

CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

From the performance spaces of ancient Greece to the cradles of pre-colonial Africa, literature and performing arts have served as instruments that do not only provide entertainment and escapism to the audience but also mirror and reprove the different political dispensations towards the preservation of human rights. In Europe, renowned playwrights like William Shakespeare coined pieces of dramatic literature that came in different genres like tragedy and comedy with theatrical pieces like *Othello* and *Measure for measure* transcending to address heated issues centered on racial segregation, the right to appeal for justice in the court of law and the balance one can place in questioning a higher power in cases where it proves to err without being subjected to victimization. In Africa such a trend of championing human rights in performance spaces has also been visible since antiquity, in Zimbabwe's social gatherings like funerals and collective labor efforts like the *Nhimbe*, all evil and social hazards that have affected the progression of humanity towards the enjoyment of liberties like peace and unity in a village or community have been reproved under the guise of performing arts with the anticipation that a reasonable change shall take root.

Zimbabwe and the State of Palestine present cases of human rights violation which have not escaped the eye of scrutiny from playwrights, while the latter attracted the attention of an American journalist Jen Merlowe who went on to scribble down the play titled *There is a field* in 2010 as a sign of expressing solidarity with the people of Palestine suffering under Israeli occupation and oppression, the former drew the attention of two Zimbabwean Playwrights, Raisedon Baya and Leonard Matsa who also went on to draft a political satire titled *Super Patriots and Morons* in 2003. The play mirrors the reality of corruption in Zimbabwe which has left millions with obliterated dreams due to unemployment and the depreciating standards of life, the play also highlights how state security instruments play a dual role of protecting the masses while at the same time spying on them whenever they prefer to voice out their complains.

While this study seeks to investigate the violation of human rights in Palestine and Zimbabwe as cases for comparison and contrast, it shall also seek to explore the dynamics and forms in which human rights abuses come in.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.2.1 The Palestinian case

Before 1948, the nation now called Israel was known as Palestine but at the turn of the 20th century anti-Semitism championed by Adolf Hitler started to spread its tentacles around Europe which compelled many Jews to flee back to the then Arab-Muslim territory with the intention of establishing their own national homeland grounded on the principles of Zionism which according to the Jewish anti-Zionist network (2012) is defined as ‘an ideology of Jewish nationalism that came from the desire of creating a Jewish nation by the Jewish’. The problem that underpinned this ideology was that it intended to establish itself on the established land already occupied by Palestinian-Arabs and other minority groups like the Christians and Druze. Before the ideas of Zionism came into scope around 20 000 Jews lived in Palestine but after the exodus from Europe Jews numbering over eight times of the initial number in Palestine had flooded the Arab land. What culminated from this encounter was a series of serious conflicts between the Palestinians and the Israeli-Jews, the United nations failed to resolve the dispute and much of what is in existence today territorially resembles the outcomes of two wars, one that was fought in 1948 and the other that was fought in 1967.

With the Israeli state now established and in full control of the land and resources that were once in the hands of the Palestinians, the Palestinians have been inhibited by the Israeli settlers from enjoying their own fundamental human rights including the right to education, water and sanitation. (Koek 2013:26) alludes to an episode in which the Israeli government has gone to the extremes of diverting mainwater bodies for the benefit of the Israeli population.

“Crucially, Israel does not exercise full control but also prevents any Palestinian’s use of these shared water resources by continuously diverting the flow of water into Israel.”

In addition to the above stated violations of human rights the Israeli government inhibits the Palestinians from enjoying the right of association by erecting check-points and blockage campaigns. The blockage campaign is however justified by the Israeli as a way of safeguarding national security from Palestinian ‘terror’ groups’ but such a stance falls on barren ground when one brings into scope that the retaliation that is being launched by the Palestinians is a response to the settlers’ exploits. As a grand act of its violations the government of Israel proved to have a deficient in having a soft spot towards the minors as evidenced in the shooting of one Palestinian teenager by name Aseel Asleh by the Israeli forces in October 2000 while attending a peaceful demonstration. The case of the killing of Aseel was presided over by the Or Commission a body set aside to investigate the events of October 2000. As per the outcome of the commission it was admitted that it was indeed the Israeli police fire that had killed Aseel but no police officer among those who pursued the boy were convicted until the case was closed. After the tragic event an American filmmaker/playwright and video journalist Jen Merlowe made her way to Palestine and through the interviews she had with the family members of Aseel she managed to draft a play in 2010 that was titled ‘ There is a field’ based on the real life experiences of Aseel and other Palestinian Arabs. The play in 2010 as part of the Global theatrical call to action aimed at expressing solidarity with the people of Palestine under Israeli oppression was heralded around the world and it opened doors for debate in relation to the violation of human rights in Palestine.

1.2.2 The Zimbabwean case

Unlike the Palestinian case which has been confronted by violation of its human rights as a result of the Israeli settlers’ activity, the Zimbabwean case presents a unique case of human rights abuse that emanated from within. After getting its independence from the British government that was led by Ian Smith in 1980, Robert Gabriel Mugabe took over the helms as Zimbabwe’s first prime minister and later became president. Some few years into independent Zimbabwe, Mugabe’s government launched a campaign in Matabeleland and some parts of Midlands which came to be known as ‘Gukurahundi’ against the Nkomo led Zanla forces which were termed as dissidents on the allegations that they were launching a campaign to remove the democratically

elected government. To wipe off the ‘dissidents’ a special force known as 5th Brigade which was trained in North Korea was assigned to handle the task and over 20 000 people died in the process among them vulnerable women and children. In July 2012 the then minister of defence Emmerson Mnangagwa classified the Gukurahundi episode as a ‘closed chapter’ according to the Human Right Report (2013). With over three decades into independence a lot has transpired within the nation from radical land seizures, reports of political violence during elections and a crumbling economy falling at the mercy of what seems to be a corrupt system. From this backdrop two Zimbabwean playwrights Raisedon Baya and Leonard Matsa wrote the political satire *Super Patriots and Morons* in 2003 which mirrored the economic and political environment of the nation ailing under human rights abuses. According to Murphy (2004) the play was performed more than 20 times in the 10 provinces of the nation and it was only after these numerous performances that the Censorship Board of Zimbabwe cited an entertainment law inherited from colonial system resulting in the play being banned a violation to the freedom of expression as highlighted by the Universal declaration of Human rights Article 19 (1948)

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression, this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In cases where a group of people in a given national set-up seek to emancipate themselves from oppression, governments have resorted to monopolizing legal systems as a measure to eradicate emerging voices from exposing its evils. In the process passive resistance, peaceful demonstrations and forms of protest art have been demonized. In cases where the legal frameworks prove to lack the loophole for government monopoly towards thwarting uprisings, abductions, torture and violence have been embraced as effective state security instruments. The performance space has been scrutinized by the authorities in power as being used by external powers to champion anti-government objectives, while in Zimbabwe theatre performances which are critical of the government’s human rights abuses are labeled as propagating an imperial goal, in Palestine performances critical of the Israeli’s settler policies are termed as being grounded on shallow propaganda aimed at defeating the Zionist course.

The problem lies when one brings into scope how governments perceive its subjects to be gullible and passive lacking the stamina to challenge human rights violations using creative means like theatrical productions without the aid and intervention from external forces. It is the intention of this study to therefore highlight on modes of theatre that can effectively cultivate human rights awareness.

1.4 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To highlight how both Zimbabwe and Palestine have been confronted by the tide of human rights abuse as mirrored in the two plays ‘There is a field’(Palestine 2010) and Super Patriots and Morons (Zimbabwe 2003)
2. To demonstrate how state security institutions have had a hand in the violation of human rights.
3. To establish the power of protest theatre in harnessing the masses’ mind towards a call for justice and accountability.
4. To unearth elements that prove the inter-connectivity of humanity irrespective of nationality or race in the face of violated rights
5. To delve into the purpose of torture techniques and its effects to the psychological make-up of its victims.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the comparisons and contrasts of Zimbabwe and Palestine in the face of human rights abuses?
2. Does protest theatre bear the potential of demanding attention from the authorities for them to foster change?
3. Are state security apparatus protecting peace and order at the expense of human rights violations or are they acting on the basis of being beneficiaries to the whole system?
4. When the custodians of law break the codes they claim to stand for as highlighted in two plays ‘There is a field’ and Super Patriots and Morons, to what extent is it justified for the citizens to take action to bring about political and economic sanity?

1.6 JUSTIFICATION/ SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Zimbabwe and Palestine might seem to be distanced cases in the exploration of the human rights abuse subject but a closer analysis proves that they are intertwined. While Palestine has been exposed to oppression from the Israeli government, Zimbabwe which got its independence in 1980 is a unique case in which the violation of its own people's rights is emanating from within. Through this study it will come in central that dramatic arts are not just for entertainment but they are there to address critical issues towards nations, on peace, justice, tolerance and accountability.

1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To expand the study several theories shall be brought into scope to offer critique, justification and analysis. Among the theories that shall be tapped into is the cultivation theory, audience reception theory and the Marxist theory.

1.7.1 CULTIVATION THEORY

Coined by George Gerbner in the late 1960s the cultivation theory states that some versions of reality can be constructed from over exposure to a piece of art. Gerbner stated that a piece of art, theatre and film for example are responsible for molding a viewer's conception of social reality. The combined effect of exposure over time shapes the perception of social reality for a given group that is constantly exposed to the creative text that comes in film or theatre formats. In investigating the violation of human rights in both Zimbabwe and Palestine as highlighted in the two plays *There is a field* and *Super Patriots and Morons* this theory comes into scope when one brings into scope how due to exposure of the Palestinian play scores of theatre consumers around the world started to have a deeper appreciation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict hence triggering what came to be known as the global theatrical call to action in solidarity with the people of Palestine. For the Zimbabwean story *Super Patriots* which was showcased in the country's ten provinces due to exposure to the text, theatre consumers started to

question the existing leadership, this explains why a year later it became the first play to be banned in Zimbabwe due to its rippling influence only to premiere again in 2016.

1.7.2 AUDIENCE RECEPTION THEORY

Propounded by Stuart Hall, the theory explains the communication model which is anchored on Encoding/Decoding, sending and receiving messages. Hall states that there are three ways through which receivers decode messages and these are the hegemonic position, the negotiated position and the oppositional position, in breaking them up Martin (2007) explains them as follows.

The dominant-hegemonic position- According to Hall (1993, 101) this position is when targeted audiences views, accepts and adopts the message from the film/ theatre text which means that they are in agreement with whatever message is being conveyed.

The negotiated position-Hall(1993,102) is when the audience member or receiver is able to make sense of the sender's message within the context of the dominant cultural and societal views. At this stage the consumer of the art piece takes in the message in the text and make attempts to relate it with their own lives afterwards he or she will strike a balance between what the text is hinting on and what he or she wants to take out of the film.

The oppositional view- At this juncture an audience is able to understand a message in the way that it was intended to be understood but due to their grounding in societal beliefs they often see another unintended meaning, the viewer completely rejects the film's standpoint hence coming up with a different message altogether in relation to the theatre or film text.

