option. As a result, ZANU-PF has had to face the reality of competing for the hearts and minds of the voters since 1980. Regarding itself as the sole liberator of the people, ZANU-PF has not enjoyed sharing political space with its rivals. This was the case in the early 1980s with ZAPU, in the 1990s with ZUM and after 2000 with the MDC. In many instances, ZANU-PF has used violence as a political weapon, particularly during the decade-long battle with the MDC.

The 2000 parliamentary elections and the 2002 presidential polls were characterised by violence and tension. In Mugabe's rhetoric, MDC leaders were mere 'puppets of the West', who did not understand that the land rightfully belonged to blacks. Some of his slogans called for the total eradication of the MDC (Chitando 2002). The overall climate was one of fear and intimidation. The philosophy of *jambanja* (militancy) that emerged during the fast-track land reform programme implied that the rule of law could no longer be guaranteed. In the case of *jambanja*, war

veterans and other citizens would grab white farms without following any protocols, it was more of putting the law in their own hands. In many cases, the police refused to get involved in addressing cases of violence, arguing that these were 'political'. All the issues discussed above led to the crisis which this article is addressing thus Zhakata in his album *Vagoni vebasa* (Professional Workers) has projected the crisis before its fruition.

Music as a mirror

Music has been defined by Connell and Gibson (2003) as a form of cultural expression for individuals and social groups, but is also a commercial commodity that circulates in demographic markets. Despite it being a commercial commodity, the understanding of this paper is on the basis that music expresses culture of individuals and social groups. If one would go by p'Bitek's (1986) definition of culture as life as it is lived and celebrated by the community, the lifestyle in which people lived during the decade of crisis represented the culture of the time thus music mirrors such. In line with the above understanding, Zindi (1997) posits that most of Zimbabwe's music expresses the social life and hardships experienced by the people. This manifests the relationship between art and society hence Achebe (1989) argues that African literature is 'functional' such that it would be easy to identify it in action. This idea places literature at the centre of people's activities in a society which has a hand in producing it. He believes that African literature has always been there as demonstrated by its close connection with the oral traditional literature where it was functional in passing on values, norms, culture as well as morals of society from one generation to another as drawn from the part played by folktales and other genres. In this case, music as a form of art produced by the society can tackle on aspects of the liberation war, the social conditions of ordinary people, poverty and injustices in society. At times it talks about romance. The most important thing is that the issues that people battle with in their day to day running are tabled through music thus the notion that music is a mirror through which people can reflect on their lives in an interesting manner.

Furthermore, for Achebe the functionality of the work of art is also reflected by its realism that is reflecting issues that are existent. This implies that when artist such as Zhakata and others who are discussed in this paper produce their works, they have to bring out issues as they are experienced in a bid to be realistic. Jones (1992) observes that Zimbabwean music and everyday activities are closely related. She discovered that songs to do work, hunting, weddings, funerals and religion probably developed alongside these activities and festivities. On the same note, Mhiripiri (2012) also notices the power that music has in communities. He observed that, at a time of very serious political and economic crisis, Zimbabweans seem to be entertaining themselves with music. There has been a massive shut-down of

manufacturing industries, but the music industry remains resilient because musicians exploit the existing situation for their survival, for example Fungisai Zvakavapano Mashavave's song '*Chingwa nhasi zvachakwira*' among others. According to the country's Central Statistics Office, inflation was the highest in the world, reaching as high as 100,000 per cent by mid-February 2008, even exceeding that of war-ravaged Iraq, which had second highest at 60 per cent. At its apex, Zimbabwe's crisis created paradoxes such as poor billionaires and the fastest-shrinking economy outside of a war zone. Poor in the sense that their money could not buy anything, the billions were useless. Unemployment in formal jobs was as high as 80 per cent in January 2008. Despite all this, the music industry remained vibrant, and there were no signs that the big recording companies – Zimbabwe Music Corporation (ZMC), Records and Tape Promotions (RTP), Gramma and Ngaavongwe – would shut down or relocate to South Africa as most other companies have or had done. This shows the way things were operating during the time thus giving several artists to reflect on the crisis in different ways.

