

A reflection on the clergys' engagement in politics in light of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe

**Author:**Peter Masvotore¹ **Affiliation:**¹Institute for Theology and Religion, Faculty of Human Sciences, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa**Corresponding author:**Peter Masvotore,
masvotorep@gmail.com**Dates:**

Received: 05 Oct. 2022

Accepted: 30 Jan. 2023

Published: 20 Mar. 2023

How to cite this article:Masvotore, P., 2023, 'A reflection on the clergys' engagement in politics in light of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 44(1), a2751.
<https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v44i1.2751>**Copyright:**© 2023. The Authors.
Licensee: AOSIS. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution License.**Read online:**

Scan this QR code with your smart phone or mobile device to read online.

The overarching rapport between clergy and politics goes back to biblical times. The clergy used their civic politicking as a catalytic agent to influence rules and plans on all tiers of the country. Historically, clergy such as Martin Luther King Jr. and others were active and involved in the civil rights movement during the 1960s. In the context of Zimbabwean struggle for independence, the clergy unlocked their cathedrals and house of worship for strategy and forecasting meetings for additional political reasons. This study draws on various forms of data that include a content analysis of existing publications both electronic and archival sources to demonstrate the relationship between the clergy and politics. Using a theological reflection theory, the study further analyses the reasons for the engagement or disengagement of the clergy in politics. The initial outcomes of this study add weight to the understanding that from the beginning of the armed struggle, Zimbabwean clergy were actively participating in politics. These discoveries have major implications for the role religion plays in the political development of Zimbabwe.

Intradisciplinary and/or interdisciplinary implications: The engagement or disengagement of the clergy in politics could assist the churches to self-introspect and be informed that they are inseparable from politics to shoulder the weight, pain and problems of the people they serve. This is informed by the discipline of theology, political theology, political science and sociology.

Keywords: clergy; disengagement; engagement; Methodist Church in Zimbabwe; politics; theological reflection.

Introduction

Biblical narratives both the Old and New Testaments are filled with instructions to God's people concerning their role in government and society. Some of the duties that the Bible directs believers to in relation to government are articulated in, for example, 1 Kings 22:1–8, Ezekiel 24:1–24, 2 Samuel 12:1–15 and Matthew 14:1–12, just to mention a few. The relationship between clergy and politics goes back into the historical memory lane of decades. Christian clergy and leaders were involved in communities as catalyst agents to stimulate people to change policies and agendas at local and international stages. Factually, clergy such as Martin Luther King Jr. and others participated in the civil rights movement during the 1960s (Lewis & Carson 2022). As previously indicated earlier on in the abstract, the context of the Zimbabwean struggle for independence saw the clergy opening their churches for strategy and planning purposes for the furtherance of the political cause. This study draws from various forms of data inclusive of content analysis of existing material both electronic and archival sources to validate the relationship between the clergy and politics. Using a theological reflection theory, the study further analyses the reasons for the engagement or disengagement of the clergy in politics. The study concludes by showing that the clergy are inseparable from politics and as such can never be divorced from active involvement to help the people they serve who are the constituency in the political field. The initial outcomes of this study add weight to the understanding that from the beginning of the armed struggle, Zimbabwean clergy were actively participating in politics. These discoveries have major implications in the role religion plays in the political development of Zimbabwe.

Definition of terms

Definitions are always controversial because they are given according to the context of the writers. In this study, the word clergy means the body of all persons who are ministers, sheiks, priests and rabbis, trained and set apart through ordination for religious services especially in Christian Churches. Such clergymen can also be referred to as ecclesiastic, churchman, cleric, divine, man of the cloth, pastor, rector, vicar or presbyter (Tulloch 1991). In the context of this study, the use

of the word clergy encompasses all the religious persons whether they are ordained or not, as long as they render services to the church.