The oppositional view in the case studies of the two plays applies when one alludes to how different nationalities reacted to their performances. Firstly when *There is a Field* which was written by Jen Merlowe in 2010 was heralded around the world the participating nations inasmuch as they knew that the play was centered on the life of a Palestinian teenager who was shot dead by the Israeli police while peacefully championing for his people's own rights scores of audiences from around the world while watching it looked for ways of integrating the play with their own experiences hence creating a new text meaning altogether. Hedgebrook(2016)

makes reference to how students at Bowie State University connected the play's meaning with the American justice system alluding to the case of Tamir Rice who was gunned down by police fire without representing any danger. On the other hand Super Patriots while it is based on Zimbabwean experience in its regional tours was pointed out to point the collective problems of Africans in the face of leadership crisis

1.7.3 MARXIST THEORY

This theory was coined by Karl Marx, it states that images are not innocent, rather they are saturated with the inscription in the narrative of a group of people to influence a given way of thinking of a given class, the theory propounds that the class that owns the means of production owns the ideas that circulate the public sphere (*Communist Manifesto-1848*)

In exploring this study the Marxist theory helps one to interrogate the content of the plays critically without bias, inasmuch as Jen Merlowe in *There is a Field* amplifies the human rights abuse in Palestine one can note that she emanates from a capitalist economy which to some degree places her in a shallow light when addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the role of her nation in the entire process which makes America a spectator to the whole process when in reality she is not. Jen Merlowe as the creator of the content gives the illusion that America is no way involved in the dispute when it has gone on record of supporting financially the armed conflict on the side of Israel a trait which feeds heavily on Marxism while Super Patriots has some elements of donor funding which again might be argued to influence the structure of the play's meaning when attending to human rights abuses in Zimbabwe.

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Gray (2011) research methods refer to the collection and processing of data during the research process. In this study interviews, questionnaires and a record of the post play discussions shall be utilized.

1.8.1 Interviews

According to Denzin (2001) interviews refer to ‘verbal interchange where interviewer attempts to elicit information from an interviewee using a set of pre-established questions (structured) and unstructured questions (unstructured), but all trying to establish certain information pertaining a certain area’. In this study this method will play a crucial role in data gathering as it permits the interviewee to unearth a great deal of information (based on the good rapport that would have been established) that he or she would not release through other avenues of information acquisition. The negative component of this avenue of data gathering is that usually an interviewee will release information that is condensed with the intention of trying to please an interviewer and in addition due to the sensitivity of the subject of study one might prove to withhold the information on the basis of fear therefore to curtail this obstacle my research population will be legal experts and human rights activists for the reason that they are readily willing to share the required information on human rights abuses.

1.8.2 Questionnaires

Gray (2011) defines a questionnaire as research tools through which people are asked to respond to the same set of questions in a pre-determined manner, questionnaires are designed to meet the study’s stipulated objectives. In this study such an avenue shall be designed and distributed among students, human rights activists and the general public as a way of investigating the subject of human rights. The advantage that this avenue has is that the prospective respondent is in a position to supply the required information in a more flexible manner without facing the challenges and phobia that come in a typical one on one interview; however this method of data collection has its own flaws as one might deliberately choose to give summarized answers due to the seemingly laborious process that comes in filling up the questionnaire. To curtail this problem this mode shall be used together with other data gathering techniques highlighted in this section.

1.8.3 Recorded post-play discussions

As a way of integrating the theoretical component of this study together with the practical side THERE IS A FIELD which shall be the Palestinian case study of human rights violation shall be performed by selected students to an academic audience including lecturers and fellow students. After the performance a post play discussion shall be done and recorded as an attempt to answer the study's objectives which includes the ability of performing arts in attending to heated issues of human rights abuses.

1.8.4 Secondary sources of data

With secondary sources data shall be collected from published materials like the internet, magazines and journals, this form of data collection shall aid the above stated forms.

1.8.5 Ethical considerations

1. In the case of Palestine, acquiring information through interviews and questioners might prove to be a challenge since Palestinians are a minority in Zimbabwe and among the minority the greater percentage represents the diplomatic mission which might prove to be committed to other pressing issues at the time an interview is proposed.
2. Due to the existing code of laws like AIPPA access to documents hinting on human rights in Zimbabwe might be withheld which may lead one to only depend on sources of other Human rights organization within the nation.
3. The current environment in Zimbabwe marred by incidents of abductions and torture might result in prospective parties for engagement withholding some information.

1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has highlighted the long relationship that theatre has had with the ruling authorities checking for elements of injustice and abuses, rebuking the existing leadership of its time to rectify its conduct were necessary for the benefit of its subjects. It has also opened up the origination of human rights abuses in both Palestine and Zimbabwe alluding to how the two

cases are unique yet interconnected to each other, while Palestine is compelled to confront an external threat in the form of Israeli settlers Zimbabwe on the other extreme faces a human rights crisis from within in the form of a government defined by an ailing economy defined by abductions, displacement and violence to thwart opposition and preserve its stay in power. The next chapter shall settle upon an overview of what other scholars have written in relation to performance and human rights.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

According to United for Human rights (2008) Human rights are the rights one has simply because he or she is a human. The subject of human rights is anchored on the basis that each person is a rational being who is therefore entitled to his or her dignity. While it has become so commonly accepted that human rights refer mostly to freedom of expression and association, the subject is wider as it encompasses other elements like the right to explore life opportunities without harassment, the right to appeal in a court of justice and freedom to take part in economic growth. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights which came into scope in 1948 has the following description of what the fundamental rights stand for.

'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and in rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood'

Article 1, Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The purpose of this section is to highlight how performance can be a powerful medium that can be tapped into, towards the shape shifting of viewpoints for the preservation of human rights. Allusion shall be made to the different contributions of scholars in the field of dramatic arts towards the subject non-violence performance as a means to curtail human rights abuses and disseminate a message centered on peace and tolerance

2.1 COMPARISONS OF PALESTINE AND ZIMBABWE IN THE CASES OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSE.

Zimbabwe and Palestine present unique cases of human rights abuses. The case of Palestinian human rights violations primarily culminates from an external system in the form of Israeli settlers that established its government on the land that once belonged to the Palestinians after

being stirred by the ideals of Zionism. From 1948 Palestine has been entangled in a series of wars with the Israeli settlers, demanding its right of ownership to the now seized land. To ensure that the settler government maintains a firm grip on power, Israeli forces have resorted to the use of checkpoints and blockages against the Palestinian people as a way of discouraging them not to take part in desired political and economic exploits. Othman (2007) makes reference to how some youths within the areas confronting Israeli hostility have to walk to school through ‘a drainage hole’ all because the other road networks are reserved for the settlers. According to the Geneva Convention IV, Article 33 (1948) ‘it is illegal for a state or nation to inflict collective punishment’ where a group is punished for the crime of one or the other. In the scope of this convention Israel has swayed from the international code by victimizing even the vulnerable members including women and children from the Palestinian community as a counter-measure to the uprisings of Palestinians. Reference can be made to a tragic incident of collective punishment that was inflicted on the Palestinians by the Israeli forces in 2014 recounted by Marlowe (2014):

“On July 28, at least eight children in Gaza were killed when a playground was shelled. Entire extended families—children included—have been literally wiped out.”

Within such a frame of gross human rights violations that has emerged from the 1940s with the exodus of Jews from Europe to the land of Palestine, Human rights Activists transcended to champion the ideals of justice in Palestine among them Felicia Langer as referenced by Hajjar (2001).

On the other hand Zimbabwe which attained its independence in 1980 with the leadership of Robert Gabriel Mugabe just like Palestine leaves less to be desired on the subject of human rights. Unlike Palestine which is confronting hostility from external forces in the form of the Israeli settlers, Zimbabwe bears the burden of drinking from the bitter cup human rights violations emanating from its own internal government structures. With less than a decade into independence a campaign dubbed *Gukurahundi* was championed by the Mugabe led regime as a way to silence a group of Ndebele people which his government demonized with a tag of

dissidents claiming that they were making plans to remove his democratically elected government. Within the process, according to the Country Reports on Human Rights (2012), over 20 000 people lost their lives to the North Korean special troupe known as the 5th brigade, again just like in the case of Palestine where collective punishment is exercised in violation of the international conventions on human rights, Zimbabwe crossed the same line of victimizing vulnerable members of the society among them women, children and the elderly. Later on, one of the senior minister Patrick Chinamasa of Zanu Pf made a blunt statement in reference to the atrocities that swept through parts of Matebeleland and Midlands regions which is chronicled in the Country Reports on Human Rights (2012)

‘...later that month ZANU-PF- minister Patrick Chinamasa stated that it was reckless to apportion responsibility for Gukurahundi on ‘anyone’, since the killings were a national crisis.’

To add fuel to the flames of its human rights violations, the same government championed *Operation Murambatsvinain* 2005, a campaign that was set to remove all illegal structures around the nation with the aim of restoring sanity and curtailing the spread of diseases. The disheartening part of this operation was that it affected over 700 000 people and saw them being relocated into environments that were worse than the ones they operated from hence defeating the objective of such a campaign in restoring sanity and compels one to question the true objective of this venture when placed against some documentation which highlights that it was not the first of kind. Tibajuka (2005) chronicled how the ruling party had launched such an identical campaign as a means of crippling its political rival’s power:

‘Operation restore order was not the first experience of evictions in post-independence Zimbabwe. For example, an estimated 20 000 residents of Churu farm lived on a tract of 260 000 hectares on the outskirts of Harare acquired in 1979 by the late opposition leader and onetime archrival of President Mugabe, Ndabaningi Sithole , who subdivided the land and rented out plots...by November of that year (1993) about 300 armed police officers, acting on government orders, moved in after giving the community a week’s notice to leave, and evicted them’

As a crowning act to the abuse of human rights, Zimbabwe's 2008 elections coinciding with a melting economy characterized by inflation and unemployment stand central as they were marked with bloodshed and death backed by a series of draconian laws inherited, altered and assimilated into Zimbabwe's legislation from the colonial government. Just like in Palestine all these events did not drift by without attracting the rebuke of human rights organizations like the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human rights (ZLHR) and Zimbabwe Peace Project.

One component stands as a common denominator in both Palestine and Zimbabwe's confrontation with the abuse of human rights and that is the undisputed role played by theatre in lobbying for a revolutionary form of performance that attempts to eradicate all human inequalities while at the same time propagating the ideals of peace. In Zimbabwe theatre companies like Amakhosi and Rooftop promotions have gone on record for advocating for the ideals of human rights while in Palestine theatre companies like the Freedom theatre and Jaffa theatre have stood for the same principles. With the enlightenment of the activities that are being carried forward by these institutions it's noble to investigate the power embedded in theatre if ever it is in a position to foster a meaningful change towards the preservation of human rights.