Furthermore on the resilient of the music industry, Mhiripiri (2012) did a research on how the Zimbabwean music industry has survived during the time of the crisis in Zimbabwe. He established that despite the harsh economic conditions in the country, recording companies managed to struggle on and record artists' music using foreign currency. Many musicians could record their pieces of work and it was during this time that they would sing about the situation of the day. This has enlightened this paper in the sense that music as an art form and an industry gave the artists the opportunity to air out the people's voices and be able to reflect on the situation that the people were going through. More so, Chitando (2013) looked at the prosperity theory and Zimbabwean Gospel music in which he was exploring at the celebration of prosperity theory in gospel music. He argued that music that celebrated prosperity gained ground following a decade of crisis in Zimbabwe. It is during this time that people raised their hopes to God and gospel musicians in particular produced songs to keep people's faiths high in line with prosperity. Contrary to this idea, this paper is specifically exploring how popular music has been used to narrate the nature of the crisis in Zimbabwe during the decade in question.

Zimbabwean music is integral to Zimbabwean everyday life and history which entails that music is central to a people's life. It narrates people's experiences as they live. The performance and consumption of music in Zimbabwe not only predates colonialism but also is linked to Zimbabwean historical and cultural processes (Kwaramba, 1997; Pongweni, 1982; Vambe, 2004; Zindi, 1985). Music is a crucial part of Zimbabwean society, for example in times of war and peace, at workplaces, in the home and outdoors, in religion and social ceremonies (rain-making, collective labour, religion, marriage, death or love, for instance). Any

recognisable event in a people's life seems to be accompanied by music as part of the African way of doing things. Thus music in this particular phase is not exceptional as it is life as it was lived since time immemorial.

Reflection of the crisis through selected popular music

Raftopoulos (2009:202) summarises the challenges in Zimbabwe thus:

A key aspect of the crisis was the rapid decline of the economy, characterised by, among other things steep declines in industrial and agricultural productivity historic levels of hyperinflation, the informalisation of labour, the dollarization of economic transactions, displacements and a critical erosion of livelihoods.

As has been summarised by the above authority, these issues have been seen filtering in the music produced by various musicians during that time as shall be explored in this section.

Leonard Karikoga Zhakata is one of the artists whose music is analysed in the paper. The particular album which the researcher is interested in is "Vagoni vebasa" (Professional workers). The song *pane ziya pane dovi* (Sweet comes from sweat) is quite pertinent as the song was released in 1997 before the crisis flourishes but the most interesting idea is that the singer sounded a very strong warning in his song. As popular music has mockery tendencies the album *vagoni vebasa* is somehow questioning the powers that be if they are really professional in the way they do their job. Before delving deep into his music, the artist in an interview with says, "My music is a recording of events as they occur. I sing about my environs and people are free to interpret my songs the way they feel ... As a musician I have a duty to serve my people, to sing about what I see around me, to sing about one man's injustices to another, to rebuke those who manipulate others by virtue of being in powerful and authoritative positions". (Zhakata, 2005, pp. 123)

The decade of crisis is a memorable phase that musicians would not afford to let it go without a record in form of music. In the song '*pane ziya pane dovi* (Sweet comes from sweat) the artist has been pointing, projecting to the situation which was impending. Already food shortages, unemployment levels among others in the country were bad such that masses have been wondering the outcome of the situation. The lyrics of the song show that already there were indications that pointed to the meltdown of the economy. This is manifested where it is said:

*Asi zvirevo zvizhinji hazvingowira pasi sechiposherwa
Sekuti kazhinji kazhinji unozoyeuka bako wanyata
Asi ngwarira kupoterera paine mudimbudzirwa
Sekuti kudai ndakaziva anozotaurwa panguva yekukungura*

*Zvichitaurwa kudai rinenge dambe, anenge mahumbwe
 Asi kana chirevo chodudzirwa nechitiko zvikazoshoropodzwa
 Zvinozopembedzwa, zvikatozosekesa zvinozotsamwisa
 Ngwarirai panobuda ruvengo apo, ngwarirai panobuda kufumurana
 chenjerai panobuda kumukirana chenjerai panobuda kurimana mbesa dziripo.*

