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The 'just war' tradition in Zimbabwean historiography

Dis(entangling) the Gordian knot between religion and morality of war

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Abstract

Three wars stand out in Zimbabwean historiography with regard to the use and application of the 'just war' tradition. The first was occasioned by the murder of Father Goncalo da Silveira, a Portuguese Jesuit missionary, in 1560. After seeking the advice of the Ecclesiastical Council, the Portuguese king decided to send an expedition under the leadership of Francisco Barreto to wage war against the Mutapa Empire. Deliberations by the Council had concluded that the military expedition would constitute a 'just war'. The second war broke out in 1893, at the instigation of the British South Africa Company. This war, often referred to as the 'Matabele war' was a war of conquest against the Ndebele kingdom. Again, the 'just war' theory was applied. Thirdly, political and Church leaders in support of the Chimurenga / Umfazo II (1966-1979) also used the concept in their writings. This article argues that the three wars fell short of the moral bar to which the 'just war' tradition aspires. Instead, the three wars were geared to, and indeed succeeded in, serving parochial and sectarian interests of those behind the war at the expense of the lofty ideals espoused by the 'just war' tradition. The study will rely on available secondary sources that form part of Zimbabwean historiography[2].

Keywords: Zimbabwe, Monomutapa/Mutapa Empire, 'just war' theory/ tradition, colonialism, decolonisation, justice, racial reconciliation

1. Introduction

This study examines the 'just war' tradition in relation to Zimbabwean history. In light of the religious history associated with the tradition, our goal is to disentangle the religious and moral assumptions underlying its use or abuse. The study will not only situate the utility of the term 'just war' within Christian thought but will interrogate underlying motivation behind its use. We will attempt to answer the question: What does the resort and appeal to the tradition say about religion, morality and war? The article follows the following format: Section 1 briefly discusses the key features of the 'just war' tradition, Section 2 presents and interrogates the specific instances and circumstances in which the 'just war' tradition was applied in Zimbabwean history; and, Section 3 presents an analysis of the moral issues running through the three historical epochs. Our analysis will bring into focus the religious and moral ramifications for the resort to the 'just war' tradition within the context of Zimbabwe. As is common of historiographic studies, our presentation will rely on available written historical sources on Zimbabwe. Naturally, such studies are qualitative in nature and are limited to the available literature on the subject of choice.

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2. A brief history of the 'just war' tradition

Augustine of Hippo is credited as the proponent of the 'just war' theory. He developed the theory during the 5th century, and it became standard for the Church in successive centuries. "Though Christian in origin, the doctrine of 'just war' is one of the largest efforts of mankind as a whole to limit the violence of war, even before the existence of that which we call International law" (Borgus de Macedo, 2012). In Augustine's view, war may be fought only out of necessity, not choice. According to Langan (1984:25), Augustine's approach to 'just war' theory is based on his interest in the "the preservation of moral order which is fundamentally a right internal order of dispositions and desires… in which the question of whether action is violent or not is not fundamental. The restoration of that order constitutes a sufficient justification for the resort to violence". In this view, the 'just war' tradition may thus be understood as the theoretical foundation for the morality of war (Kinsella & Carr, 2007: 59).

Over the centuries, the 'just war' theory was refined by writers such as Thomas Aquinas, Francisco Suarez, Francisco de Vitoria, Hugo Grotius, among others (Kinsella & Carr, 2007:59-80; Chirenje, 1973:45). The theory has thus become a tradition. In its current form, the 'just war' tradition contends that, for any resort to war to be justified, a political community, or state, must fulfil each and every one of the following six requirements. Firstly, the requirement of 'just cause' places focus on self-defence against external aggression as well as defence and protection of the innocent. The second requirement is 'legitimate authority' and emphasises the fact that authority to embark on a war resides in a sovereign power of the state. Thirdly, 'right intention' focuses on the need to re-establish justice and order. Fourthly, 'last resort' insists that all non-violent options should have been exhausted before resort to war. The fifth requirement is 'proportionality'. This refers to the need to reduce the damage caused by war. Simply put, war should not use more force than necessary to avoid collateral damage to civilian life and property. Finally, the requirement

of 'probability of success' focuses on reasonable prospects of success before one engages in war (Harty, 2006:5-6). Overall, the six criteria can be grouped into three distinct but related stages, i.e. "the *jus ad bellum* (the moral justification for resorting to war), the *jus in bello* (the moral guidelines for conduct in war), and finally, the *jus post bellum* (the justice of peace agreements and the termination phase of war)" (Harty, 2006:6).

3. Instances and circumstances when the 'just war' theory was used in Zimbabwean history

In this section we address key instances and circumstances when the 'just war' theory was resorted to in the context of Zimbabwe. These instances pertain to three wars fought in Zimbabwean history, the Portuguese war against the Mutapa Empire (1569-1572), the 'Matabele war' (1893, and the Second Chimurenga/Umfazo, 1966-1979). The three wars thus cover the pre-colonial era, the era of occupation and conquest, and lastly, the era of de-colonisation.

3.1 Portuguese war against the Mutapa Empire (1569-1572)

Available literature shows that the 'just war' theory was first used in Zimbabwe during the 16th century following the Jesuit priest, Goncalo da Silveira's ill-fated mission to the capital of the Munhumutapa Empire in December 1560. After three months of catechetical mission work, Silveira baptised the Mutapa ruler, Negomo Mupunzagutu, his mother and top-ranking members of the aristocracy. Their conversion to Christianity became the priest's undoing as future events were later to unfold. Arab and Kiswahili traders in the Empire as well as traditional authorities began to the Father Goncalo da Silveira as a threat to their interests. Before his arrival, they had for generations enjoyed pride of place at the royal palace of the Mutapa. It is not surprising, therefore, that the priest was executed on 15 March 1561, due to their influence on the young and impressionable Mutapa leader (Randles, 1979:28; Mudenge, 1988:59).