According to Dixon (2007) during the performance of the play *Final Push* which was written by Silvanos Mudzvova, two actors Anthony Tongai and Silvanos were arrested by some members of the law enforcement agency while presenting their play in Harare, what followed was a two day interrogation in which they were forced to perform their play that suggested a reflection of the unfamiliarity of the corrupt government in power for over twelve times while the authorities sought charges to pin them on. On the other extreme end, according to Gelman and Weiss (2012) in the distant Palestine the artistic director of Freedom theatre Nabil Al Raei was arrested by armed Israeli forces in the early hours of the morning under unclear circumstances. The two incidents highlight the power theatre can possess in conveying a deep rooted political message. State apparatus do not waste time and resources on elements that do not pose any danger or question the authority in power. The moment one crosses the red line by attempting to bring the government in for accountability that is the moment when all hostilities are awakened. As

highlighted above, the fact that theatre can command attention from ruling authorities is evidence enough that it is powerful to send out messages that can foster the ideals of human rights.

2.3 NON-VIOLENT PERFORMANCE IN A HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

Now that the power of theatre in commanding attention even from the authorities has been placed in scope, the question that one can now confront will be on how best it is able to strike a balance between proclaiming the ideals of unity, peace and justice in a creative way without stepping on the ground where it transforms into a radical medium that champions change even if it means resorting to the same set of hostilities it is fighting.

Rosenbohm (2014: 6) alludes to Ghandi who once said that “Be the change you wish to see” which might serve to imply that if theatre in the context of human rights is centered on championing peace and equality it must be presented in the same spirit that it anticipates to see coming into fruition rather than resorting to advocating for violence and revenge. However Baraka (1968) stands for a revolutionary form of theatre where all human rights abuses are bluntly exposed:

‘The revolutionary theatre must teach them their deaths. It must crack their faces open to the cries of the poor. ‘

The gap made with such an approach to performance in a hostile environment is that it awakens the authorities and gives them a reason to stamp down on anything that they might deem inciting on its subjects. In the context of the above stated human rights activist who used theatre in the revolutionary and radical sense one can take note that during his time his pieces of artistic works faced a lot of resistance from the media conglomerates when it came to publishing. In the light of this study one of the leading human rights advocacy theatre companies called Freedom theatre which to some degree bears the same revolutionary approach as advocated by Baraka (1968) is on record of being denied entrance into Jordan where the members can access International flights to go abroad and mirror the injustices that are being imposed in Palestine by the Israeli forces. The case of Zimbabwe presents a series of laws like the 2002 AIPPA (Access to

Information and Protection of Privacy Act) and POSA (Public Order and Security Act) which according to Mandinde (2005) have the power to call down anything that might stir public disorder or place the public in danger, which might serve to point out at any public appearances deemed inciteful by the government. With this in view though an aggressive form of theatre can swiftly convey the principles of human rights, it poses a danger on both the performer and the audience from the state apparatus deployed to ensure that the government's interests are preserved at all costs, rather what could prove to be more effective is a non-violent alternative form of performance.

2.4 RUSTOM BHARUCHA ON NON-VIOLENT PERFORMANCE

Bharucha (2014) makes an allusion to Susan Buck Moss' writing titled *'Thinking past terror'* 2003 where she says that "terrorism will disappear because non-violent ways of communication and debate are possible". The general meaning in the context of this study will be that the abuse of human rights by those who are in power can only come to a halt through creative initiatives (theatre performances) that try to bring together both the perpetrator and the victim into a discourse where they can set aside their differences and dwell more upon a common goal towards progression into the future. Boal (1979) alludes to the subject of non violent performance by highlighting on what he termed 'an invisible theatre' which can be defined as a form of theatre that taps into symbols and is not conventional spaces as a way to evade censorship amid a hostile system. The disadvantage that comes with this form of non violent invisible performance is that the targeted subjects might find it difficult to break the symbols within the piece to create meaning hence defeating the whole purpose of championing the ideal of human rights. On the same note one can take into consideration that its underground/invisible approach does not formally invite the affected parties into a discourse but it just sprouts unannounced in spaces like streets and improvised spaces, a move though loaded with rational intentions might trigger some elements of unrest. In addition to the above, in cases where the symbols are deciphered and assimilated in the public spheres of communication, the invisibility and the non- violent performance is condensed and the participants are left at the mercy of state agents. Bharucha (2014: 155) comes in to give his input on how best non-violence can be performed when he states that:

“...Not through action but inaction. Not through blows, but passive reflexes: a resolute non-resistance to the violence inflicted on the body.”

In the above scope the writer takes one into a realm greater than a theatre hall and that's the realm of everyday life as a form of performance where despite all the abuses that might be inflicted by the existing system (antagonist) on a subjects, one (protagonist) instead of fighting back he or she stands back and takes an opposite peaceful approach which is not motivated by giving up but rather stirred by the desire to disseminate a given message within the silence. Such a world of non-violent performance is usually defined by peaceful demonstrations in the form of hunger strikes. Marlowe (2012) makes reference to how one Palestinian theatre practitioner Zakaria Zubeidi of Freedom theatre went into this mode of hunger strike as a way of expressing discontentment with the system in Palestine in 2008. The performativity of non-violence as manifested through demonstrations is also evident in Zimbabwe's human rights activism, an example can be that of Stern Zvorwadza in Munayiti (2016) who in the company of kids is documented to have once handed over some flowers and cakes to members of the law enforcement sector before an observing multitude in Africa Unity Square as an expression of the need for peace, love and justice within Zimbabwe. Just like the invisible theatre, to break down the codes and symbols of what the demonstrator who then assumes the role of a performer might prove to be slightly challenging for the targeted parties as codes and symbols are chameleonic in nature, interpretation therefore depends on one's background and cultural orientation. What is needed is therefore a participatory approach where the parties in discussion are brought face to face to confront their differences, resolve their conflicts and plan for a brighter future where all interests are considered in clear dialogue and ways.

2.5 SEEDS OF PEACE: USE OF DRAMATIC PERFORMANCE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCACY.

Seeds of Peace is an international organization based in the United States of America, it was established in 1993 by the late John Wallach, the objective behind this initiative is to train the youths from different nations across the globe to become leaders that value tolerance and resort

to peaceful resolution in the face of conflict. According to the Seeds of Peace Annual Report (2005) the initiative has seen thousands of graduates from places like Israel, Palestine, Jordan and Egypt joining hands at reunion camps, taking time off from their newly found life exploits of academics, parenting and even service in the military, reflecting upon past experiences within the Seeds of Peace camp and celebrating unity in diversity of religion, culture or political opinions. In the context of the Israeli Palestinian conflict the initiative has been instrumental in bringing the youth from Palestine and the Youth from Israel, activities are set in place where the trainees from the conflicting nations are mixed and placed in groups for assignments that demand co-operation. The usual end result is that the Israeli and Palestinian Youth will be in positions in which they will discover more areas of co-operation and team-work rather than areas of violence and hostility towards each other. As a point of interests the camp goes on further to engage the youth creatively in dialogues where they can freely express their sentiments on the ongoing Middle Eastern conflict, such openness can help to unveil the root cause of the conflict and suggest possible solutions that embrace the preservation of the fundamental rights of humanity. The fact that the youths are the primary targets of the initiative might serve to imply that since they are the life stream of the future who shall take over positions of leadership, catching them young and embedding the ideals of peace and tolerance for fellow humanity guarantees the world of a generation that believes in dialogue and co-operation as meaningful ways of resolving conflict. Many testimonials have been made by the participants of the Seeds of Peace Initiative to prove its effectiveness:

“Seeds of Peace taught me and others not only to believe peace is possible but to know it for a fact because we experienced it. One day this powerful group of people will make history and change reality in the region”

Avigail a 21 year old Israeli soldier-Seeds of Peace Annual Report (2005)

“I put the hatred on the side, because I am here for peace, I am not here to blame, because if we go on blaming, its going to end up with nothing”

Aboob a 23 year old Palestnian revitalization projects manager-Seeds of Peace Annual Report (2005)

With such a level of documented success in restoring sanity on the subject of human rights through non-violent means one can allude to Betinho in Bharucha (2014) who poses a rhetoric question “What could be more violent than non-violence?”

2.6 SYMBIOTIC EMBEDDEDNESS OF THEATRE AND CONFLICT

One can note that in the face of human rights violations, a certain party or a national structure will be conflicting with the other over the subjects of entitlement (material or immaterial objects) and over superiority be it ideologically or on contrasting worldviews that emanate from religious, political and social differences. To defend its ground the party that will be in a seemingly advantageous position in the conflict imposes restrictions and withholds certain human liberties on the weaker party. The outcome of such an arrangement brings about violation of human rights. Majid (2015) in the heat of the ongoing conflict that has snowballed into human rights abuses in both Palestine and Zimbabwe makes an interesting theoretical discovery which he terms as the ‘symbiotic embeddedness of theatre and conflict’ to highlight the dependency that the two have over each other.

Definition:

Majid (2015) states that symbiosis is Greek borrowed word meanings ‘living together’ while embed means to ‘put into’. Bringing the two words into definition states that symbiotic embeddedness is ‘a situation in which ideas or concepts are built into one another’

The general interpretation of such a discovery serves to imply that theatre thrives on conflict while the opposite is also true. Such an assertion of theatre and conflict might prove to be grave if critically scrutinized. Theatre in the face of human rights abuses then metamorphose into a profit making platform rather than an undiluted advocate for justice and equality, the discovery also serves to imply that to some degree without conflict theatre would be non-existent hence

painting a negative image in which dramatic arts, as an illustration, take on a personified role of a photo-journalist in the depths of hunger stricken Somalia busy taking pictures of a malnourished child whose weak staggering steps are being tracked by vultures patiently waiting to consume his flesh upon his death which they know is imminent. In the context of the above

example in relation symbiotic embeddedness of theatre and conflict, theatre is made an opportunists' platform that benefits from mankind's misery under the guise of offering reportage on the state of human rights abuses. What will be more appreciated in the context of this theory is a theatre that exists out of conflict, making strides to unify the perpetrator of human rights violations and the victim towards one equal field where they can learn to view each other as humans worthy of dignity and respect.

2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has highlighted how theatre can be an instrumental tool in shape-shifting worldviews for a better course in which human rights are greatly embraced. It is only through non-violent performance approaches as advocated by Bharucha (2014) that a perpetrator can be enlightened of his or her own evil and seek reform that will restore his victim's sanity. On the other extreme the section allude to the Seeds of Peace Initiative that proved that peace is a possibility among conflicting parties as long as there is room for engagement and the organization stands as a lesson book to what a theatre should be if ever it is going to record success in the two nations of Zimbabwe and Palestine that have been confronted with a series of human rights violations ranging from torture, detention without trial, censorship and the withholding of the rights of association and other necessities of humanity which include shelter, education and water. The symbiotic embeddedness of theatre and conflict as hinted by Mijud (2014) has the power of continuously being a mirror to the set prevailing injustices but its continual dependence on conflict for survival tends paint theatre that is being exercised in conflict zones in a negative shade. The next chapter shall focus on a critical analysis of the two main plays of this study and how they manage to mirror human rights abuses in the two countries.