(But usually things which are said don't just end like that
 As you will end up regretting
 But beware of taking the long route when there is a shorter one
 As lamenting usually comes during hard times
 When it is said, it will be like jokes
 But when the said is manifested and criticised
 It will be blown all over will make people angry
 Be warned there will be hatred, there will be pointing of fingers)

This is quite a warning to the powers that be to really see to it that they step down before things get worse. The singer is sounding a warning that when the actual meltdown manifests into reality then that is when one sees the true side of things (*Asi zvirevo zvizhinji hazvingowira pasi sechiposherwa*). It is during this time that the artist has already projected the coming of the crisis that is why he is also singing on behalf of the masses that even if they want to think about it they have no say or power to change things thus resonates Mano (2012)'s view that popular music among the powerless in society raises issues that they cannot do anything to change. The powerless nature of the masses is also reflected in the opening stanza of this song when he says, "*Ndangariro dzinorwadza kukunda fungidziro, ruzhinji runozorerutsa nekuridza tsamwa*" (thinking is painful than just imagining, many take it light when they are frustrated). This action of just being frustrated with it proves that the masses have no power to change things but the most important idea in the paper is that the musician managed to mirror the concerns of the public during the crisis through music.

The musician is really bringing out people's feelings on the political situation of the time. He uses a metaphor that even if he does not want to take the advice, it shall come a time when he would want but people would have lost respect of him. He says

*Kuzoda kuturura kakanaka, kudadamirira zvichakunetsa iwe
 Wadiridza moyo wangu neshungu uchadzimba chete ichocho,
 Uchabata chete ichocho chaunoda, uchasvika chete ikoko kwaunoda
 uchadzimba chete ichocho, Shinga iwe*

(When you would want to do good, it will be difficult as people will not
 Be interested. You will get what you will be looking for, you will catch

That you would want, you will arrive where you would want to go. Soldier on)

In this case the artist is referring to the people of Zimbabwe that when you do not respect other people, you eventually get what you deserve at the end of it all. The song is already pointing to the crisis thus the musician in this case is just a voice of the voiceless masses.

More so, the song *Pane ziya pane dovi* (Sweet comes from sweat) is in line with what the African popular culture in general contends through the works of Barber (1997) and others which reflects fight back by mocking the powerful. This is manifested when the singer says;

Pane ziya pane dovi, namatira ipapo sechikwekwe, zvinotoonekwa nemaitiro kuti ava ndivo vagoni vebasa. Zvinotonekwa negoho racho kuti ava ndivo vagoni vebasa. Tongai zvenyu nguva Ndiyoyi asi ko chiuyo chacho machiona here, ko gadziriro yacho maita here dadai zvenyu nguva ndiyoyi.....

(Sweet comes from sweat, stick on like a tick

It is seen through work that these are the professional workers.

It is seen by the harvest that these are good workers. You, rule this is the time but be ready for the consequences.)

In the above example the artist is mocking the status quo and those who are perpetuating it. The country was in crisis but the musician is fighting those in power through satire when he says keep on ruling that is the time, the results of what you are doing can be seen through the harvest. In Zimbabwe people were already suffering from unemployment, food shortages just to mention a few. There were the results of the rule that is being praised by the musician in the song. During this particular time he had already seen hardships coming that is why he sought of warned the leaders that do it, but be aware of the results.

As the role of the artist to march in front of his people (Achebe 199), Zhakata in his song fulfils that when he says;

Ndotongoisuma ndisina matyira, nyevero ndatosvitsa hameno anoramba zvake Ndiyani achada kurarama nevimbiso isingazadzikiswe mazuva ano, rema hakuchina, hakuchina fuza hakuchina. Kana imimi muchizviti vagoni vebasa pangani pamakayemurwa nhayi, vangani vamakayemurwa navo, ko vangani vakazoti taneta kunyengerera

(I will say it without fear, i have warned it is up to you to take it.

Who on this day would want to live on false promises? There is no one.