Another term that needs to be situated in the context of this write-up is politics. For Tulloch (1991), politics refers to the art and science of government and engaging in activities that are concerned with the acquisition or exercise of authority. The term politics is more inclined to dialogue and so the basic demand of dialogue is dual. No dialogue is possible unless there are two sides or two persons ready to engage in it. Dialogue is impeded if one side sees the other as a threat. In actual fact, politics is a social science that demands more of courage to take risks and humility to accept the possibility of undergoing a change in oneself. Therefore, in this study, politics is viewed as a participation in the issues to do with social justice. For Aristotle and Weldon (2018):

Politics is the master science that is, nothing less than the activity through which human beings attempt to improve their lives and create the good society. Politics is, above all, a social activity. It is always a dialogue, and never a monologue. (p. 12)

It is from this spectrum that this study views politics as a process of engagement in an attempt to create social order for good of the society.

Methodological considerations

This study employed a methodology of re-examining prevailing information using a desk research analysis method. According to Creswell (2009), a desk study is gathering data without engaging in fieldwork. Furthermore, it can be defined as secondary analysis, which is an examination of already prevailing information that brings in clarifications, assumptions or conclusions that may buttress or differ from information in the first report on the investigation as a whole and its main result (Hakim 1982:1; Masvotore 2021:225–226).

In the context of this study, the term desk research has been used in a broader understanding to include all gathered data without engaging fieldwork participation. Desk research entails gathering data from libraries, Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (MCZ) archives and the Internet. In addition, desk study analysis is an examination of knowledge that was assembled by somebody else intended for a different main purpose (Masvotore & Tsara 2019). The use of available information presents a viable option for researchers who could have inadequate resources and time for fieldwork. Desk study investigation is a practical method that employs similar essential research ideology as studies using first-hand information guided by regulations as any other methodology in research. Even though secondary data enquiry is further defined as a logical research method, nevertheless, not many frameworks are obtainable to direct researchers as they carry out desk research data analysis (Andrews et al. 2012:13; Smith et al. 2011:920).

The desk research method was used in this article because of COVID-19 lockdown limitations. The most important

advantage linked with desk research is the cost effectiveness and convenience it is endowed with (Dale, Arbor & Procter 1988). In light of the fact that someone has earlier assembled the data, it follows that the researchers will save financial resources with regard to the collection of data. It therefore gives equal opportunity to all researchers including the beginners and builds competence for experiential research (Hakim 1982). Furthermore, it is quicker to conduct desk research as one skips other time-consuming research steps such as measurement development and data collection thereby enabling the researcher to easily answer time-sensitive policy-related questions (Doolan & Froelicher 2009).

In this study, the researcher conducted this research through accessing sources from the Internet, news articles, published books, MCZ documents from archives and journals because of the lockdown as indicated elsewhere. In an effort to mitigate research gaps, the study used published sources for a careful deep in thought valuation and conclusive assessment of the data as a justifying degree to minimise shortcomings of desk research methodology (Boslaugh 2007; Dale et al. 1988; Kiecolt & Nathan 1985).

Biblical narrative models on the involvement in politics

The Scripture is the major source of doing any theology. It informs and shapes theology as the reference guide in any endeavour to ministerial praxis. This article looks at some models described in some of the chapters from both the Old Testament and New Testament that inform the authenticity and relevance for engagement or disengagement into the political arena of the clergy.

Micaiah the prophet as a political engagement model

Micaiah was a prophet who is clearly recorded in 1 Kings 22:1–8 as the prophet of God among a number of court prophets. King Ahab in his quest to reclaim his city Ramoth-Gilead, which was for a long time in the hands of the Arameans, his friend King Jehoshaphat then advises him to consider the idea of consulting from God whether to go for it or not. This is where prophets came in as it was their duty to predict the future and hear what comes from God. Four hundred prophets were summoned and they all concurred with one message that the King was supposed to go for it (v.6). It was then realised that one prophet was missing but King Ahab confessed that he hated him because he never prophesied any positive message to him (v.9). Micaiah was eventually called and was given a platform and eventually told him that the Lord said, 'do not go', but King Ahab rejected the prophecy. Zedekiah, one of the court prophets, even slapped him in the face (v.24).