CHAPTER 3

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Imagine residing within a lawless community where it's a risky exploit to linger outside when the sunsets. Each night your heartbeat dances to the rhythms of fear as you are constantly forced to endure the high frequency decibels of screams coming from unsuspecting travelers on the streets who have fallen prey to robbers and the gasping sounds of defenseless community members drowning in their own blood after failing to meet the loan sharks' deadlines. Your safety within the neighborhood is only guaranteed by your adherence to silence. Already there is more than enough evidence of the consequences that come with one voicing and advocating for an end to such gruesome acts ,from disappearances, torture and social restrictions imposed by the most feared community mafia that inhibits one from trading and interacting with fellow community members. The law enforcement agents are reluctant to the deteriorating state in the neighborhood, all they care about are fat envelopes filled with bank notes coming from the local gangsters, a sign that they will not interfere with the ongoing vile activities. One day the community members infuriated and fond with all the chaos unite to take matters into their own hands to cleanse the neighborhood of all evils. With determined effort both the old and young pluck off the rotten elements in the community and once more sanity is restored.

The above illustration attempts to highlight how both Zimbabwe and Palestine have been operating in the area of human rights violation. For decades the two nations have lived in silence motivated by fear while being inhibited from the enjoyment of the fundamental rights of humanity. From backdrops were torture, violence, corruption, abductions and restrictions form the national fabrics, theatre has emerged as a powerful voice to rebuke the existing human rights abuse evils with the sole aim of restoring sanity. In this chapter textual analysis shall be made to the two plays Super Patriots and Morons and There is a Field on how they have managed to unearth human rights violations. A comparison of the two plays which seem detached based on their different countries of origin is a justification to how universal the subject of human rights is. This section shall also highlight the synopsis and themes of the two plays while bringing into application the proposed theories.

3.1 CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF SELECTED PLAYS

SUPER PATRIOTS AND MORONS

Written by: Raisedon Baya and Leonard Matsa

Genre: Political Satire

Year of release/publication: 2003

Produced by: Rooftop Promotions

SYNOPSIS

The political satire revolves around the story of an old African dictator in an unnamed country who is leading a nation that is facing numerous economic challenges ranging from food shortages, corruption. The leader will not stop at anything in preserving his stay in power despite the visible indications that he is now unpopular. Using his number one henchman who goes by name Bazooka he installs fear among the ordinary citizens with the intentions of thwarting any form of uprising. Through torture, manipulation of the existing legal framework and murder he preserves his personal interests. When he least expects to be questioned for his carnal deeds, he is confronted by Shami a pregnant citizen who is fond of the depreciating state of things in the nation, Shami's intention is to submit a petition to the Super Patriot with the anticipation that this might be a noble move that might foster the much anticipated change but little does she realize that this awakens the Super Patriot's hostility who then sends out Bazooka to bring her in for interrogation. What follows is the true exposure of the Super Patriot's carnal personality when he goes on to sacrifice an innocent soul from among his loyalties just to make sure that he is not threatened any further in his rule.

Super Patriots and Morons was the first play to be banned in Zimbabwe in 2004 by the board of censors based on the Censorship and Entertainment Control Act (Chapter 10:04) after its tour of

the nation's ten provinces. Following its ban in Zimbabwe the play went on a regional tour and only resurfaced in Zimbabwe in April 2016. According to Muguwu (2016) 'the play's first stint at the Edinburgh Festival in 2007 earned it the Freedom of expression Award. Super Patriots is the first play to be banned in independent Zimbabwe, the first Zimbabwean production to be presented at the South African Market theatre and the first production to also grace the stage of the newly erected Theatre in the Park space in 2016.

3.2 THERE IS A FIELD

Written by: Jane Marlowe

Genre: Documentary-style

Year of release/publishing: 2010

SYNOPSIS

There is a field follows through the real life story of one Palestinian teenager by the name Aseel Asleh who was shot dead by the Israeli police in the year 2000 when he did not represent any threat or danger to the law enforcement agents while attending a demonstration. His family seeks justice against the perpetrators but their case for the simple reason that they are Palestinians is swept beneath the carpet. Throughout the play Aseel's voice stands as an immortalized insignia that attempts to strike a balance between the advocacy of human rights for fellow Palestinian Arabs while on the other extreme it lobbies for tolerance and peace with the historic rival of the Palestinian nation (Israel). Aseel's dream as echoed in the play is to see the dawn of an era in which both parties are sensitive to the ideals of human rights irrespective of the differences they uphold politically or socially

Regan (2010) recounts how in October 2010 Jen Marlowe after completing the first draft of the script There is a field posted it to interested theatre companies around the world to perform as an

an expression of solidarity with the people of Palestine. The play was performed in over 40 cities in 18 countries and it was also translated into 18 languages. During the global theatrical call to action Zimbabwe was privileged to herald the production with NKM theatre spearheaded by Zimbabwean theatre director/playwright Blessing Hungwe leading the initiative in association with the Embassy of the State of Palestine.

3.3.0 THEMES

1. INEQUALITY

In both plays a portrayal of inequality is highlighted, in *Super Patriots* and *Morons the Patriot's* number one henchman Bazooka after being given an order to bring in Shami for interrogation because according to them she is inciting the masses into rebellion, Bazooka gives a number of excuses among them questioning how they would find a right charge to pin her upon as a justification for her arrest. When the Super Patriot comes to the realization that Bazooka does not want to pose any harm on an innocent citizen he threatens to unearth the series of crimes that Bazooka did on behalf of the party which might see him losing his job and facing the full wrath of the law which leads to him consenting to the arrest of Shami who is simply advocating for the restoration of order and sanity in the economic and political fronts. The inequality comes when one places it under the backdrop of the law, firstly one must note that no-one is above the law even the Head of State but in the play he seems to have immunity and it is him who decides who is guilty and who is not despite him having committed many atrocities than the people whom he is labeling as terrorists. Shami an ordinary citizen who endures the toils of queuing for necessities is now a criminal all because she has decided to submit a petition to the head of state while in the play the antagonist who has killed and buried people in disused mines leads a free life where he continually exercises his atrocities. In the play *There is a Field* the subject on inequality is brought to view when Aseel's father Hassan recounts how Agricultural subsidies in his early years were given to Jewish farms and denied to Arab farms. In accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the supreme subject of the document is the preservation of human life so by denying a given group of people the right to take part in economic activities for self-

sustenance while granting the other group a privileged position, inequality is explicitly highlighted.

SIMILAR DOCUMENTED CASES ON INEQUALITY

Tendi (2016) alludes to how in the mid 1990s the two directors of the Central Intelligence Organisation ,ShadreckChipanga and LovemoreMukandi were now becoming corrupt elements within the institution. However, there is no documented evidence that the two were ever brought to book to account for their actions before the law of justice save for Mukandi who fled to Canada out of his own bidding on the basis of fraud. On the contrary, Zimbabwe's opposition groups which advocate for nothing but accountability, justice and human rights are demonized and labeled as imperialist instruments of regime change and in cases where they are brought before the law they don't get to partake of the simple liberties of humanity which include exemption from torture, violence or any form of inhuman treatment which are liberties enjoyed by rivals from the ruling party who would have committed the same crimes as them. In addition to the above, the centralization of power in Zimbabwe poses a great threat to the preservation of human rights and the subject of equality, Robert Mugabe holds the offices of President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Commander in Chief of the Zimbabwe defense forces, Chancellor of all Universities and the first secretary of the ruling party Zanu Pf among many other portfolios which guarantees his immunity and continual stay in power.

The Palestinian case is more amplified than the Zimbabwean one in the face of the subject of inequality as it covers inequality before the law and inequality in economic exploits, with an Apartheid wall visibly set to separate the Arab Palestinians and the Israeli Jews. As mirrored in the play *There is a Field*, Hassan who is the father of Aseel the 17 year old victim of police brutality states that the Arabs are denied Agricultural subsidies which the Jews get to enjoy, a move which might be meant to totally paralyze the economic exploits of the Arabs. While the play gives an insight into the theme of inequality in Palestine on the subject of economic freedom in reality inequality is even broader as highlighted by Othman (2007:7)

'Access to education and jobs discriminates clearly against the Palestinian indigenous population and allocation of state money for urban planning largely excludes or discriminates against Palestinian areas'

2. REDRESSING OF GENDER IMBALANCE

As opposed to situations where most plays have male protagonists the two texts have female main characters who are fighting for the preservation of human rights, their male counterparts are just coming in to support the movement. In *There is a Field*, Nardeen, Aseel's sister is the main voice, she is forced to gulp down the reality of her brother's death who has been shot by the Israel forces yet she finds strength to join the Jewish community in her health occupation where she is daily confronted by hostile situations while at the same time making efforts to bring justice for the Arab Palestinians through the organization of demonstrations and the signing of petitions. On the other extreme in *Super Patriots*, Shami is the one who brainstorms the idea of writing down a petition to the Super Patriot, the other male figures including Looksmart a jobless University graduate chicken away from the suggestion. However, this theme of redressing of gender imbalance as highlighted by the two plays inasmuch as it has made an attempt in elevating women on an equal playing field with their male counterparts still bears some subtle tones of male supremacy, firstly though Nardeen is the main voice, Aseel though dead is immortalized through the course of the whole play, he is the one who preaches unity, peace, justice and tolerance until the end even in his death while Nardeen after some attempts of seeking justice finally decides not to take part in any activism for Palestinian rights just because no visible change is taking place, a typical portrayal of the social construct of gender where women are perceived to be weak, lacking the masculine abilities to endure the demands of a decided action. On the other extreme in *Super Patriots* it is important to note that while Sham stands as a replica of a vigilant woman who can fight for her own rights and be in a position to stir fellow citizens into action against the rule of the Super Patriot, the playwright serves to

suggest she is not a human figure but a personification of the long forgotten ideals of independence which might be loosely interpreted as being Zimbabwean crying for recognition in a system which is illiterate to the values of human rights. Below in an excerpt from Scene 7 of *Super Patriots and Morons* to validate the above finding where Shami after being abducted by Bazooka her full identity is unveiled.

BAZOOKA: I'm not surprised. That teacher had coward written all over him from the word go. Anyway, you can go if that's all. (Looksmart does not leave, instead he hands the file to Bazooka) What is this?

LOOKSMART: (sneaking a glance at Shami) It's her file, delivered from headquarters.

Bazooka smiles victorious as he reads the file

BAZOOKA: Name..Shami Victory WaBantu. Home Address Number 28 Independent Street. Date of birth. 18th April 1980.

With the above quote from *Super Patriots and Morons*, one can take note that from the file read by Bazooka, Shami's full name bears Zimbabwe's three major languages which are Shona(Shami) English(Victory) and Ndebele(WaBantu),her home address is bordered closely to the year and day Zimbabwe got its Independence on 18 April 1980. In this scope one is compelled to conclude that on the theme of placing gender balance in the play, the text falls short as Shami serves to suggest that she is nothing but a personification of the nation's independence hence leaving the play with one outstanding male character in the form of the teacher who refuses to sign the Super Patriot's confession to the point of committing suicide.

