

Zimbabwe's Liberation Struggle Recycled: Remembering the Principles of the Struggle in Political Ways

This think piece is inspired by two of the themes of the workshop: *The 'politics of remembering' and reconciliation* and *History and sustaining the principles of the struggle*. Nowhere in Southern Africa is the memory of the liberation struggle being kept alive today in quite the same way as in Zimbabwe, and no one following Zimbabwean politics over the last 10 years has not been prompted to reflect on the dynamic between academic and political approaches to this history. Many academics working on the politics of remembering the Zimbabwean liberation struggle in recent years have been forced to re-think how 'living history' in the shape of active living politicians, who have long since been canonised as heroes of 'liberation history', are constantly writing and rewriting their own history in their daily practices of ruling the nation. Likewise, the active political reworking of liberation history into a recycled political programme, where a singular interpretation of the principles of the liberation struggle has served to underscore political authority in the Zimbabwean case, emphasizes the contentious political nature of all processes of sustaining the principles of liberation struggles.

This think piece reflects on the contentious exercise of writing and preserving liberation struggle history and the principles in the context of political discourses of authority and legitimacy which are based on the same liberation struggle history.