If you say you are professional workers, can you count where you been

praised, where have you been applauded, how many have said
we are tired of pleading with you.)

The above lyrics of the song show that the artist has no fear and plainly tells those in authority that people need to be told the truth. The musician in this particular context is triggering the ordinary people's feelings that they should see the other side of the story. He is marching right in front of his audience and is bold enough to expose the weaknesses of the powerful that of keeping on promising people heaven on earth which will never come to be. Thus he is telling them that people are no longer interested in false promises. The idea of mocking the powerful is again brought out by Zhakata here when he says, '*kana imi muchizviti vagoni vebasa vebasa, pangani pamakayemurwa nhayi, vangani vamakayemurwa navo, ko vangani vakazoti taneta kunyengerera*' (if you think you are doing the good job, how many people have applauded you, how many have clapped hands for you, let alone who have said we are tired of pleading you). This is mockery in the sense that this is said against a background where people are suffering and some people are clinching on to power and yet the needs of the people are not addressed.

Having highlighted mainly on the weaknesses of those in authority and the projection of the crisis through Zhakata's album *Vagoni vebasa*, Mapfumo in his album *Chimurenga explosion* (2001) did not mince his words in portraying the situation of the time as it is. In this album the researcher singled out two songs, *Mamvemve* (Tatters) and *Disaster*. The two pieces are really a fulfilment of what Zhakata said, '*Tongai henyu nguwa ndiyoyi asi gadziriro yacho maita here?*' (You can rule, this is the time but be prepared for the consequences) that is the outcome of what was projected by the aforementioned artist in his song '*Pane ziya pane dovi*' (Sweet comes from sweat). In the song *Mamvemve* (Tatters), Mapfumo is reflecting on the out-cry of the people after the war of liberation that we need our country/ land back. It is against such sentiments that he released that song. He is bemoaning with the general public that the land, the country, the home they have been crying for is now in tatters. In other words he is telling those in power that they have failed to run the state. The imagery of the use of the term '*mamvemve*' suggests that the country was torn apart. People's condition in terms of social, political and more importantly the economic was largely affected. *Mamvemve* applies to a situation which is unredeemable and in as far as the crisis is concerned, people were anguishing in an environment which was not pleasant. On a different angle, the concept of *mamvemve* implies that there is no secret issues and things are exposed in the open. In light of the crisis the Zimbabwean economy was exposed such that it was vulnerable to any form of danger. It is against this understanding that '*matsotsi*' is used as well in the song. This implies that when important assets are just laid bare open without protection '*matsotsi*' are bound to attack. As such during the era of crisis the economy was grounded, the *tsotsi* took

advantage of the situation and eroded it more in a bid to survive under such harsh system. In the lyrics of the song, he says:

Musha wenyu wamaichemera, hona waita mamvemve
Musha wenyu wamaichemera, hona waita mamvemve
Musha wenyu wamaichemera, hona waita matsotsi
Chipo, Chipo iwe bereka mwana tiende
Jani, Jani iwe bereka mwana tiende

(This home you have been crying for look it is in tatters
 This home you have been crying for, look it is in tatters
 This country you have been crying for, look it is in tatters
 You Chipo, Chipo carry the baby and lets go
 You Jani, Jani carry the baby lets go)

The situation in the country during the time in question proves that the country was in tatters, it was infested with 'thieves' as per the singer's lyrics. The singer is also giving people solution in his music. After seeing that the situation is not friendly and things are hard, he now calls upon his wife, friends and relatives to leave the country. He says, '*Chipo, Chipo iwe bereka mwana tiende, Jani, Jani iwe bereka mwana tiende* (You Chipo, Chipo carry the baby and lets go, Jani, Jani carry the baby and lets go). This is all because the situation was unbearable. This as a result saw a lot of people leaving the country for better places around the region in search of better living conditions. The same sentiments are further manifested in the song Disaster where the musician is explaining the extent to which the crisis had gone. He says;

Vakomana muno mune disaster, Mumba menyu muno mune disaster
Munyika medu muno mune corruption, Munyika muno maita disaster
Yowerere matsotsi, vakomana muchamhanya