SUPER PATRIOTS AND MORONS AND THERE IS A FIELD: A FORESIGHT OF WOMEN'S ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN MAINSTREAM HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCACY

It is not a strange phenomenon to come across iconic figures of women who have championed the preservation of human rights. History has records of people like Harriet Tubman 'the Black

Moses' who challenged the oppressive system of her time by creating the Underground Railroad which freed hundreds of slaves. Maya Angelou within the cradles of American history also spoke of the Black person's emancipation from the shackles of racial discrimination through her speeches and literary works. As proven by the stated examples, women have been central just like their male counterparts in advocating for the fundamental rights of humanity. The playwrights of the two plays formulating this study as if driven by a deep foresight which can be argued to be inspired by luck, coincidence or by some form of critical analysis of the prevailing situations of human rights abuses in their countries at the time of writing managed to predict an era in which women would join the mainstream fight for justice in conspicuous ways without fear of being victimized. In *There is a Field*, there is the outspoken character of Nardeen fighting for justice to prevail after the death of her brother Aseel who was shot by the police, there is also the character of Jamilia Aseel's mother who will not stop at anything to announce her high tempered personality's visibility in front of a law enforcement agent after the death of her son even if it means bluntly exposing their evils in public. In *Super Patriots and Morons* there is the character of Shami who is determined to bring an end to the nation's mismanagement by organizing a demonstration and submitting a petition to the Super Patriot.

The two plays contain characters' experiences identically bordered on their countries of origin's real life experiences which unfolded years after they had been written. Firstly in *Super Patriots and Morons*, there is the character of Shami who is detained without trial by the Super Patriot's special branch for inciting the masses. She is made to endure psychological and physical pain after being dragged away from the comfort of her home in the odd hours of the night to be forced to recant her position and expose some of her associates. Four years down the line after the unveiling of the play *Zimbabwe Peace Projects* national director Jestina Mukoko is detained without trial for over 80 days in 2008 for the cooked-up reason that she was organizing a youth militia aimed at overthrowing the democratically elected government while in reality she was documenting accounts of gross human rights violations within Zimbabwe. Like Shami in the play, Jestina is arrested within the odd hours of the morning and is also forced to recant her position and accept the cooked-up case that she was indeed propagating national unrest. Below is Jestina's account as documented at the Oslo Freedom Forum (2012)

“I woke up on December the 3rd (2008) at the crack of dawn to the invasion of unknown men who were armed...this all happened in front of my son who was 17 at the time and I was taken away in my nightclothes...the 21 days I was incommunicado my abductors extracted a false confession . I was accused of recruiting on behalf of the Movement for Democratic Change led by Morgan Tsvangirai who would be trained in neighbouring Botswana before they would return to Zimbabwe to commit acts of sabotage, terrorism and overthrow a democratically elected government...”

According to Zayas (2005) among the relevant international norms of human rights, reference can be made to Article 9 of the Universal Declaration of Human rights which states that “No one shall be subject to arbitrary arrest, detention or torture”. With this in mind the case of Jestina Mukoko and many other human rights advocates who like Shami have been detained without trial as mirrored in the play *Super Patriots and Morons* was not handled in a legal way in accordance to the international code of which Zimbabwe is one of the signatories.

In the play *There is a Field* the characters of Nardeen and Jamilia seek justice for Aseel’s death who was shot point blank by the Israeli police with the latter openly rebuking the police in public, a move which is followed by threats of abduction and the withdrawal of her economic freedoms. In proceeding years identical cases of justice seekers being threatened or getting arrested have been unearthed in Palestine, one notable incident is alluded to by Haifawai (2016) where a human rights activist/photographer/poet Daren Tatour spent close to six months under arrest in 2015 for incitement with the main thread of evidence pinning for her arrest being a poem that she posted on the facebook social network which alluded to the killing of one Palestinian human rights activist by the Israeli forces.

With the above stated examples of the visible roles of women in championing human rights, the issue that remains is one that questions theatre on its exact nature in the progression of the human rights subject, firstly, Is theatre a time-traveler that can race through the corridors of the political space and predict accounts years before they take place or is it just a fortunate hitchhiker in the course of events privileged to calculate how certain events in human rights activism shall

take shape? The best way to answer these questions will be a reference to the playwrights themselves who are within the systems that are stomping on human rights, through the developed art of observation, research and encounters with acts of gross human abuses, they stand a chance of accurately predicting how the systems shall develop in the future the same way sailors know where and when the ship shall dock depending with the tempest.

3. POLITICIZATION OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE SECTOR AND POLICE

Another theme which appears in both *There is a Field* and *Super Patriots and Morons* is the theme of politicization of the police force. In *Super Patriots and Morons*, the character of Bazooka is labeled as belonging to the special branch which is bordered on the Central Intelligence Organization of Zimbabwe, surprisingly Bazooka on different occasions chants the Super Patriot Party slogan to express his allegiance to it while on the other extreme in *There is a Field* an Israeli police officer who kills the 17 year old Aseel kills him for two reasons, firstly for the reason that ‘he is demonstrating’ and secondly because he is a Palestinian and not a Jew in accordance to the dictates of the higher Israeli powers meant at exterminating the Palestinians from their homeland for their own benefit and resettlement. In all the two cases the interference of the authorities in power is explicitly drawn. Such interference poses a greater challenge to the human rights preservation as the intelligence and police sector instead of striking a balance in the execution of their duties find themselves bearing a double standard in which they pay homage to the ruling political party and tend to have a bias towards it. The dual nature of the Zimbabwean security sector that came as a result of politicization is best described by Chung (2007)

‘...the security department played the dual role of providing protection while at the same time spying on the person who are being protected’

Bazooka in *Super Patriots* seems concerned with the protection of the nation’s peace from the external machinations of the imperialists but the moment he goes back into the presence of the Super Patriot he furnishes him with information on potential threats from the citizens. On the

other extreme the Israeli forces who are suppose to safeguard the interests of both Jews and Arabs seem reluctant when it comes to protecting the Arab Palestinians as evidenced by how they don't take up the case of the murder of Aseel with haste, their defenses are raised only when the political interests of the Israeli government are at stake where they appear to shower the subjects with threats of disappearances. Below is an excerpt from There is a Field outlining the incident in which Jamilia lashes out on a Israeli police officer after the death of her son who later on pays an unannounced visit her work station superior with words laden with threats hinting on the theme of politicization of the police force as another inhibiting component in the enjoyment of human rights.

NARDEEN

Mom becomes a battle machine. A policeman parks in front of our shop one day.

JAMILIA

What is your car doing in front of our shop? Move your fucken car! What are you doing in this village anyway?

NARDEEN

The police go to the principal were she teaches.

POLICE OFFICER

Look. I think you owe it to her to listen to me, because she has a lot to lose. We don't have nothing to lose. She thinks we won't dare arrest her? We could and we could do it in the middle of the night where nobody is there to protect her or demonstrate...

The police officer in the above text threatens Nardeen not in a singular term like 'I' but rather he resorts to the use of the plural 'we' which serves to imply that him and the entire Israeli law enforcement body are one in mission and purpose and a further examination of the conversation

shows that the police officer is acquainted with Aseel's family details but rather instead of using that same set of intelligence which they applied in gathering data on Aseel's family in identifying the murderer of Aseel they decide to sweep all the facts and evidence under the carpet which shows how politicized they have been by the Israeli system which has a firm hatred for the Palestinian Arabs. In explaining why the police force must not take any political side in the discharge of its duties Wetzel (2012) states

“...in our line of work, it is vital that we demonstrate a commitment to public service to all without any bias or slightest hint of favouritism. When organizations that represent us take positions on candidates, they compromise our mission.”

With the police force caught in the midst of politicization and the propagation of inequality which both compromise the preservation of human rights, the next step which it takes in thwarting any form of uprising completely breaks its sanity as the entrusted body of law enforcement and that is the subject of the use of torture.

4. TORTURE

Firstly in defining torture one can point out that this is the way of interrogation used by authorities in power to gather information or intelligence, through the inflicting of pain or the disorientation of the state of mind. Costanzo and Gerrity (2009) classify torture as 'one of the most extreme forms of human violence, resulting in both physical and psychological consequences'. In addition to aiding in extracting information and intelligence torture techniques are monopolized to act as an open rebuke to all individuals who would wish to take the same path of action that might be deemed as being terrorist in nature or retrogressive to the operations of the government.

Torture as a theme in both *Super Patriots and Morons* and *There is a Field* is highly visible, in the latter play the character of Hassan recounts past episodes to his family where he was electrocuted, punched and painfully pushed in the most intimate body parts within the Israeli prisons. On the other extreme in *Super Patriots and Morons* another dimension of torture is exposed which is psychological torture in which Bazooka upon detaining Shami he forces her

into a confession and at the instruction of the Super Patriot he tells her how the Special Branch operates through the disappearances of close relatives if she does not expose some of her associates in the so called mission of dethroning the democratically elected government.

Purpose of highlighting torture in the plays' texts

Besides painting a gruesome picture of human rights activists being emotionally and physically wrenched apart at the mercy of corrupt systems in torture chambers the playwrights seem to propose a greater purpose of including torture as a theme in the plays' texts. The purpose might be best drawn by an illustration.

Within the cradles of fertile imaginations one can envision him/ herself on a mountain pinnacle, there the valley blends well with the stretching rivers and the grass and trees seem like they are all threaded together. As one climbs down the mount perspectives change the once seemingly unified vegetation is detached and everything is all but to itself. Within the top leadership of the Israeli and Zimbabwean government it might seem like a justified effort to expose individuals to inhuman treatment with the aim of safeguarding government interests but a stroll down into the objectives and intentions of the same human rights activists gives the authorities a fresh understanding of what really they are fighting for while at the same time exposing the leadership's evil, however an acknowledgement of the human rights' state of mind is not a thing that any government infringing human rights is ready to embrace. In this scope theatrical plays since they bear entertainment elements and are highly engaging mentally and physically to both the participant and consumer they get to give those who are involved an opportunity to see how gross their evils are at close range in the world of the play while giving alternative avenues for positive reformation. To amplify on the power of theatre as a tool that can eradicate human rights abuses one can allude to Nawaz (2016) who states that:

The theatre literary creates the world in which we live. Theatre has the potential to significantly change lives and create awareness

3.4 THEORETICAL APPLICATION ON THE SELECTED PLAY TEXTS

3.4.1 Cultivation theory analysis

As stated in the earlier chapter of this study the cultivation theory which was coined by George Gerbner has it that some form reality can be molded by exposure to a given artwork, in this case theatrical productions. Making reference to the play *There is a Field* one can argue and state that the details of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and events of October 2000 were unknown save for the condensed versions of information disseminated by the media. Through exposure and repetition of the performance of *There is a field* worldwide in what came to be known as The Global Theatrical Call to action in 2010 which saw theatre companies in 18 countries of 40 cities performing the play in solidarity with the people of Palestine masses were enlightened on the nature human rights abuses in the Middle Eastern conflict through the deceased Aseel's letters and emails which were formulated into a play. Zimbabwean audiences benefited from the heralding of the play as *There is a Field* in the same year was taken to the city of Chitungwiza at Young Africa Skills centre courtesy of the Palestinian embassy and Ndiripo Kana Muripo (N.K.M) theatre initiative. In the Zimbabwean play *Super Patriots and Morons* the cultivation theory in the face of the study of human rights violation comes into scope when one considers how the play was heralded in the nation's ten provinces and due to exposure to the text, theatre consumers started to question the existing leadership's approach on human rights this explains why a year later after its release it became the first play to be banned in Zimbabwe a factor which might be attributed to its rippling influence.