The scenario shows that King Ahab did not want to embrace the truth but just wanted the prophecy that would come in

his favour. Anything that would come contrary to his wishes was wrong even if it was the truth from the Lord. It is actually evident that Ahab had always clashed with Micaiah before; hence, he hated him. This is very typical of today's most political leaders; they are only ready to receive that which is in their favour according to their wishes or desires even if it leads them to undesirable eventualities (McGreal 2007). This scenario shows us that clergy are not most welcome by politicians to tell the truth of the Lord especially pertaining to justice issues. They even end up falling victims for speaking undesirable truths to the politicians of the day. Politicians would rather embrace those types of clergy who always shower them with praises even in the moments of their madness.

The given scenario can be equated to the former Zimbabwean First Lady Grace Mugabe who reached a climax level of madness in 2017 during the last lap of her reign (Akwei 2017). She would seek authenticity from the church by gathering the different church sects such as *Vapostori* who would shower praises on whatever she said, wrong or right (Dube 2019). She never smells any rat; she never saw it coming that a coup could even happen in their reign. Those who would try to knock sense in her head would be threatened, castigated, demonised and labelled as opposition. Grace Mugabe would give a deaf ear to the social and justice concerns that actually paved way for the ouster of Mugabe (ARAB News 2018). The great lesson that can be drawn from the Ahab and Micaiah saga is that those in powerful positions should not give deaf ears to the men and women of God even if one hates the way they prophesy because it eventually leads to destruction. One can save himself or herself by adhering to what comes from men and women of the cloth because it also comes from God himself, hence one should not be surrounded by court prophets who always deliver to please their masters. In actual fact, such prophets or clergy will be operating as typical civil servants who are only expected to deliver up to the expectations of the current government and leadership.

To show that Ahab was not with the truth that he received from Micaiah, he ordered his police to imprison Micaiah up until he comes from the war. Ahab did not understand that to be forewarned is to be forearmed. He was quick to rush towards his destruction yet the Lord had spoken of the danger that was ahead of him. Ahab never came back from the war; he died as what Micaiah said 'if you come back the Lord has not spoken to me' (1 Ki 22:28).

The Ezekiel political engagement model (Ezk 34:1–24)

The prophet Ezekiel presents a scenario whereby God is denouncing the shepherds who were careless, unjust and greedy. The shepherds were failing to match up to God's shepherding standard. In this case, the prophet was ordered to prophesy against the shepherds of Israel who were: the princes, kings, magistrates, the priests and Levites, the great

Sanhedrin or council of state or whoever was responsible for the public affairs from lower to higher tiers. In this case, both the clergy, the political leaders and those in the justice execution system were being addressed as the shepherds yet on another level. This implies that whatever excuses any one of the shepherds may give as long as they do not expedite their mandate, they will be held responsible and accountable to God. God claims that He will consider the careless and gluttonous shepherds his enemy, which means God would have waged war against them yet he will not lose the war. God had mandated the shepherds to care for the weak, tend to the sick, bound the broken bones, and look for the lost and wandering ones, feeding them instead of them (shepherds) feeding themselves.

Ezekiel 33:6 presents that, 'if the watchman does not sound the alarm upon seeing the enemy and they are devoured, He (God) will level the accountability against the watchman, he is responsible for their deaths.' This as well translates to the point that if the watchman sees danger and runs away without sounding the trumpet preserving his life, he will be accountable to God. Being a watchman is risky but that is the duty that needs to be delivered with due diligence, knowing that God the great shepherd, shepherd of all the shepherds, and God the great watchman watches over all the watchmen. From this understanding, the clergy are the voice of the voiceless, and they are to give a prophetic message to the politicians of the day to sound the warning trumpet as Ezekiel did.