The execution of Goncalo da Silveira aroused anger and indignation in Portugal. Sebastian, King of Portugal consulted an Ecclesiastical Council (the Mesa de Conscientia) (Chirenje, 1973:47; Mudenge, 1988:202) about whether it was justified to wage war against the Mutapa Empire. In January 1569, the Mesa da Conscientia advised the King that it was necessary to go to war against the Mutapa Empire. They described such an enterprise as a 'just war' (Randles, 1979: 28). Reasons for waging the war included the fact that the Mutapa leader had ordered the execution of Father Silveira, robbed Portuguese nationals of their property, and allowed Arabs to live in the empire (Chirenje, 1973:43). The purpose of the war was, therefore, to (Wilmot 1969:178):

1. Avenge the murder of Father Silveira;
2. Obtain riches from Monomotapa to support the great expenses of Portugal in India;
3. To make the Gospel known.

The Portuguese King deployed a battalion of over 700 men in December 1569, under Francisco Barreto, to South East Africa. By the end of 1572, the battalion had wreaked havoc and destruction in their trail as it desperately tried to reach the Mutapa headquarters.

Whilst the Portuguese king's desire to avenge the murder of Father Silveira and other Portuguese nationals might fit the criterion of 'right intention', the military action taken was clearly disproportionate to the crime committed. In Chirenje's view (1973:47), the Portuguese military expedition "was more like an extermination campaign against Shona and Arab alike". Father Monclaro's reflections, cited in Schofeleers (1992:123), reveal a clear lack of proportionality in the Portuguese campaign. Father Monclaro writes, "Enemies of the Christian faith, primarily Arab traders, were executed, impaled alive, torn asunder, their backs open, blasted to bits by mortars, all done in a gruesome manner, deliberately calculated 'to strike terror into the natives'".

In Mudenge's view (1988:203), the real motive of waging war against the Mutapa was "to procure the abundance of the wealth in the Mutapa state for the purposes of raising funds for the administration of Portugal and the Estado da India". This is the same view shared by Chirenje (1973:47) who argues that the war had little to do with evangelisation. Rather, it was essentially an "economic mission" targeting the elimination of Arab Moslems from the Mutapa Empire. According to Chirenje (1973:47), the Portuguese "had resented Arab acumen in the ivory and silver trades since the turn of the sixteenth century". The views expressed above are consistent with the long-standing ambition of the Portuguese to secure a monopoly in the trade of gold in East Africa since 1506. According to Axelson (1940:162), "An enforcement of this monopoly automatically involved, however, the impoverishment and extinction of the Arabs of the coast".

Mudenge (1988:203) questions the logic of the Portuguese king in demanding the privilege to evangelise freely. He argues that such a demand could not be "defined as a criterion for the 'just war' in any objective sense of the word". In his view, such a demand was "part of the bigoted arrogance inspired by a mixture of Christocentric and Eurocentric worldviews which have afflicted men of European descent over the centuries….." Similarly, Chirenje (1973:39) observes that Portuguese Christian religion of the time suffered from "arrogant pretensions bordering on moral casuistry which condemned all other religions as irrelevant to meaningful religious experience". Adrian Hastings (1994:74) corroborates Chirenje's obser-

vation stating that "The Christian spiritual world of the time had become a highly dualistic one in which the devil was an almost omnipresent reality which non-Christian cults were seen as necessarily serving". All these views raise the spectre of an unholy intent behind the Portuguese war. They also cancel out the idea of a just cause. Clearly, the Portuguese idea of war against the Mutapa Empire was contrived out of a context of inter-religious contestation whose origins were in Europe. Such contestation was, however, transported to Africa to secure Portuguese trade and mining interests.

The strategy adopted by Barreto against the Mutapa Empire failed to yield positive results, however. Barreto had not done adequate homework regarding simple things such as understanding the terrain on within which the war was to be waged, distances the soldiers were to travel, weather conditions, how much food and medicine to carry, etc. Wilmot (1969:187-8) writes:

> There was absolute want of food, clothing, and medicines, deaths were numerous, and disease with famine walked hand in hand. They were in a malarial country which drew the energy and vitality from the soldiers… the greater part of their soldiers was dead, the rest were in a bad state, continually a prey to the most dangerous fevers.

Malaria and sleeping sickness inflicted heavy losses on the Portuguese army. Under such circumstances, any prospects of success were illusory. Barreto and his successor, Francisco Van Homem, failed to accomplish the objectives of the expedition. Their forces were at the mercy of hostile tribes, disease and the deadly climate of the Zambezi Valley (Gale, 1958:17). The forces never reached the Mutapa headquarters.

Based on a simple cost-benefit analysis, Francisco Van Homem decided to halt the military campaign after realising that even if the Portuguese were to attain victory, the investment required for making viable mining business in the Mutapa Empire far outweighed the benefit expected from the venture. Overall, the expedition was "a complete disaster" (Schofeleers, 1992:123).

3.2 The 'Matabele War' (1893)

The conquest of the Ndebele kingdom by Cecil John Rhodes' of the British South Africa Company (BSAC) provided the second occasion for the resort to the 'just war' tradition. Events leading to the invasion of the Ndebele kingdom unfolded with unprecedented speed from July 1893 when Lobengula sent a punitive expedition against chiefs Chivi, and Zimuto as well as headman Bere. The targeted 'culprits' were accused of cattle rustling. All were located around Fort Victoria, the first town to be

established in Mashonaland by the BSAC. The Ndebele force led by Manyewu Ndiweni and Mgandani Dlodlo (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:49) entered Fort Victoria, and "killed a number of Kalanga (sic) natives, capturing others, seized stock, including some stolen cattle and cattle belonging to some Europeans there" (Posselt, 1945:86-87). This raid dismayed white settlers in Fort Victoria and the neighbouring farms and mines as they lost their Shona labourers who scattered in awe of the 'madzviti'. Reflecting on the commercial implications of the Victoria event, Gale (1958:129) writes;

> How could mines and farms be developed when native labourers dropped everything and ran for miles at the rumour that an *impi* was on its way? There could never be stability or security as long as these conditions were allowed to continue. Civilisation and savagery made uneasy bedfellows, and one or other would have to go.