3.4.2 AUDIENCE RECEPTION THEORY ANALYSIS

The theory explains the communication model which is based on encoding/decoding. Stuart Hall states that there are three ways through which receivers decode messages which are:

1. Hegemonic
2. Negotiated
3. Oppositional

While in the premiere of the two plays that are anchored on human rights it can be argued that the audience adopted a dominant hegemonic position where they were in agreement with the content of the plays and its surface meaning as evidenced by how in *Super Patriots and Morons* no hostilities were directed towards the producers in its tour of the provinces as it possibly seemed to be a simple political satire bordered on no particular individual while in *There is a Field* the play was embraced simply as a Palestinian story as it suggested from the surface, one can note that later on the audience adopted a negotiated position where one is able to make sense of the sender's message within the context of societal views. This is explicitly drawn in *Super Patriots* where after its national tour the authorities rather than classifying it as an innocent piece of art later on related it to the country's leadership and deemed it unworthy of being heralded which finally culminated in its ban. In oppositional view the audiences understand the text and its intended meaning but rather reject it and come with a different viewpoint. In *There is a field*, the issue rests upon the human rights violations in Palestine but rather with the progression of time organizations like the Centre for Constitutional Rights in America (2016) has decided to relate it to the human rights advocacy for African American rather than the initial rights of Palestinian Arabs.

3.4.3 MARXIST THEORY

The Marxist theory coined by Karl Max has it that images are not innocent, it states that the images are filled with a narrative meant to monopolize the way of thinking of a given people and central within this theory are the ones who control the means of production. In applying this theory to the two plays one can state that though Jen Marlowe the playwright of *There is a Field* mirrored the carnal acts of the Israeli forces there is a subtle yet powerful meaning that is being sent out by the play which feeds on American capitalist interests. Firstly it must be noted that Jen Marlowe is of Jewish American origin and the probability is wide that her allegiance lies with the Capitalist State hence *There is a field* is nothing but a sensational portrayal of the conflict which depicts Palestinians as weak in the eyes of the oppressor while at the same time feeding the carnal nature of the Israeli forces which have strong ties with the American government as being strong and brutal. On the other extreme *Super Patriots* can be argued as being an imperialist agenda powered by donor funding to downplay the government structures.

3.5 ARTISTIC STRUCTURES OF THE PLAYS

3.5.1 OPEN ENDEDNESS

While in *Super Patriots and Morons* the play ends with the antagonist still clinging on to power even after killing innocent people and unlawfully detaining citizens whom he labels as terrorists. *There is a Field* also ends unexpectedly with Nardeen progressing with life even though her brother's murderers are free. The impact of such an artistic approach is to create a continuous thought process for the audience to find out possible solutions to the play's conflict by so doing when confronted with identical struggles in real life, human rights violations in this case they can apply the same set of alternative solutions. This artistic structure does not confine a play to a textbook or a performance space but it expands further to resonate with everyday life.

3.5.2 SYMBOLISM

Amidst hostile environments where it's seemingly grave to openly expose a government's human rights violations and risk being detained or worse off tortured, symbolism which is a literature device where an object or being is used to represent something aids in evading persecution. In *Super Patriots* there is no explicit naming of individuals who are at the forefront of human rights abuses, rather what the authorities use to pin down the production are similarities with real life people and experiences. To justify the artistic power of symbolism Muzari (2016) in a state controlled paper (*The Herald*) announced the return of *Super Patriots and Morons* in the new Theatre in the Park venue even though it had been banned in 2004, the probability is wide that the arts editor of the paper saw nothing within the play that could pose a challenge to the government system as everything was hidden under the guise of symbolism or rather he knew the threat it had posed in downplaying the ruling party but basing on the fact that the majority of what the play mirrored were outdated events of the year 2003 which had no relevance anymore to the year 2016. However if this is true, the editor failed to realize that much of what the play illustrated were still ongoing acts of human rights violations in Zimbabwe. To announce the return of a theatrical production bordered on the government cruelties in a state controlled paper can be best likened to giving an opposition party the platform to announce its manifesto before a

grand election on the ruling party's premise. On the other extreme There is a Field encompasses symbolism in the way that its titled and how some of its characters are named just like in Super Patriots and Morons to prompt the audience/ reader to decipher the hidden codes.

Symbolism in the play's titles and character names

There is a field:

There is a field is a title extracted from the ancient philosopher Rumi's poem from the book *Rumi's Book on Love*. Through the course of the play the title appears twice, the third time it appears in the final act but in an indirect way when Aseel and Nardeen part ways. The first encounter with the phrase is when the character of Reem seeks advice on how to handle identity crisis in the face of choosing between being a Palestinian Arab (her original identity) and being an Israeli (an Israeli government imposed identity). Aseel in response, points Reem to a symbolic field where all humanity can learn to break the racial divide which comes with checkpoints and live in harmony without paying attention to the other's identity. In the second encounter the phrase re-surfaces when Jamilia who is Aseel's mother laments over the death of Aseel and the killing of other Palestinians by the Israeli forces in violation of the fundamental rights of humanity. Aseel as in the case of Reem comes in with the phrase to point Jamilia to a symbolic field where non-militant ways of solving conflict and restoring human rights are encouraged. From a literal standpoint 'a field' is a place characterized by agricultural production and it is also a place of serenity as it is usually secluded from the noisome struggles of city life, from a field mankind communes with nothing but nature, there one can take a leaf of what it means to be at peace. Since antiquity the economic spine of the Middle East has been built on land, the ongoing conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelite community emerged as a result of struggles over control of land. The question that now transcends is towards which field is the character of Aseel leading to that knows not of warfare, murder, unlawful displacement, torture and racial segregation between the Arabs and Jews? When one takes note that Aseel as a name means 'deep rooted' and when one also takes into scope that Aseel belonged to the Seeds of Peace an Arab-Israeli co-existence camp it becomes clear that he is pointing to a deep rooted belief in an era that is peaceful where humanity collectively treasure life and pay homage to human rights.

As an active participant of Seeds of Peace though his life has been taken by the bullet, he falls down hinged on hope. Like a seed thrown in a field, Aseel believes that his life shall one day germinate into a justification of why the world needs peace in resolving conflict.

One can also note that the opening scene of the play presents the song *Changes* which was written by the late rhythm and poetry (Rap) artist Tupac Shakur whom according to Westhoff (2011) was inspired by Bruce Hornsby who provided a template for Tupac to work around with from his 1986's album which was titled 'The way it is'. It can be suggested that the placement of the song by the playwright into the text was not by coincidence, there are many artists who preceded and came after the legendary rapper whose works could have been blended together with the text but rather out of the pool Marlowe selects Tupac. Such a selection criteria is of symbolic importance for two reasons. Firstly Tupac was known as a champion of social justice especially among the Black people in the face of human rights violation, in cooperating the artist's song into the opening scene sets the tone and mood of the play and gives the art piece's consumer an insight of what to expect, in this case themes centered around human rights violation. Secondly there are lines of similarities to be drawn between Tupac and the protagonist Aseel as both were not apologetic of coming from unfavorable backgrounds and situations to challenge the areas where they felt injustice being exercised and both died through gunshots for standing out for what they believed in. The writer by resurrecting the memories of Tupac through his song was symbolically highlighting how global the subject of human rights violations is, as it is not a subject unique to the Palestinians under Israeli rule, hence indirectly calling for a global action to eradicate it.

Super Patriots and Morons

The title of the play *Super Patriots and Morons* sarcastically mirrors the political-economic order of an unnamed African country in the sense that The Super Patriot is the one who is leading a decaying economy that does not uphold human rights while the Morons (dull minded) are the ones who are castigating corruption and the abuse of other fundamental human rights as the root causes of the economy's failure. In a seemingly comical stance, through the course of the play, its only The Super Patriot and his shadow Bazooka who label themselves as the Super

Patriots rather than wait for the citizens who elected them into power to accord them such a status.

When one examines the word 'Super' it can be noted to point to a being or object that possesses extra-ordinary abilities. The word is usually synonymous with comic strips characters of superheroes and super villains that have an air of immortality or invincibility. The playwright by coining the antagonist of the play as The Super Patriot he was suggesting in a symbolic manner the inevitability of the aging African dictator who is continuously clinging on to power despite the fact that he has failed to lead the nation that is now ailing politically, economically and its observation of the fundamental rights of humanity.

Within the play there is a character named Bazooka who is the Super Patriot's right hand man, he is labeled as belonging to the Special Branch of the government which can be loosely interpreted as meaning the Intelligence Agency. The name 'Bazooka' derives from a destructive rocket launcher. Having someone at the helm of the intelligence system who has a name that triggers imaginations of war and total destruction might a symbolic approach implying that the agency among its other assignments has a hand directly or indirectly in the disappearance of perceived threats.

Another important example of symbolism is when Looksmart, a new youth militia recruit is sent to government square to deliver a letter to a group of unnamed officials on the command of the Super Patriot. In handing over the letter to Looksmart the Super Patriot explicitly gives the description of the government building which is identified by the code 666. From the surface it just seems like an innocent description but when brought against the backdrop of theological scholars the number 666 is associated with the devil or antichrist. In this scope the writer suggests that the government as identified by the mentioned numbers is a diabolical institution destined to bring about destruction at all costs even if it means violating certain human rights. Further in the play Looksmart who has been sent to the government building 666 is reported to have been consumed in a pre-planned bombing, Bazooka upon questioning why the Super Patriot sacrificed such an innocent soul the Super Patriot reluctantly asks Bazooka if he had never seen

revolutions that eat their own children. Through symbolism the writer in a subtle manner portrays how carnal the established government institutions have grown in stomping on the fundamental human rights, however on the other extreme the playwrights place a balance which suggests that in the current leadership in Zimbabwe it's not all black as there are other individuals who despite having past records of taking part in atrocious acts on behalf of the party still find it within themselves to move in solidarity with champions of justice, these beings prove that like water which has a boiling limit which it cannot surpass, humanity has a given level of tolerance and compliance which if reached he or she cannot go any further. In Bazooka the number one henchman of the Super Patriot such a trait is noted, despite being involved in a series of abductions, corruption and spying on behalf of the Super Patriot Party, upon realizing that The Super Patriot is the brain behind the bombing which killed the innocent and youthful Looksmart is portrayed as finally being uncomfortable with the Super Patriot's actions and finally makes a stance which hints on his withdrawal from the party and service from the Special branch.

3.5.3 ALLUSION TO HISTORIC ICONS

Through the course of the two plays reference is made to historical figures, in Super Patriots and Morons the Super Patriot labels himself as the 'black Moses', meaning to say that since the office of Moses from the biblical times was divine and could not be challenged by any human power so was his to prove his indispensability. In There is a field allusion is made to Jalal ad-Dim Mohammad a Persian mystic poet born in 1207 whose writing of the poem There is a Field forms the nucleus of the play. According to Ciabaratti (2014) 'so powerful was Rumi's influence that people from different religions came to his funeral in 1273'. He spoke of unity, love and tolerance in a remarkable way. In such explosive days where the people in the West Bank and Gaza do not have basic structures to support them in their daily exploits as a result of displacement, where scores of children like Dima al Wawi are placed in prison irrespective of the Israeli law discouraging the arrest of children under 14 as stressed by Silver (2016). Rumi amidst such a backdrop speaks of love, including him in the text of the play would mean that the text would relate with a wider base including those within the top helms of the oppressors to foster a

dispensation were the fundamental human rights irrespective of class race and ethnicity come first and all differences are peacefully resolved. The same approach of non violence towards conflict resolution is the one that is upheld by RastonBharucha as explained in chapter two of the study.