(Guys there is disaster here, there is disaster in this home
 There is corruption in this country; there is disaster in this country
 Yowerere thieves, guys you will suffer)

The musician is reiterating the situation of the crisis in this song. Disaster as the title of the song tells shows that the situation was terrible and was up to no good. People could cheat on each other through the black market system which as a result the talk of '*matsotsi*' resulted. Also the issue of '*matsotsi*' during the time is manifested through the government officials who would live luxurious lives whilst the ordinary people were suffering. He is calling them '*matsotsi*' because they were pretending to be on the side of the people and yet they were not and worse still they themselves were getting everything whilst the people they claim to be representing were anguishing in poverty. This as well brings out the dimension of

thieves which is lamented by the singer that is why he at the end call for his relatives to leave the country to find a better place where their concerns can be addressed. The deals were done by people so as to make a living thus the musician through his song reflects on issues to do with corruption in his song and the *tsotsiness* of the environment is also exposed. He goes on to warn people again in this song that they will suffer and run away because of this disaster which was in the country.

As if it is not enough, the late Simon Chimbetu of Sungura music fame was a good example of the popular as representing not the commercial interests of the elites but the everyday concerns of ordinary people. He also had his song produced which mirrored the problems encountered during the period in question. He was a veteran of Zimbabwe's liberation war who sang about ordinary everyday life issues that have resonance for poor working- class and unemployed Zimbabweans. His hit song "Ndaremerwa-One Week" ("I'm Overburdened") was a brotherly lament about the high cost of living in Zimbabwe. He says:

Babamukuru tarisaiwo
Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday Mugovera
Ndaremerwa
Babamukuru ndaremerwa
Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. Mugovera
Kubasa kwangu kure nekwandinogara
Kumunda kwangu kure nekwandinorara

(Uncle look for yourself
 Sunday Monday Tuesday, Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday
 I am overburdened
 Uncle look at my situation
 Sunday Monday Tuesday, Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday
 I am overburdened
 Where I work is far from where I live ...
 My field is far from where I sleep ..)

This song captures poor peoples' problems in Zimbabwean everyday life. Most of the musicians live in the same areas as their listeners, making them more able to depict aspects of their social realities within music. In the song above, a worker (either rural or urban) laments the problems of having to travel to a remote workplace and having to pay expensive fares at a time when the cost of living had sharply gone up under the leadership of Mugabe from 2000 to 2010. The artist is also making a statement on the meagre salaries people were getting. Although it was brotherly lament about the situation he was in during the time, the musician was able to mirror the high cost of living which people experienced

during the time. Like Chimbetu, post-independence Zimbabwean musicians generally produce music that communicates or documents conditions of daily life in Zimbabwe, covering issues ranging from love, romance, politics, religion, corruption, unemployment, disease, AIDS to moral decadence (such as prostitution). The inclusion of such popular causes increases the popularity of the music.

Conclusion

The paper has explored on the role of popular music as a tool which mirrored the Zimbabwean crisis during the period 2000 -2010. The researcher in the paper has scrutinised Zhakata's song Pane ziya pane dovi (Sweet comes from sweat) which projected on the crisis before it came to fruition. The musician in the song sounded a strong warning to the powers that be by saying out people's feelings. He also triggered the feelings of anger in the public by spelling out the reparations and causes of this crisis. Having analysed the song that projected the disaster, the paper went on to Mapfumo's songs Mamvemve (Tatters) and Disaster as other popular songs which depicted the nature of the crisis. The songs spelt out that the country was infested with 'thieves' and corruption and in a way the artist also managed to capture the situation as it was during the time. Finally Chimbetu's Ndaremerwa (I am burdened)was also looked at in the paper where the artist as a result of corruption and 'thieves' who had infested the country, people ended up being burdened by the system as is manifested in the song. In this analysis the researcher used the popular culture concept together with the ethnography of communication to shape the arguments in the paper. At the end of the analysis, it can be concluded that popular music plays a pivotal role in bringing out issues that concerns people. It is only through these songs that the voices of the majority of the people are heard thus these songs managed to mirror the situation on the ground during the decade of crisis.

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