

# **Three pandemics in post-2017 Zimbabwe: authoritarianism, corruption, and ruling through Covid-19**

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## **Abstract**

Existing work on Zimbabwe's crises of governance post-2017 focuses on searching for continuities and discontinuities between Mugabe's policies and those of Mnangagwa. This article questions the assumptions that continuities can occur without disruption in such a context and that Mnangagwa's discontinuity with the past is a straightforward road that will lead to a positive culture of governance. It particularly considers the domains of life in which the military continues to assert its authority and control over Zimbabwean citizens. This study is based on qualitative approaches, which recognise the interconnectedness of politics (authoritarianism), cultures of affect (corruption), and the manipulation of a fragile context induced by Covid-19. Critical hermeneutics and postcolonial theories help explain subjective motivations in actions by politicians. The major contribution of the article is to show how and where power is reconstituted by the Mnangagwa administration to guarantee regime survival by controlling the masses.

**Key Words:** Authoritarianism, corruption, Covid-19, post-2017, Zimbabwe, masses