3.6 AN EFFECTIVE THEATRICAL APPROACH TO END HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

While Super Patriots and Morons returned to grace the Zimbabwean stage in 2016 after over a decade long ban and There is a field is continuously heralded in institutions of higher learning in the United States of America to trumpet a call for justice, real change and the observation of human rights can never take root as long as such texts are presented before the same set of consumers who desire to see the same change. Involving political leadership more and more in the consummation of such texts which are afterward crowned with discussions hinged on how best human rights can be observed stands at a greater advantage of achieving more in this respect. One argument that can be raised in this respect is that no political dispensation whether wrong or right is willing to give in for the betterment of the other, even through the use of more creative and engaging avenues like theatre. To best tackle this obstacle one can blend the voice of theatre and the one of a proverbial Shakur (1994) who stated:

“I am not saying that I am going to change the world. But I guarantee I will spark the brain that will change the world”

Efforts in the engagement of the top leadership might seem to be null and void but a repeated course of action if it positively affects one who belongs to a contrasting viewpoint then the probability is wider that the preservation of the fundamental right of humanity is indeed a possibility.

3.7 RESEARCH FINDINGS

To have an appreciation of human rights violations in Zimbabwe a research was carried out among three age groups which included the youths who according to Zimbabwe’s Ministry of Youth Indigenization and Economic Empowerment are people who fall between the ages of 15 and 35years, adults between 36 and 64 years and the elderly people from the ages of 65 years

and beyond. The sampling was done in Zimbabwe's three cities namely Harare, Gweru and Zvishavane. Through a series of interviews, questioners and reference to published articles, data was gathered on the subject to find out what people think encompass human rights violation and also to launch an inquiry on if people saw theatrical productions as effective tools to mirror and reprove human rights violations.

i. INTERVIEWS

The series of interviews were carried out among the three Zimbabwean age groups from different p, each interviewee was interviewed separately, in different date and time settings. To ensure that biase was exterminated in this mode of data gathering interviewees were drawn from different locations, economic backgrounds and sex. The total number of participants was 15.

The main question was on what they understood on the subject of human rights violation, though the answers were given from different viewpoints all of them boiled down to one component which is the inhibition from the enjoyment of life's liberties and opportunities of an individual or a group of people by a given system.

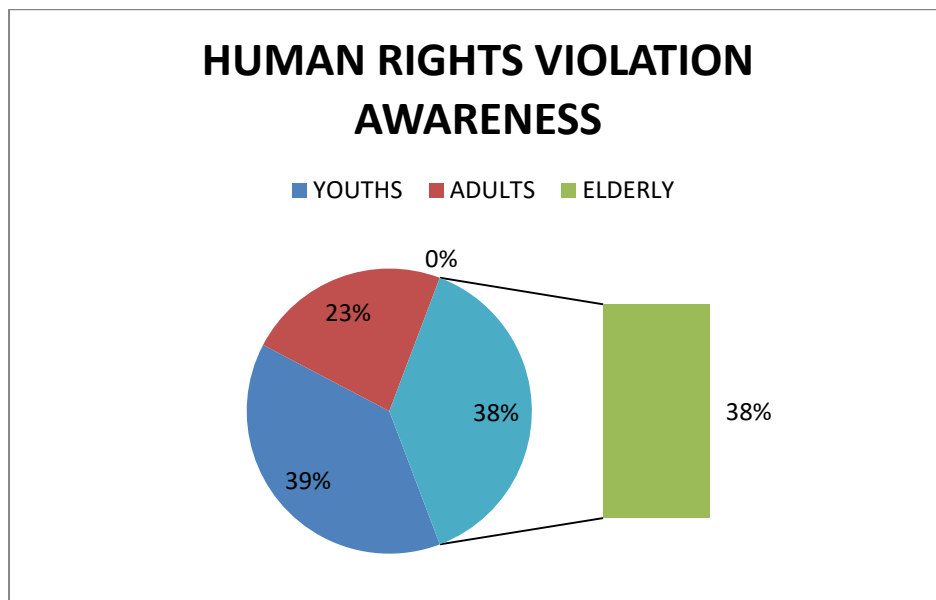


Fig 1 pie chart of interviews outcome on human rights violation awareness

Requested to give examples of human rights violations which they could practically relate to, the outcome of the interviews proved that only two groups consented to such an arrangement these included the youth and the elderly. Such a discovery can be best explained when one points out to the fact that since the youth constitute the active force within any given national set-up, they are the ones who are enlightened on the subject through education and exposure to social media where the call for justice and accountability are constantly trumpeted. The second factor is that the youths in Zimbabwe also constitute the bulk of people who came up close with the bitter hyper inflationary economy of 2008 marked by political violence, this same group also constitutes a greater fraction of unemployed university and college graduates bitter with the failing system so an expression of their grievances comes out with ease.

The other compliant group of the elderly aged from 65years and beyond freely gave examples of human rights violations based on experiences, the rationale behind such free disclosure can be attributed to the fact that this age group constitutes of people who have experienced the two dispensations of political developments in Zimbabwe that were characterized by human rights violations namely:

1. Colonial period-characterized by Rhodesian built detention camps, forced labor and racial segregation.
2. Post Independence (1980-)- characterized by an ailing economy, a mass slaughter of the people in Matebeleland (Gukurahundi) violent elections and police brutality thwarting uprisings.

The elderly group having been exposed to the above stated dispensations which have victimized them in all their efforts of enjoying their liberties since independence might possibly stir feelings of betrayal by a system they placed into power, expressing themselves freely through the interview process might serve the dual role of venting out long harbored discontentment against the government while at the same time partaking in the interview process might be viewed as a gesture of making their voices heard by the authorities with the anticipation that it may foster a positive change.

The remaining group of adults that expressed no interest in taking part in the interview process highlighted the fear of being victimized if they share their opinions. Taking into consideration

that they resemble a reasonable fraction that constitutes the working class, partaking in any politically oriented dialogues might eat up into their economic exploits.

The three groups asked if they viewed theatre as a possible vehicle aiding in the conveying of the fundamental rights of humanity only the youths registered an understanding into the embedded power of theatre and other performance modes with the two groups expressing doubt. The reason behind this feedback may be grounded on the reason being that a protest type of theatre has proved to be a reserve that is only heralded in traditional venues like Theatre in the Park, 7 arts, Charles Austin, Amakhosi and Alliance Francaise which appeals more to a privileged group and the enthusiastic youths within the nation that afford the luxury of transporting to theatre venues that attract a paying audience which in most cases are located a great distance away from the central business district. With the less privileged group in the societies exempted from partaking in the theatre experience, theatre for the majority will be continuously doubted as an effective medium in championing human rights as long as it bears no direct connection with the people it aims to represent.

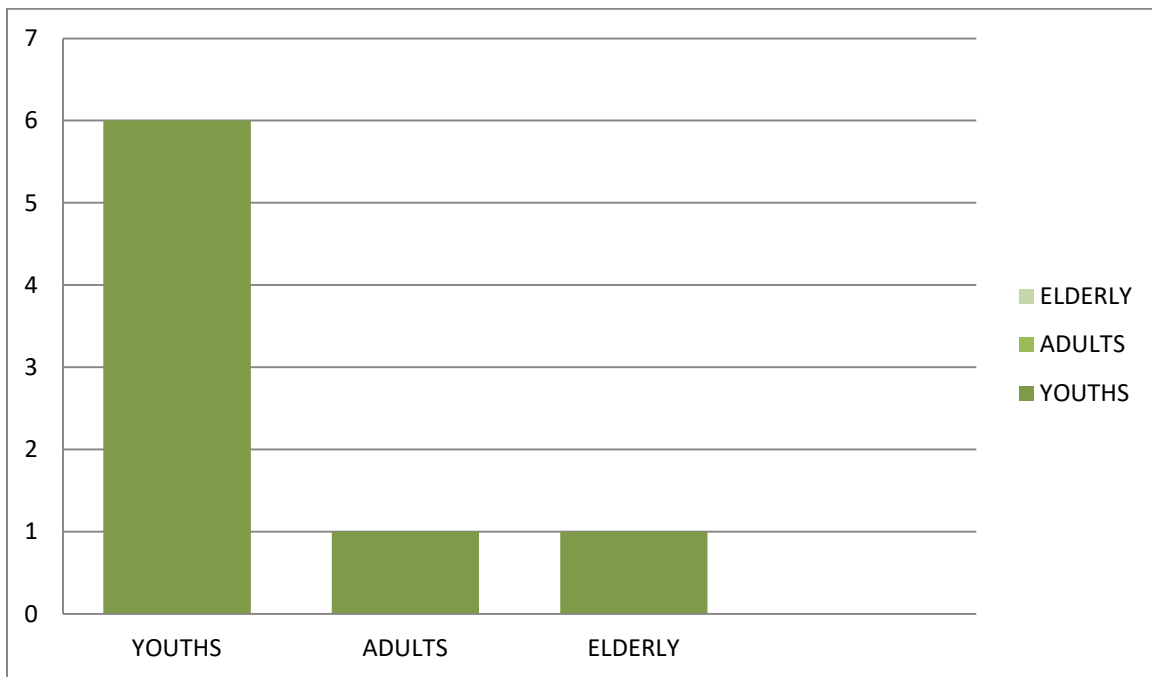


Fig 2 showing the number of people and their age groups who uphold the power of theatre in fostering human rights

ii. QUESTIONNAIRE

A questionnaire was distributed among 6 people, two from each age group stated above, with an equal division of both the males and females. The questionnaire set to inquire the definition of human rights according to the individuals, their knowledge of any theatrical productions that address the subject and how they think theater can effectively shape-shift the viewpoints of those in leadership towards a position where they are sensitive to human rights abuses among many other questions. In total only half consented to attend to the questionnaire while the remainder cited fear of victimization, rather they were comfortable with an interview where anonymity according to them was guaranteed.

The knowledge exhibited by the three participants showed that it is within public knowledge that there are theatrical productions on human rights advocacy; however these productions are not usually heralded in places where the majority of people it seeks to represent are stationed. In situations where these plays are presented amidst huge targeted populations they fail to reach the proposed end because the realm of leadership or decision makers which is usually on the forefront of violating or preserving human rights is not represented within the audience of the play, a situation which can likely foster a change of policy as a result of input gathered from the post-play discussions.