Juxtaposition of Nathan (2 Sm 12:1–15) and John the Baptist (Mt 14:1–12): The case of David and Herod

Two scenarios are presented here that of Nathan and King David and John the Baptist and King Herod. Some scholars believe that Nathan was a court prophet. Be that as it may, Nathan still needed to tell David what had come from the Lord that David had sinned against God by taking Uriah's wife but he had to employ some riddles as his wisdom. The king eventually found himself convicted when he later discovered that it was him being referred to. Powerful as he was the king was very sorry about his actions and pleaded for forgiveness and mercy from God. It was unjust for the King to kill Uriah and take his one and only wife yet, he himself had plenty. This narrative fits well in today's happenings in the socio-political realm because those who have the privilege to be in power politically have all the room to be greedy and treat those who are powerless and voiceless as non-events. Social justice is greatly compromised and undermined; yet, God is the God of social justice, he cares for the less privileged. In this, Nathan was very privileged to be listened to by the king probably because of the diplomatic approach he used or the fact that Nathan was a court prophet but the fact is that David humbled himself. David could still accuse Nathan of betraying or undermining his authority but he chose to hear God than to be arrogant.

On the other side of the coin, we see a very similar scenario. Herod knew that John was a prophet. He was even hesitant to eliminate him because he feared the crowd for people believed in John as the prophet. To a greater extent, Herod showed to be afraid of people than God who was their common denominator. John was jailed for having denounced Herod for taking his late brother's wife as unlawful. John was eventually beheaded. The whole saga turned out to be socio-political. This presents a fact that prophets have always been God's medium of communication to his people especially for the advancement of social, political and economic justice. Clergy are therefore entitled and expected to be ambassadors of truth despite the fact that it is life-threatening to do so. John says '... a good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep' (Jn 10:11). John was convinced that he needed to tell the truth for the sake of his flock and for the sake of social justice. What the political actors do when confronted with the truth is the best they can do and by the same token, clergy should do their best by advocating for social justice; while King Herod did hide the truth by eliminating the truth-bearers, the truth-bearers should keep the light on a higher place so that they enlighten the political figures and the general populace.

A two-way scenario has to be put into consideration here:

- The clergy's mandate is to carry the burden of the people they serve, which means they have to be ready for what it takes, the cost of shepherding from a holistic approach. It is disturbing and disheartening that lay people such as Itai Dzamara and Hopewell Chin'ono (Mafunda 2018; Mavhunga 2021) can sacrifice to lose their life and social life, respectively, standing in for the social justice concerns of the populace, yet the clergy themselves are not ready for that mandate, fearing for their lives, save for Evan Mawarire (Mahtani 2019). Even though one of the Catholic Bishops, Bishop Pious Ncube had decided to stand up and challenged the systems a few years ago, he just disappeared from the scenes mysteriously, and supposedly he was forcefully silenced (McGreal 2007).
- The political players are challenged to see the clergy with the eye that they are called by God to stand in for the people by guiding the politicians to take the right track not to ouster them and labelling them as opposition. Clergy only represent the mind of God, which means if they (politicians) fight the clergy, they are fighting God himself. The difference between the opposition political parties and the clergy constituency is that the opposition political parties do pursue their mission to be in power one day despite the fact that the ruling party has made reforms in all the sticky and concerned areas. The clergy only pursue the justice system, if all is well, they do not aim at any ouster but guidance only as long as God's mission is advanced and the general populace are socially, politically and economically taken care of.

Jesus' political engagement model

When Jesus Christ presented his manifesto in Luke 4:18, he referred to all forms of suffering that he was on a mission to

alleviate pain and affliction and likewise all those whom he called and ordained were set apart for the advancement of his mission. Luke 4:18 says:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor, He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.