Dr Jameson, the Administrator of Mashonaland, travelled from Salisbury to Fort Victoria to negotiate with the leaders of the Ndebele force to withdraw to the Tokwe (now Tugwi) River, which he argued was the agreed border between the Ndebele kingdom and Mashonaland. Apparently, Manyawu and Mgandani, leaders of the raiding battalion disputed the whole idea of a border claiming that king Lobengula was in control of all the Shona in and around Fort Victoria. On 18 July, Jameson gave orders to Captain Lendy to attack Ndebele forces that had not withdrawn to the Tokwe River. Posselt (1945:87) writes, "Suffice it here to say that this 'incident' in which a number of Matabele were pursued as they were marching away from Fort Victoria, and a number of them shot, was in fact a declaration of war against Lobengula". Following the Victoria incident, there were other skirmishes between Ndebele forces and European troopers between July and October. Two other reports of the firing of European patrols that reached Jameson in early October 1893 provided Jameson with "a heaven-sent opportunity" (Posselt, 1945:91). However, Posselt (1945:90) questions the bearing of these events on Jameson's resolve to wage war against Lobengula. He argues that, "Whether actual firing did in fact take place, there is no independent testimony to prove, suffice it, however, a pretext was needed, and border incidents like these and those of martyred missionaries have been the usual source to justify operations, as oft recorded in history".

After the Fort Victoria incident, Jameson "gave up hope of incorporating Matabeleland peacefully under Company rule and decided that the conquest of this warrior kingdom was essential" (Tindall, 1967:162). He consulted settlers around Fort Victoria through Dr Hans Sauer regarding "the strength of the military force that would be required for the conquest of Matabeleland" (Ash, 2016:53). Soon after getting the settlers' opinion, Jameson decided to wage war against Lobengula (Ash, 2016:53). He started recruiting settler volunteers whom he promised

a farm of 6000 acres and fifteen gold claims each, if the war succeeded (Tindall, 1967:162). He also sought endorsement from missionaries. For instance, Father Peter Prestage, S.J., who was stationed at Fort Victoria at the time of Victoria incident provided justification for the invasion of the Ndebele kingdom. The Victoria incident provided Father Prestage, S.J. with the occasion to liquidate Lobengula's "pagan system of government" (Linden, 1980:15). His response to Jameson was, "I consider there is most just cause for punishing the Amandebeles at once. Without prompt punishment there is every probability of the same atrocities recurring" (Linden, 1980:10). Similarly, Rev Isaac Shimmin, a Methodist missionary, endorsed Jameson's plan arguing that, "in defence of truth, of hearth and home, to fight [is] just and righteous… the time [has] come to strike the blow, and let us strike it manfully and well under the old English flag" (Linden, 1980:10). Rev J.H. Upcher of the Anglican Church also supported the war against Lobengula (Weller & Linden, 1984:201). The references above patently reveal that BSAC's ideology of a conquest state was bolstered by a theology of Empire.

According to Ash (2016:55), Jameson tried to convince Rhodes and the British Commissioner in Cape Town that the war was necessary. He had no intention of "letting Lobengula wriggle off the hook once he had decided that the war was the only way to deal with the threat". For that reason, he "did what he could to keep the pot boiling and was 'somewhat economical' with the truth in reports he sent down to the company bosses in Kimberly and Cape Town" (Ash, 2016:61). The war against the Ndebele kingdom was finally declared on 6 October 1893 (Ash, 2016:67).

3.2.1 The unholy alliance between Christianity and colonialism

Some historical context could help explain why Father Prestage, S.J. eagerly looked forward to the crushing of Lobengula and the Ndebele kingdom. After a few years of settlement in Mashonaland, the BSAC and their missionary colleagues were quick to conclude that the Shona as a subject people needed liberation from Ndebele overlords. This became an "important contributory factor in the moral justification" (Steele, 2017:11) for the conquest of the Ndebele kingdom. From 1884 to 1889, Father Prestage, S.J. was based at Empandeni mission. Upon realising that there were no prospects of mission success, he left Matabeleland for South Africa. Prestage's reflections on his failure to make any converts in his eleven-year stay in Matabeleland convinced him that the Ndebele people could only be freed for Christianity by the sword. As fate would have it, the Jesuit Order which "had shaken the dust of Matabeleland from their feet" (Linden, 1980:15) offered principled support to Rhodes' BSAC's colonisation of Mashonaland. In 1892 Father Prestage, S.J. journeyed to Mashonaland accompanying the first party of Dominican nuns (The Tablet Archive, 1907). Based in Mashonaland where he heard about Ndebele raids

on the Shona, Prestage concluded that the destruction of the Ndebele state would lift a yoke of oppression over terrified Shona people.

It is historically correct that the raids on Shona communities by the Ndebele threatened the former security. This did not, however, imply that the Shona were at the mercy of the Ndebele. According to Mazarire (2009:34), Ndebele power came under serious threat in Mashonaland after 1979. Mazarire (2009:34) further notes, "Ndebele *impis* were being defeated owing to the gradual adoption of guns, and more sophisticated defence strategies, by most Shona groups". Mazarire therefore questions the myth commonly bandied about by missionaries such as Prestage that the Shona people were a terrified subject population vulnerable to Ndebele raiding parties. Instead, he argues that by 1893, Shona societies were "conscious of the existing dangers" and constantly working out means of dealing with the Ndebele threat (Mazarire, 2009:34).