Another striking input from one individual which answered to the question on the definition of human rights was one that crossed the bounds of the most championed freedom of expression. The individual explicitly alluded to the LGBT (Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual and Transsexual) rights which are currently being violated by Zimbabwe's government which does not acknowledge them in its constitution. The participant cited a theatrical production titled *The Loupe* by Mandisi Gobodi and Patience Tawengwa which featured John Pfumojena and Tafadzwa Muzondo where the subject of gay and lesbian rights are alluded to. As per the participant the government of Zimbabwe allowed a play bordered on the controversies of the subject to run for weeks without rebuking it yet it fails to create a simple line of dialogue with those who belong to the LGBT community to have an appreciation of their side of the story rather than throwing hate speeches grounded on negative sensations that are not factually informed.



(Fig 3 *The Loupe at the Theatre in the Park*: on the left Tafadzwa Muzondo playing a homophobic militant brother on the right John Pfumojena playing the persecuted gay sibling)

iii. RECORDED POST PLAY DISCUSSIONS

From the two plays data was gathered from the post-play discussions, the outcome revealed that the audience could relate with the subject of human rights violations in the two countries irrespective of them being performed in countries other than that of their origination. In the performance of *There is a field* in New York one audience member in 2010 gave a remark that proved the universality of the human rights subject.

“What struck me most was the mixed emotion I felt during the reading (There is a field). Sadness about the tragic events, anger that no-one was punished and happiness knowing that Aseel is remembered throughout the world by retelling his story and I was a small part of it”

Barbra G Brooklyn, New York

An audience member who saw the Zimbabwean version of *Super Patriots and Morons* that was presented by the Midlands State University’s department of film and theatre remarked that inasmuch as he related with theme of human rights violations as presented by the play from a Zimbabwean context, the play ripples further to mirror the same crisis that is taking root regionally.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The two plays central in this study carry identical themes, from inequality, the politicization of the police and intelligence sector right up to the subject of torture as, however while There is a field brings in the component of torture as a gross human rights violation from a physical level Super Patriots and Morons propounds further the subject of torture which appears on a psychological level. In this chapter allusion has also been made to highlight how the playwrights' texts have been in harmony with real life accounts of human rights violations. In this chapter the research findings which were done through questioners, interviews and recorded post play discussions revealed that the people know what it means to have their rights violated however most participants withdrew from giving their input based on the reason stirred by fear of victimization. Through the interview process a component of human rights that is abhorred in Zimbabwe which champions the acknowledgement of the *LGBT* community was introduced by one participant stating how in one Zimbabwean theatrical production *The Loupe* the subject of homosexuality was addressed without rebuke from the authorities, yet avenues of dialogue with the government and the community are far from being realized. In, addition this chapter has unveiled that the playwrights' texts are not solely based on imagination but rather they are hinged and inspired with ongoing acts of human rights violations that are taking place in both Zimbabwe and Palestine. The effectiveness of theatre in addressing human rights issues can only be relayed when it is all encompassing of all classes and when it integrates policy and decision makers in the presentations. The final chapter shall tie the loose ends by giving recommendations on how the performance space can be utilized to effectively bring about a consciousness of human rights from an ordinary citizen to those entrusted with positions of leadership within the government hierarchy

CHAPTER 4

4.1 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Theatre and human rights advocacy as revealed in this study have a long relationship that dates back since antiquity, the performance spaces of Greece and the Roman theatre while they provided escapism they also provided a constant check on the authorities that were in power at times reproving them through political satires. Such a communion between theatre and human rights was not confined in Europe only as the African communities through social gatherings could also rebuke the wrongs of those in power under the guise of song and improvised drama sketches. The first chapter also introduced the two plays that have been central in interrogating human rights violations in Zimbabwe and Palestine which are *Super Patriots and Morons* (2003) and *There is a Field*(2010). The rationale behind the selection of the two plays which come from two different countries that seemingly share less in common was grounded on an attempt to try to explain how interconnected and universal the subject of human rights abuses are while at the same time unveiling the different ways in which the abuses come in. The study revealed that while the Palestinian crisis comes from external forces in the form of Israeli settlers spreading their territory on land that belongs to the Palestinians through forceful measures the Zimbabwean crisis on the other hand is characterized by aggression that is growing internally in the form of a government that has stayed for more than three decades in power since independence exercising corruption and unaccountability and to thwart any form of critical opposition it resorts to the use of violence, unlawful detentions without trial and a series of abductions. The first chapter also highlighted the question on how best theatre can be harnessed in the modern age to shape-shift the minds of masses towards an appreciation and upholding of human rights through innovative means.

The second chapter of this study delved deeper into some of the contributions made by scholars on theatre and human rights. While some scholars advocate for a more militant and radical approach of performance that bluntly points to the evils of the government even if it means inciting the masses into a struggle allusion was made to Ghandi who was recorded in

Rosenbohm (2014) as having stated that one must place into practices that which he or she desires to see taking root, meaning to say that if theatre really wishes to foster a consciousness which then aids in the preservation of human rights it must be presented in a peaceful manner that strikes a balance between exposing the governments' evils and avoiding to awaken its hostilities which then discourage fruitful dialogue between the victim and perpetrator. Concurring with Ghandi, Bharucha (2014) makes reference to how non-violence performance can reach the desired goal however he leads to a place greater than a performance space by re-creating the world into a theatre hall where the protagonists are the victims of a given system and the antagonist is the system itself, in this one great imaginary theatre hall the protagonist rather than being visibly militant on the human rights abuses takes a passive stance non violent stunt that is not driven by fear but rather motivated by a desire to send a message to the perpetrators of injustice in silent but effective ways like peaceful demonstrations and hunger strikes. The gap that can be noted from this type of non-violent performance is that the advocates are not guaranteed that their human rights abuse grievances will be addressed by the governments or in worse circumstances their safety is not immune to government's hostilities just because they have taken a non-violent path. Rather a favorable alternative is a form of performance that tries to place the victim and the perpetrator in one space where they can engage in a dialogue, highlighting their differences but mostly areas of common interest mapping ways on how best human rights can be championed to the advantage of both sides. Such a discovery led to a case study of the Seeds of Peace which is a co-existence camp for youths from different nationalities, among them Palestinians and Israelites who have managed to celebrate their diversity as a stepping stone to the preservation of the fundamental rights of humanity.

The third chapter focused on the themes highlighted by the plays (SP) and (TIAF) among them were the issues of inequality, politicization of the police and intelligence sector, the redress of gender imbalance and torture as components of human rights violation. It also unearthed how the playwrights managed to draw their texts from real life experiences rather than from mere imaginations and creative abilities that are usually marred with a lot of inaccuracies in addressing such issues. The employment of certain literary devices like irony, symbolism and

personification can be argued that while they add to the appealing creative structure of the play they also have the role of aiding in evading censorship from the authorities. In the same chapter a survey was carried out which involved people from Zimbabwe's different geographical settings and educational backgrounds (names withheld for confidentiality). The selected groups were called upon to share their understanding of the subject, all the classes expressed awareness of human rights abuses in the nation but a greater fraction was hesitant in giving details as a result of fear of victimization. As part of practical examples given on the subject one participant gave an interesting angle to how the LGBT community has been subjected to harsh criticism by the ruling power without being afforded a platform to share their ideals and convictions publicly in fulfillment of the freedom of expression. The research unveiled that the majority doubted in the power of performing arts in addressing the subject of human rights violations, the only age group that was in support of theatre as a conveyer of such ideals was the youth, this can be attributed to the fact that the theatre productions that are produced that carry the theme of human rights are usually heralded in secluded venues far from the Central Business District making it a bit difficult for the targeted audience to partake of such an experience. The research in this scope revealed that only the youths who are usually associated with being energetic and outgoing could spare the time to go to such distant venues this explains why they express confidence in theatre as a medium of human rights advocacy.

The research attempted to make a stride in investigating human rights violations in Palestine and Zimbabwe paying note at how these fundamental rights can be preserved through performing arts, however a number of factors limited the acquisition of research data as listed below.

4.2 LIMITATIONS

1. Participants withheld information out of fear of victimization.
2. The Palestinian case beyond data captured on the internet and other published documents had nothing to offer in terms of interviews as Palestine is not the geographical location of the researcher.
3. A wider national survey could not be conducted due to lack of research funds, hence explaining why data capturing was mostly based on sampling.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Champion a non-violent form of theatre targeting knowledge generation institutions like colleges, universities and vocational training centers. The rationale behind is that this special group of students constitutes a group of future leaders, exposing them to a form of theatre that concertize them earlier on the importance of preserving human rights creates an atmosphere in the distant future where they can be able to draft and advocate for policies that foster justice, peace and tolerance.
2. Create a form of performance that engages both the perpetrators and victims in one space that opens for post-play discussion. Such an environment will be more like the truth and reconciliation commission which acts in healing past wounds and aid in mapping a way forward were human rights are the central subject of all national policies.
3. Protest theatre performances instead of being confined in secluded spaces that are usually graced by an audience from a privileged class they must adopt a ‘moving theatre’ approach which can reach out to any given target audience. By so doing masses are concertized on their human rights.
4. In an age where even peaceful assembly in both Palestine and Zimbabwe can be classified as a criminal offence under government laws, discouraging audience turn-up in theatre venues, protest theatre practitioners can resort to the utilization of the social media networks. A live streamed play can reach out to a broader audience base while also facilitating for a live discussion which can suggest solutions to the human rights crisis.

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APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is TAWANDA MUPATSI and I am pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Film and Theatre Studies Honours degree with Midlands State University. I am researching on a topic titled. AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN PALESTINE AND ZIMBABWE. THE CASE OF THE PLAYS *SUPER PATRIOTS AND MORONS* AND *THERE IS A FIELD*.

Kindly give your input on the highlighted subject. The information that shall be acquired in this process shall not be published in any other medium not concerned with this research and a strict level of confidentiality shall be observed in handling the supplied information.

Please tick or fill in the answers in the spaces provided.

PART A

1. SEX

MALE FEMALE

2. AGE GROUP

Youth 15-35 years
Adults 36-64years
Elderly 65-

3. HIGHEST ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION

- a. Primary level
- b. Ordinary level

- c. Advanced level
- d. Diploma level

- e. Degree
- f. Post Graduate level

PART B

4. WHAT IS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FROM YOUR OWN OBSERVATION DO YOU THINK THEY ARE BEING EXERCISED IN ZIMBABWE?

.....
.....
.....

5. GIVE EXAMPLES BASED ON PERSONAL EXPERIENCE IN WHICH YOUR HUMAN RIGHTS OR THAT OF ANY OTHER PERSON YOU KNOW WERE VIOLATED

.....
.....
.....

6. BESIDES OFFERING ESCAPISM/ENTERTAINMENT WHAT ELSE CAN YOU GET FROM A THEATRICAL PRODUCTION

.....
.....
.....

7. HAVE YOU EVER WITNESSED A THEATRICAL PRODUCTION IN WHICH HUMAN RIGHTS WERE ADRESSED. IF YES HOW DID YOU RELATE WITH THE SUBJECT IF NO WHY?

.....
.....
.....

8. DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE POTENTIAL OF THEATRE IN ADVOCATING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS? EXPLAIN YOUR ANSWERE

.....
.....
.....

9. WHAT MUST THEATRE PRACTITIONERS DO TO MAKE THEIR PRODUCTIONS EFFECTIVE IN ADRESSING HUMAN RIGHTS?

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.....