Jesus actually confronted all those political and prominent figures of the society to abstain from unjust practices. He even called for all those who are heavily burdened to come to him to give them rest. So, in actual fact, his mission was to give rest to those who are in different forms of agony. Therefore, the role of a clergy is that of carrying on nursing the wounds of the people they shepherd and carrying their burdens, taking after the master's very words and actions; hence, it is true that the clergy should actively participate in politics to help their congregants.

Engagement and disengagement of MCZ clergy in the politics of colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe

Most clergy, preachers and a majority of theologians since time immemorial have always felt that when they speak on issues that sound political, they are transgressing. Most of these in their various ranks and titles feel politics is not for discussion but a participatory matter. The matter draws far reaching divisional lines among these groups. The idea that politics is dirty and dangerous is not the norm, it is abnormal and it is the role of the clergy to normalise political participation. The church must neither be a political party itself nor it be aligned or affiliated to a certain political party, but it must make the political leaders accountable (Mtata 2021). This notion was much supported by Bonheoffer (1937) when he talks of the church being a voice for the voiceless. The populations have suffered the blow especially in Zimbabwe because of the silence of the church. The church has thrown Zimbabweans under the bus in governance matters because it has allowed corruption and ill-governance to prevail as normalcy and not making political leaders accountable as was the case in the biblical times (Mtata 2021). This study therefore examines the role of the church in politics with a specific focus on the contributions made by some of the MCZ clergy in the political matters of colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe in view of the fact that the clergy cannot be divorced from bearing the weight, pain and problems of the people they minister to.

The Republic of Zimbabwe, throughout decades of her history, has had a culture of violence and impunity, partnering and coupled with colonialism that caused enormous movements of people, massive killings and/or persecution, and bodily and disturbing memories of the past (Dombo 2014:139). During all these episodes of violence, it is crucial to point out that some religious sectors were vocal and had condemned politicians while others were supportive or co-

operated and enticed by these political parties (Chitagu 2018; *News24* 2011). Looking back on the colonial and post-colonial epoch in Zimbabwe, Church groups played a pivotal role, some by working together with the committers of viciousness and blowing conflict, while some fought hard to mitigate conflicts. Russel (2004) argues that:

[T]he fact that the church's influence being mainly on spiritual aspects does not stop church leaders from involvement in national politics. It is from this capacity that the church itself has spiritual programmes like church politics and administration. (p. 23)

Over the years MCZ clergy have contributed immensely to political issues including being active in anti-colonial politics. The likes of Canaan Banana using the pulpit denounced Rhodesia's white racist minority rule and spoke from the eyes of a black liberation theologian (Steyn 2003). In his publication, 'The Gospel According to the Ghetto', he writes a personalised form of the Lord's Prayer that began 'Our Father who art in the Ghetto' (Moes 2003:341). He incorporated a collective Christian theology and avowed that when he sees a guerrilla, he sees Jesus Christ (Steyn 2003). Ndabaningi Sithole was also a former Methodist clergy who was instrumental in the founding of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), a revolutionary organisation that challenged the government of Rhodesia, in July 1963 (Cary & Mitchell 1980). His contributions to politics included opposing colonialism, brutality and abuse of office. It also took Rev. Arthur Kanodereka to befriend Alec Smith the then Premier's son to organise multiracial meetings to speak and demonstrate that change in attitude was possible. Kanodereka initiated the formation of a cabinet of integrity composed of men from both sides in order to help their leaders during the transition to black rule (Johnston & Sampson 1995; Smith 1984).

The Methodist clergy also embraced a socialist Christian theology approach and this was implemented by ministers such as Bishop Abel Muzorewa and Canaan Banana together with the United African National Council (UANC) (Banana 1996). This Council was instrumental in opposing the deal that was reached between the British government and Ian Douglas Smith that provides a changeover to popular majority rule to mark the end of sanctions against Rhodesia (Banana 1996). Together with other Methodist ministers in the UANC, Bishop Abel Muzorewa fought for the independence of Zimbabwe and he became the first Prime Minister under the internal settlement and Canaan Banana became the first President after independence (Zinaman 2020).