In respect of the colonisation of Zimbabwe, Rhodes never underestimated the role of the Christian religion in 'civilising' the African people thus making them amenable to the capitalist world order. His motto, 'From Cape to Cairo' was about creating a market for business in England and the western world. Although his main interest was Commerce (i.e. creating markets in Africa for Europe), Rhodes was not oblivious to the powerful and influential role that religion was to play towards achieving his overall plan of sucking Africa into the web of global capitalism. Soon after being granted the Charter by the Queen of England, Rhodes approached Church leaders in South Africa and promised them land and financial grants for their missions. Conversion and providing western education were critical pillars in Rhodes's colonial master plan. Hence, the three C's, i.e. Commerce, Christianity and Civilization were indeed supposed to work hand in glove. A fact that is often missed is that Rhodes also facilitated the nexus between the three G's, i.e. God, Gold and the Gun. It was no small wonder that, on arrival at Fort Salisbury on 12 September 1890, Conon Francis Balfour, the Anglican priest who accompanied the 'Pioneer column', blessed the Union Jack (Weller & Linden, 1984:66). As Jones (1987:354) avers, "The pioneers brought with them their religion; chaplains had been attached to the column. Of these the Roman Catholic Father Hartmann was, in the opinion of his Anglican confrere canon Balfour, "without doubt the best man…"

The unholy contract between the BSAC and Christian missionaries was signed and sealed in 1893 when Father Peter Prestage, S.J. offered unqualified support for Jameson to go to war against the Ndebele. The partnership between the cross and the flag was further strengthened when missionaries became military chaplains to the colonial soldiers fighting against the Ndebele state. With a few exceptions, the sense of kith and kin between the missionaries and white settlers subsisted throughout the colonial period. During that period, the Church assumed the position of handmaid of

colonialism. With few exceptions, the mission church was conservative, and saw no contradictions between their express if sometimes tacit support for the oppressive policies of the colonial state and the liberating Gospel they purportedly propagated. The unequivocal support that Father Prestage, S.J. gave to Jameson was a testimony of his moral bankruptcy. This support was yet another case in Zimbabwe's history when the 'just war' theory was applied by religious authorities to justify an unjust imperialistic enterprise aimed at bolstering and boosting white supremacy in Africa. Religion and the Bible were mere tools of achieving political power over the Ndebele people. Not surprisingly, when Jameson asked Rhodes to approve the plan to go to war, Rhodes' responds was, "Read Luke, Chapter 14, verse 31..." Jameson replied, "I have read Luke, and it is all right" (Tindall, 1967:162).

3.3 Chimurenga/Umfazo II (The armed struggle, 1966-1979)

The 1961 constitution was the turning point in the Rhodesian political landscape. Ian Smith left the United Federal Party (UFP) under Edgar Whitehead, and joined forces with radical white nationalists to form the Rhodesia Front (RF). Instability crept into the National Democratic Party (NDP) camp following the acceptance of the Constitutional proposals by Joshua Nkomo, Ndananingi Sithole and Herbert Chitepo (Hancock, 1984:94). The compromised agreement accepted by the leadership of the NDP changed the face of African nationalism from a policy of non-violence to violence. African nationalists, had since the formation of the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress (SRANC) in 1957 viewed the latter, as "an expression of moral superiority over the methods of the colonial government (Ranger, 2013:78)". The Youth Council of the NDP spurred a petrol bombing campaign "under the leadership of a mysterious 'General [Chinhu?] Chedu' (Ranger, 2013:78)". This campaign continued in the Youth Wing of the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) following the banning of the NDP (Ranger, 2013:131). To compound the political mayhem taking place in Rhodesia, the Rhodesia Front (RF), a party of rightwing white nationalist won the 1962 elections on the promise of guaranteeing perpetual rule by whites. The RF government created laws that gave it more power to ban, detain and deport African nationalist leaders. Diminished political space, coupled with a radical white nationalism, generated unprecedented levels of anger and frustration among the disenfranchised black population. The banning of the NDP in December 1961 did not stem African resistance to political oppression in Rhodesia. In 1962, ZAPU was formed. Unfortunately, a more vicious form of violence pitted Africans against Africans in the wake of the split of ZAPU. A more vicious spiral of violence broke out when the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) was formed in August 1963. Intra-party violence took its toll in both urban and rural areas from 1963 to 1964.

By 1964 when Ian Smith took over from Winston Field, in a backbencher revolt, virtually all African nationalists were detained across the breath and length of the country (Ranger, 2014:41). To stem the popular groundswell of African nationalism, the RF government detained party leaders in jails across the breadth and length of the country. African nationalists were jailed and detained at places such as Gonakudzingwa, Gokwe, Hwahwa, Highlands, Khami, Kentucky, Lupane, Marandellas, Que, Selukwe, Salisbury, among others. Brutality and torture were commonplace. All hope for majority rule was finally dashed when Ian Smith unilaterally declared independence (UDI) from colonial Britain on 11 November 1965.

As noted above, before 1965, there were isolated cases of guerrilla offensives in the form of petrol bombs and the burning of crops on white farms. These offensives were a prelude of a well-coordinated armed struggle waged by the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) and the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) since 1966. The two outfits operated under the aegis of ZAPU and ZANU, respectively. The ZIPRA guerrillas established themselves in the Lupane and Nkayi districts from April to June 1966 (Ralinana, Sithole, Houston, & Magubane, 2005:479). The campaign was extended to Hurungwe and Sipolilo (now Guruve) from September to December 1966 (Waldman, 1975:4). However, their first contact with the Rhodesian security forces came on 13 August 1967 "on the banks of Nyatuwe River, between Wankie and Dete (Ralinana, et al., 2005:498). Similarly, the ZANLA forces launched the armed struggle in April 1966 when the "first group" of their fighters fought the "famous Sinoia battle... " (Mugabe, 1983:9). The "Zambezi Valley campaign" which spanned the years 1966 to 1970 were fraught with operational mistakes (Evans 2007:182-183). They adopted a strategy of frontal assault across the Zambezi River in Northern Rhodesia that sought;

> to detonate revolutionary situation by using a variant of Che Guevara's *foco* theory in which guerrilla vanguards would engage the enemy in widespread fighting. The insurgency leadership hoped that the ensuing chaos would encourage British or U N military intervention to overthrow the rebel Government in Rhodesia.