According to United States Institute of Peace (USIP 2003:10), 'Zimbabwe is a profoundly religious country and social institutions such as churches are very important'. The Methodist clergy through associations such as the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) have been voicing on issues of corruption, abuse of office, transparency and accountability. They were instrumental in opening grounds for effective multiparty politics towards the 20th century. The church stood behind the Government of National Unity through the creation of 'The Zimbabwe we want' document (Muchechete 2009). Furthermore, MCZ clergy through the ZCC and other Church networks (Muchechete 2009):

Have also observed and monitored elections, conducted voter education and civic education, advocacy against repressive legislation and any acts of conduct by government that violate people's civil liberties. (p. 9)

This also helps to ensure that the government conforms to international human rights treaty instruments such as the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In other words, the church has to play a watchdog role in governance issues.

It is also argued that in the 21st century, the ZCC, where MCZ clergy are affiliated, implemented the procedures for encouraging reunion and healing as described by Matikiti (2014). These ministers were actively involved in advocacy against the violence that destabilised the anthropological self-respect of citizens. Some of the identified cases of violence were that of rape, torture, arson, murder, destruction and deprivation of property, electoral irregularities, humanitarian aid shortages and restrictions that became obvious in Zimbabwe. In addition, findings by Munemo and Nciizah (2014) shows that:

Church organisations called for conflict transformation by advocating for peace through capacitating the clergy and lay leaders by training them as they are able to influence prevention, management and meaningful reconciliation in the whole community against political conflict and violence. (p. 66).

In the era of COVID-19, the MCZ clergy have also participated in dialogues that promote COVID-19 resource accountability and governance and this has helped in putting the government to account. In the 21st century, the Methodist clergy have openly censured and questioned the corrupt and power-hungry political leaders, putting them to task and account and this has helped the masses to change their mind-set.

Analysis of political engagement or disengagement

Canaan Banana believed in John Wesley's motto: 'I look upon the world as my parish' (Banana 1991). Banana further explains that the given statement is an indictment on those who limit their parish to their own race, tribe or gender. Furthermore, he claims that 'the world' can also be translated to the flesh and blood issues of life such as politics, economics and social justice. This baseline can translate to the fact that Banana's understanding was packed in the pregnancy of his statement. The statement is saturated with meaning, the meaning that exhibits itself in his offer of desire to partake in the political realm, hence he is on record as being the first President of Zimbabwe, Mugabe being his contemporary as the first Prime Minister of Zimbabwe. Rev. Banana had diverse qualities and he enormously contributed to the reconciliation of bringing Mugabe and Nkomo together to sign the Unity Accord in December 1987 (Banana 1996:280). He spent many years after handing over the Presidency to Mugabe serving both the State and the Church in different ways (Banana 1991:121). In his involvement in the liberation struggle and national leadership, Banana understood liberation as a struggle and even an armed

struggle; hence, he ended up articulating a prophetic combat theology insinuating an analogy of active fighting in a war. Urbaniak and Manobo (2020) present:

Banana's liberationist view of justice pertaining to land issue together with (a) Speaking truth to political power, even though there are consequences (b) bearing a prophetic witness vis-a-vis the Church's own involvement in wrong doing and (c) making a difference between the selective acts of 'Liberating Violence' and the systematic violence in-built in unfair socio-political structures. (p. 13)

Conclusion

This study has attempted to establish the role of the clergy in politics and the general church's relationship with the government in Zimbabwe. There is empirical evidence that argues that one cannot draw a line between politics and religion, and the two are inseparable from the biblical times, the medieval era when political thinkers such as St Augustine and St Aquinas attempted to theorise on the subject. This study shows that the church and government are presented as two sides of the same coin and social reality; hence, there is a need for active participation of the church in political issues. It further concludes that the Church's role is more today than it was during the colonial era and biblical times. Furthermore, the study shows that the clergy are inseparable from politics and as such can never be divorced from shouldering the weight, pain and problems of the people they serve who are the constituency in the political field. The preliminary results of the study add weight to the view that since the armed struggle, Zimbabwean clergy have been more actively involved in politics. These findings have important implications and guide for the role religion plays in political development in Zimbabwe.

Acknowledgements

Methodist Church in Zimbabwe Clergy for their unwavering involvement in the politics of Zimbabwe.

Competing interests

The authors have declared that no competing interest exists.

Author's contributions

P.M. is the sole author of this article.

Ethical considerations

This article followed all ethical standards for research without direct contact with human or animal subjects.

Funding information

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

Data availability

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated agency of the author.

References

- Akwei, I., 2017, 'Grace Mugabe's final showdown cost Zimbabwe's vice president his job', *Africa News*, viewed 10 June 2022, from <https://africanews.com.edu.ampproject.org>.
- Andrews, L., Higgins, A., Andrews, M.W. & Lalor, J.G., 2012, 'Classic grounded theory to analyse secondary data: Reality and reflections', *The Grounded Theory Review* 11(1), 12–26.
- ARAB News, 2018, 'Ex-Zimbabwean leader Mugabe calls ouster 'coup d'état'', viewed 10 June 2022, from <https://www.arabnews.com>
- Aristotle, A. & Weldon, J.E.C., 2018, *The politics*, The Creative Media Partner, New York, New Jersey.
- Banana, C.S., 1991, *A century of methodism in Zimbabwe: 1891–1991*, The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, Harare.
- Banana, C.S., 1996, *The Church in the struggle for Zimbabwe: From the programme to combatracism to combat theology*, Mambo Press, Gweru.
- Bonheoffer, D., 1937, *The cost of discipleship*, SCM Press, Munich.
- Boslaugh, S., 2007, *Secondary analysis for public health: A practical guide*, Cambridge, New York, NY.
- Cary, R. & Mitchel, D., 1980, 'African nationalist leaders – Rhodesia to Zimbabwe: The Web version of the 1977–1980 who is who', viewed 11 June 2022, from <https://www.colonialreli.com>.
- Chitagu, T., 2018, 'Zimbabwe church body condemns post-election violence', *Times Live*, viewed 10 June 2022, from <https://www.timeslive.co.za>.
- Creswell, J.W., 2009, *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods Approaches*, 3rd edn., Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Dale, A., Arbor, S. & Procter, M., 1988, *Doing secondary analysis*, Unwin Hyman, London.
- Dombo, S., 2014, 'Refusing to be co-opted? Church organizations and reconciliation in Zimbabwe with special reference to the Christian Alliance of Zimbabwe 2005–2013', *Journal for the Study of Religion* 27(2), 137–171.
- Doolan, D.M. & Froelicher, E.S., 2009, 'Using an existing data set to answer new research questions: A methodological review', *Research and Theory for Nursing Practice: An International Journal* 23(3), 203–215. <https://doi.org/10.1891/1541-6577.23.3.203>
- Dube, B., 2019, 'What about the Vapostori now? The ambivalence of politics of relevance among indigenous churches in Zimbabwe', *HTS Theological Studies* 75(1), a5202. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v75i1.5202>
- Hakim, C., 1982, *Secondary analysis in social research: A guide to data sources and method Examples*, George Allen & Unwin, London.
- Johnston, D. & Sampson, C., 1995, *Religion the missing dimension of statecraft*, Oxford University, Oxford.
- Kiecolt, K.J. & Nathan, L.E., 1985, *Secondary analysis of survey data*, University Paper Series on Quantitative Applications in the Social Sciences, 53, SAGE Publishing Inc, London. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412985796>
- Lewis, D.L. & Carson, C., 2022, *Martin Luther King, Jr.*, *Encyclopedia Britannica*, viewed n.d., from <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Martin-Luther-King-Jr>.
- Mafunda, K., 2018, 'Itai Dzamara the man who stood up to Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe and vanished', *BBC News*, viewed 11 June 2022, from <https://www.bbc.com.news>.
- Mahtani, M., 2019, 'He led a popular uprising against Mugabe. Now he says life is more brutal than ever for Zimbabweans', *CNN News*, viewed 10 June 2022, from <https://www.cnn.com>.
- Masvotore, P., 2021, 'The healing practitioner has retreated back to the trenches: Healing and spirituality during COVID-19', in R. Makamani, A. Nhemachena & O. Mtapuri (eds.), *Global capital's 21st century repositioning between COVID-19 and the fourth industrial revolution on Africa*, pp. 221–244 Langaa RPCTG, Cameroon.
- Masvotore, P. & Tsara, L., 2019, 'South Africa's road to democracy could have suffered a still birth had it not been for the unseen role played by women: Interfacing with the undercover operations of women', *Alternation Interdisciplinary Journal* 26, 122–139. <https://doi.org/10.29086/2519-5476/2019/sp26a5>
- Matikiti, R., 2014, 'Christian theological perspectives on political violence in Zimbabwe: The case of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe', unpublished thesis (PhD), University of Zimbabwe.
- Mavhunga, C., 2021, 'Out of jail on bail, Zimbabwe journalist vows to continue denouncing corruption', *VOA News*, viewed 11 June 2022, from <https://www.voanews.com>.
- McGreal, C., 2007, 'How secret camera in Archbishop's love nest silenced vocal Mugabe Critic', *The Guardian News*, viewed 10 June 2022, from <https://www.theguardian.com>.