By 1970, the Rhodesian army supported by South African paramilitary police (Evans, 2007:183; Godwin & Hancock, 1993) successfully repelled guerrilla attacks emanating from Zambia.

According to McDonagh (1979:132), the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe took a definitive armed character from December 1972 with the attack of Altena farm in Concession. McDonagh argues that the Chimurenga/Umfazo II was fought out of necessity and fits the bill of the 'just war' tradition. He writes, "Without preparation, leadership and real external support in terms of publicity and genuine economic sanctions; and faced with a ruthless and unyielding regime, it is difficult to see how

non-violent resistance could have been sustained and developed in Rhodesia in the sixties and seventies". Robert Mugabe, a former ZANU leader, confirms the view that locates the armed struggle as a post-UDI development. In a 1978 interview with David Martin (Mugabe, 1983:185-186), Mugabe highlights the atrocities committed by the Smith regime against African people, including "illegal detention", and hangings "without fair trial". These atrocities, he argues, prompted ZANLA "in 1966 to take to the armed struggle" (Mugabe, 1983:187). According to this reading of history, the criterion of the just cause was therefore fulfilled.

3.3.1 Authority to wage war

Muzorewa and Mugabe agree that Smith's government had lost the authority to rule Rhodesia from the time that he announced the UDI on 15 November 1965. According to Mugabe (1983:166,185), Smith had "committed treason against the Queen". Owing to Britain's failure to take measures to unseat the Smith government, and due to Smith's intransigence, Mugabe (1982:187) further argues that ZIPRA and ZANLA forces were "under an obligation thrust upon [them] by the people to wage a war of liberation". In the same tenor, Muzorewa (1979:1818-2) argues;

> Since November 9[3] 1965, when Ian smith declared his UDI from Great Britain, not a single nation has accepted his regime as the lawful (*de jure*) government of our country. At the same time, Great Britain, which had claimed to be lawful authority, has failed to reassert her control over the country. Legitimate authority, therefore, passes to the oppressed themselves. It is they who have been forced to seek to control the destiny of Zimbabwe. Having tried every way possible to win majority rule through peaceful means, they now turn to a liberation war to gain their rightful inheritance.

3.3.2 The intention and purpose of Chimurenga/Umfazo II

In Mugabe's view, the armed struggle was "the only effective instrument for achieving our goal of independence and thus creating peace in the country" (Mugabe, 1982:197). In an interview with David Martin of the *London Observer* and Phyllis Johnson from the *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*, Mugabe (1982:186) explains the intention and purpose of the liberation struggle as the establishment of peace. He argues;

> We have taken up arms to fight illegality; the illegality which Smith committed made oppression assume a greater intensity than it would have assumed if Rhodesia had continued as a British colony without the phenomenon of illegality being brought into it. Those of us who have taken up arms to fight the criminal regime surely must be seen as lovers of peace because we want to remove a criminal from the scene. He and his criminal code must go. He and his whole settler system which is now sustained by this illegality has to go. And so, we expect the outside world to judge us as people who have taken up arms in order to establish peace.

[3] The accurate date was 15 November 1965.

While Mugabe sees peace as the goal of liberation, Muzorewa (1979:182) has a more nuanced and comprehensive perspective regarding the goal and purpose of the armed struggle. He sees the attainment of self-determination, justice, racial reconciliation and freedom as the goal and purpose of the liberation struggle. He further argues that the armed struggle was adopted with the right intention of "shaking off the shackles of minority dictatorship in order to attain self-determination… in order to end violence – to achieve justice and racial reconciliation within a free Zimbabwe" (Muzorewa, 1979:182). The nexus between justice and racial reconciliation was very crucial for Muzorewa back in 1978 because, "The masses in Zimbabwe do not struggle against white persons, but against an oppressive and suppressive system dominated by white leadership". In light of the lofty goal and purpose of the armed struggle, the next issue to deal with has to consider the means used to achieve the goal.

3.3.3 Just means

Some of the most popular means used by the guerillas included: planting landmines, severing the lines of communication, disrupting the railway system, and roads, blowing up bridges and fuel tanks, destroying public infrastructure, driving away and killing of white farmers. Closing down rural schools became common practice from the late seventies. Thousands of innocent civilians became collateral damage as the war escalated. In this regard, Father Enda McDonagh (1979:139) argues that, "The manner of pursuing the violent revolution frequently violated the criterion of using 'just means' by attacks on innocent civilians, use of torture, etc.". People suspected of being 'sell-outs' were subjected to instant justice that smacked of kangaroo courts. Their bodies were buried in shallow graves. While some were reburied by their families after the war, unknown numbers of such victims are still unaccounted for. The ethical values espoused through the Maoist song 'Nzira dzamasoja', sung every night on Radio Zimbabwe broadcasting from Maputo where ZANU was headquartered since 1976 proved to be mere rhetoric.

Furthermore, by the mid-seventies, some ZANLA guerrilla groups reduced the struggle for liberation to a witch-hunt campaign. They had become the latter-day *tsikamutanda* whose role was to 'smell out' witches from villages. A spectre of a

vicious misogyny characterised such witch-hunts. As a result, numerous innocent village women were killed in the process, and little has been written about this tragic era. In order to make inroads in rural communities, the guerrillas played into the politics of local fears and insecurities while sidelining the bigger national issues that has inspired the 'war'. Instant justice was used as a way of instilling fear in rural communities. Popular folklore attributed the knowledge that guerillas had of witched to clairvoyance, a prized skill for rural peasants when seeking instant answers to the problem of witchcraft. The sad reality was that the guerillas exploited the fears of the young *mijibha* and *zvimbwido* whom they spent more time with at the bases before the *pungwe* (night vigils). The consequences of this behavior by the guerillas were dire for a struggle that aimed at bringing freedom to the *povo* (masses).

Mukonori (2012:54) offers a more realistic view of inherent limitations underlying the armed struggle. He refers to failures by the ZANLA and ZIPRA forces pertaining to recruitment, training and, one may add, deployment to the war front. He also touches on inappropriate methods of recruitment that included "press-ganging". Examples abound and include the abduction of school kids at St Albert's mission in 1972. The incident sent shock waves across the country as school children were "forcibly taken against their will" (Mukonori, 2008:60). In the late seventies (1975), following the independence of Mozambique, hordes of schoolchildren were coerced to cross borders into neighbouring states where they were trained as guerrillas. During the same period, ZIPRA fighters press-ganged schoolchildren at the Cyrene and Tegwane missions and crossed the border into Botswana. Innumerable cases of coercion of teenagers/juveniles (boy soldiers) were unduly influenced or press-ganged to join training camps in Zambia, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, and other countries. Many questions come up as we try to understand the ethics and the morality of the armed struggle. The ethics of consent was not necessarily factored into the politics of the armed struggle. Was the recruitment of boy/girl soldiers justified, considering that the armed struggle aimed at achieving justice and human rights? Were the means used appropriate? To what extent were ZANU and ZAPU, the two parties behind the prosecution of the armed struggle cognisant of the consequences and future ramification of violating the human rights of minors and adults in a future Zimbabwe? It is no wonder multitudes of guerillas attained the age of majority after Zimbabwe attained independence in 1980. Rural communities were turned upside down, as the power of the gun took ascendance over consent, age, and experience.

3.3.4 The war must be waged on a selective basis

Muzorewa (1979:182) refers to a rare and ideal case of solidarity between guerrillas and missionaries. In this instance, guerillas assured a missionary couple with the words; "You are our friends; we mean no harm to you... You have nothing to

fear. We are no plunderers. We are freedom fighters. You, too, are fighting for our freedom in your own way as you provide self-help and development for our people". The case referred to above illustrates the commitment by some guerrilla groups to wage the armed struggle on a selective basis. It would be naïve, however, to generalise relations between guerrillas and missionaries in a similar vein. Evans (2007) attributes the June 1978 massacre of twelve British missionaries at Elim, Nyanga, to the ZANLA guerrillas. Apart from the Elim missionaries, Father Gerhard Pieper, S.J. was killed at Kangaire mission on 26 December 1978, while Father Martin Hollensstein, S.M.B. was abducted and killed in Shurugwi, on 1 January 1979 (Kessing's Contemporary Archives, 1979). Both priests were apparently killed by ZANLA forces. Scores of other missionaries died at the hands of guerrillas. Much is yet to be written about the real hand behind the massacres of missionaries at Elim and Musami, and the real identity and motives of the killers of John Bradburne at Mutoko, Sister Rita Neff O.P. at Driefontein mission, Mvuma, Bishop Richartz (Emeritus Bishop of Bulawayo), Father Georg, S.M.B at Makaha, in Chivi, and Father Raymond Machikicho at Zimuto, among others.

On 3 September 1978 and 8 February 1979, ZIPRA guerrillas shot down two civilian Air Rhodesia Viscount passenger aircraft with surface-to-air missiles. "Surviving white passengers were summarily executed and overall 107 people were killed in the two Viscount atrocities" (Evans, 2007). The two incidences illustrated the failure by 'Freedom Fighters' to wage the struggle on a selective basis.

Attempts have been made to explain the cause of the failure by guerrillas to discriminate their targets. Mukonori (2012:54-55) argues that, "The guerillas received basic military training. They were initially trained for six months but by the end of the war, guerilla recruits were trained for only three months to flood the battlefield with armed fighters. After training, guerillas were allocated weapons of war and deployed to the front". What Mukonori may not be aware of is that due to the high risk of crossing the Rhodesian border into Zambia, Botswana or Mozambique, scores of 'collaborators' (*mijibha* and *zvimbwido*) were given rudimentary training internally and were deployed to face the Rhodesian military machine. Multitudes of the so-called 'ex-combatants' never crossed borders to train in foreign lands. Lack of adequate preparation and training obviously resulted in unnecessary loss of life. There is scholarly evidence that guerrillas were partly to blame in the case of the Kamungoma massacre, which took place on 14 May 1978, and claimed 104 civilians and one guerrilla commander. "There is evidence that the guerrilla had been drinking heavily and failed to observe basic security procedures" (Mujere, Sagiya & Fontein, 2017:90).

Inadequate training had serious effects on the discipline of the cadres that the revolutionary parties were deploying to the field. Mugabe (1982:37) acknowledged

the fact that there was high indiscipline in the ZANU Party. In a 1977 address to the Central Committee meeting at Chimoio, he observed that, "It cannot be denied that right from the Central Committee down to the smallest Party unit indiscipline pervades our entire structure". Later, in 1979, at a meeting that Mugabe held in Lusaka with the Justice and Peace Committee (JPC), headed by Archbishop Patrick Chakaipa, the question of indiscipline topped the agenda. Father Fidelis Mukonori, a JPC delegate was tasked by Mugabe to report cases of indiscipline among ZANLA guerillas directly to Josiah Tongogara (Gundani, 2001).