- Moes, G.J., 2003, *Streams of civilization: Cultures in conflict since the reformation until the third millennium after Christ*, Christian Liberty Press, Arlington.
- Mtata, K., 2021, *Zimbabwe's political condition and the role of the Church*, Youtube, viewed 10 June 2022, from youtube.com/; <https://mobile.twitter.com>.
- Muchechete, A.A., 2009, 'A historical analysis of the role of the church in advocating for good governance in Zimbabwe: Heads of Christian Denominations (HOCD) advocating in Zimbabwe's political, social and economic impasse from 2003 to 2008', Unpublished dissertation, ALMA.
- Munemo, D. & Nciizah, E., 2014, 'The church in Zimbabwe's peace and reconciliation process under the government of National Unity', *Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 19(10), 63–70. <https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-191056370>
- News24, 2011, 'Zimbabwe Churches condemn violence', 28 March, viewed 11 June 2022, from <https://www.news24.com>.
- Russel, R., 2004, *Church education systems politics and administration*, Latter Day, Lampton.
- Smith, A., 1984, *Now I call him brother*, Marshalls, London.
- Smith, A.K., Ayanian, J.Z., Covinsky, K.E., Landon, B.E., McCarthy, E.P., Wee, C.C. et al., 2011, 'Conducting high-value secondary data set analysis: An introductory guide and resources', *Journal of General Internal Medicine* 28(8), 920–929. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11606-010-1621-5>
- Steyn, M., 2003, 'Zimbabwe's Banana left legacy of disgrace', *The Irish Times*, viewed 10 June 2022, from www.irishtimes.com.
- Tulloch, S., 1991, *The readers' digest Oxford-complete word-finder*, Oxford University Press, London.
- United States Institute of Peace (USIP), 2003, *Zimbabwe's Torturous Road to a new constitution and elections*, Special Report, Washington, DC, viewed 10 June 2022, from <http://www.usip.org>.
- Urbaniak, J. & Manobo, B.M., 2020, 'Canaan Banana, churches and the land issue: Revisiting theology of Zimbabwe's vilified prophet', *Political Theology* 21(3), 225–246. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1462317X.2020.1740144>
- Zinaman, M., 2020, 'Canaan Banana Part 1', viewed 10 June 2022, from <https://www.makingqueerhistory.com>