3.3.5 The success or lack thereof of the armed struggle: focusing on the 'just end'

It is noteworthy that every address by presenters of Radio Zimbabwe, in Maputo, ended with the phrase; "Victory is certain, *Aluta continua*". Although this might just have been a mobilisation strategy, it was only a matter of time before forcing the colonial government to grant independence to majority Africans. Although victory ultimately came through negotiated settlement, the Lancaster House Constitution failed to deliver justice, self-determination and freedom to the generality of African people in Zimbabwe. Was the victory that the people of Zimbabwe celebrated on the 18 April 1980 a mere pyrrhic victory? Mamdan (2008) provides apt analysis on the benefits of the Lancaster House settlement on the Rhodesian problem. He contends that whilst the settlement, based on the Lancaster House Constitution of 1979, created the basis for the transition from Rhodesia to Zimbabwe, "The formal handover of instruments of power from a white minority to a black majority did not bring substantial change". Furthermore, Madman observes that the agreement backed by international world "was not sustainable and did not seem to take into account the kind of transition that would be necessary to secure a stable social order. The 'willing buyer, willing seller' rule and the 20% seats in the House of Assembly for whites reflected 'short-termism'. What Zimbabweans got was qualified majority rule at best". Mamdani also contends that the justice that the Lancaster House constitution dispensed to Zimbabwe was a mirror of the racialised injustice of the colonial system. Lebert (2006:45) advances Palmer's (1990:106) contention that the Lancaster House conference was the "crucial capitulation" that "tied the hands of the newly independent Zimbabwe government in relation to agrarian transformation, and any significant redistribution of land was ruled out". The negotiated settlement that produced the Lancaster House Constitution brought about peace without justice and deferred the dream of 'majority rule' based on freedom, self-determination, and peace based on justice. Hence, the victory that the mass of black people celebrated was merely the end of the war and its horrors. The political victory they celebrated was a mirage: it was "capitulation, at worst and pyrrhic victory, at best. The Lancaster House constitution provided weak pillars for a non-racial society" (Hancock, 1984).

One serious bone of contention in Zimbabwe has been whether the Lancaster House Constitution served the best interests of Zimbabweans. The Lancaster Constitution indeed delivered on the question of universal suffrage that the disenfranchised African majority had agitated for since the early sixties. However, the "one man one vote" was just a foot in the door. More substantive rights leading to justice, racial reconciliation, freedom and genuine peace were the very essence of true victory and success that Zimbabweans expected to accrue from the liberation struggle. According to Zvarevashe (1982:18), the attainment of independence was "a great gain – an independent free Zimbabwe, the beloved Zimbabwe where justice is done to every human being irrespective of his colour, creed, race, or sex". Zvarevashe goes on to characterise Mugabe's policy of reconciliation after winning the 1980 national elections as a delightful surprise that whites were finding difficult to believe. Writing in early 1982, Zvarevashe reflects the euphoria and optimism that black Zimbabweans felt soon after the end of the war. No doubt, his article reads like an apologia of the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) government. What he fails to grasp is that Mugabe's reconciliation policy was nothing but a rhetorical appeasement of whites rather than a springboard for the "restoration of… African personality and… dignity" (Zvarevashe, 1982:18). The reconciliation policy was supposed to signpost to a new political dispensation based on justice, and characterised by social, moral and economic transformation for all citizens in the country. Herein lies the meaning of liberation, freedom, self-determination, justice and peace. It is these requirements that the armed struggle in Zimbabwe failed to deliver on, and clearly failed to meet the high standards of the 'just war' tradition.

4. Taking stock of the 'just war' tradition in Zimbabwe's three wars

4.1 The war against the Mutapa Empire (1569-1572)

Firstly, the Portuguese invasion of the Mutapa Empire was a classic example of arrogance of western modernity. Portuguese success in the so-called 'journeys of discovery' was a precursor of European imperialism and hegemony. In as much as Portugal was trailblazing the new order of modernity through advances in exploration and navigational sciences, it was still suffering from an obscurantist and hidebound religious complex that had driven western Europe to wage wars against Moslems at a huge cost to itself and the people of the Middle East. Apart from creating a viable trade route to the East, the extermination of the Islamic religion was one of the main planks in the architecture of Portuguese efforts to establish trade with

India. For Spain, its neighbour, the takeover of Andalusia/ Al-Andalus from Moslem control augured well for the expansionist project into the Americas. Moslems, all over the world were viewed as the enemy that had to be crushed at all cost. The Mutapa Empire thus became the ground and turf for the Portuguese state to crush the Islamic religion.

Secondly, in its quest for economic survival, Portugal saw an opportunity to create trade laws and norms for Africa and the Far East. Moreover, the violence meted out against anyone who stood in the way of Barreto and Van Homem was patently disproportionate to the crime that Negomo Mupunzagutu had committed in sanctioning the murder of Silveira. Breathing fire and brimstone against one's enemies has never been the defining ethos of the Christian religion. By the 16th century, the church in Portugal had become part of the political establishment. It therefore saw its role and function as promoting Portuguese interests in and outside Portugal. On this basis, we can infer that Portugal compromised its moral campus and sense of judgment in pronouncing on the culpability or otherwise of the Mutapa king regarding the death of da Silveira. The 'just war' tradition that the Portuguese Ecclesiastical Council appealed to was nothing but a re-hash of a sanitised theology of violence and war borrowed from the times of the crusades. It represented not the best of Christian morality but a carry-over from the period known in western civilisation as the 'dark ages'.

The war waged by the Portuguese against the Mutapa kingdom dismally fails to meet the criteria set by the 'just war' tradition. In this case, one does not even go as far as the 'jus post bellum' stage. It falls short of the requirements of the *jus ad bellum* and the *jus in bello*. It is apparent that the war was inspired by imperialist and expansionist motivation based on stories that did their rounds in Europe about the empire of Prester John that was believed to flow with gold. Hence, the campaign was morally bankrupt. The blessings from the Ecclesiastical Council and the chaplaincy services provided by the church were merely a smokescreen to a political and ideological farce meant to serve an emerging mercantile state.

4.2 The 'Matabele war' (1893)

It is clear that Jameson used subterfuge to justify a purely imperialistic campaign that finally brought Matabeleland and Mashonaland together to form Rhodesia in 1895. Posselt (1945:9) and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009:49) concur that the overthrow of Lobengula, and subsequent annexation of Matabeleland was long planned; and that the Victoria raid was a pretext a war long decided upon. Clearly, the war against the Ndebele kingdom did not meet the criteria of 'just cause'. It was not the 'last resort' since no efforts were made to negotiate with Lobengula on the future co-existence between his kingdom and Mashonaland, under the BSAC. Missionaries such as Prestage could have played a role if

there was a will to negotiate peace with Lobengula. In spite of the claims by missionaries that the war was just, the means used to substitute Ndebele 'savagery' with 'civilisation' were not only crude but also grossly uncivilised. Granting each volunteer 6000 acres farms in Matabeleland and twenty gold claims, as well as looting cattle belonging to the Ndebeles surely did not constitute a 'just intent'. Although the conquest of the Ndebele kingdom was achieved due to the superior weapons, especially the Maxim gun, the war failed to secure the life and property of the Shona, Ndebele and white settlers in Mashonaland. Instead, it bred a sense of white supremacy among the white settlers and arrogated upon them a sense that they were masters to both Shona and Ndebele whom they treated as slaves. Ranger (2013:8) and Mukonori (2012:8) are therefore correct that the 'Matabele war' of 1893 was a clear testimony that Rhodesia was established by violence. That violence breeds violence is a teaching well known to the men of the cloth such as Prestage, Shimmin and Upcher. Violence in the form of war could not have been a breeding ground for freedom, justice and peace among all races in Rhodesia. The injustices wrought by the Company rule on the Shona and Ndebele people bred resentment and discontent and sowed seeds of the Chimurenga/Umfazo 1 (1896-1897) and decades later, Chimurenga/Umfazo II in the 1960s.

4.3 The armed struggle (1966-1979)

Muzorewa (1979), Zvarevashe (1982) and Mukonori (2012) agree that the armed struggle for independence (Chimurenga/Umfazo II) met all the requirements of 'just war'. McDonagh (1979), on the other hand, argues that the armed struggle in Zimbabwe met the requirements of the moral justification for the resort to war, but was found wanting on the moral demands for conduct in war. When he wrote his book, Zimbabwe had not attained independence. Hence, McDonagh was not privy to the justice of the peace agreement signed to end the war. He does not, therefore, address the *jus post bello* dimension of the 'just war' tradition.

Muzorewa's (1978:187) argument that, "…our cause is right, and that we have indulged in righteous violence only as a last resort", is a correct reading of the impediments thrown in the path of non-violent struggle by successive colonial governments. He also makes a legitimate argument that self-determination was a just/right intention (Muzorewa, 1978:183). He, however, misses the mark when he argues that the Internal Settlement (1978) he signed with Ian Smith (Rhodesia Front), Ndabaningi Sithole (ZANU) and Chief Jeremiah Chirau (Zimbabwe United People's Organisation) marked the success and just end of the struggle. The Internal Settlement failed to bring peace to Zimbabwe, and that is precisely why the Commonwealth Heads of Governments Meeting (CHOGM) in Lusaka, August 1979, adopted a resolution calling for an all-party Conference at Lancaster House. The latter finally produced an agreement that resulted in the holding of general elections in March 1980, for black and white citizens

in Zimbabwe. No doubt, Muzorewa's claim that the armed struggle in Zimbabwe met all the requirements for the 'just war' is symptomatic of a cynical theological apologia in the service of neo-colonialism. Unlike Muzorewa (1979), Zvarevashe (1982) and Mukonori (2012) naively and opportunistically apply the requirements of the 'just war' tradition to serve a partisan ZANU-PF agenda. Such obsequious opportunism makes the 'just war' tradition a cheap tool for the advancement of a morality-based self-preservation, power mongering.

The armed struggle in Zimbabwe (Chimurenga/ Umfazo II) can only be considered just if the life for ordinary Zimbabweans is qualitatively better than the life they endured under colonial rule. Regrettably, conditions of life for ordinary Zimbabweans, after the attainment of independence, fall far short of vindicating the lofty ideals, sacrifices, dreams and aspirations they shared before and during the struggle. White tyranny has given way to black tyranny; a shameful mimicry of colonial power mongering. Colonial authoritarian violence gave way to strongman authoritarian violence by an African government against black and white citizens. The struggle for franchise, popularly known as the 'one man one vote' has been manipulated by the Zimbabwean political elite into a system where citizens are coerced and bullied to 'vote only for one man'. The quest for 'universal suffrage' has been turned upside-down to promote 'universal suffering'. Clearly, even the basic rights of citizens and hopes have been undermined and supplanted. Almost forty years after the armed struggle, there are too many unresolved issues, and unfulfilled needs that the people of Zimbabwe talk about in hushed tones. In short, the once felicitous dream of a new order characterised by justice has become a nightmare. As stated in the introduction of this article, the 'just war' is not merely about a just cause (*jus ad bellum*); it is as much about just means *(jus in bello*) and a just end (*jus post bellum*). The armed struggle in Zimbabwe failed dismally to meet the requirements of a just end. What is clear is that the 'just war' tradition is not only about the moral justification for resort to war *(jus ad bellum*) and the moral guidelines for conduct in war (*jus in bellum*), but also about the justice of peace agreements entered into at the termination of war (*jus post bellum*). Much is yet to be done to realise "the demands of simple justice" (McDonagh, 1979) and to deliver a new dispensation where Zimbabweans truly feel free.

5. Conclusion

In all the three historical epochs discussed, it is clear that those who appealed to the 'just war' tradition viewed war within the domain of morality. The Portuguese Ecclesiastical Council of the 16th, 19th, and 20th century political and religious leaders used the tradition in mechanistic ways designed to serve their political, moral and religious interests. What is evident though is that their pronouncements on the justice of the wars they supported were rather hasty and often informed by ideological rather than objective considerations. It is our view that the three wars discussed in this article fell far short of the high moral standards embodied in the 'just war' tradition. Interestingly, in all of them, the church or its representatives come across as tainted by self-interest and self-preservation. Finally, the failure of the wars to restore order or to establish a better society than the one that prevailed before the war undermined their justification.

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