

# MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY



## FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

### DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA AND SOCIETY STUDIES

**Dissertation title: Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: Conversations with film producers.**

**R131321Q**

**This Dissertation has been submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Social Sciences in Media and Society Studies Honours Degree**

**November 2016**

## **Abstract**

This study sets motion for systematic academic investigations on the Algiers Charter of 1975 and film production in Zimbabwe and Africa at large. The charter stipulates that filmmakers should be committed to the development of an ‘African’ cinema, radically different from previous cinematic representations of Africa by the Western world, rejecting commercial influence. Despite the centrality of the charter in film production, systematic academic studies on the phenomenon in the Zimbabwean context are scarce. Theoretically informed by Third Cinema theory and utilizing a qualitative research approach, the study investigates the feasibility and relevance of the Algiers charter in the context of film production in Zimbabwe. In-depth semi structured interviews were conducted with five purposively selected film producers drawn from some of Zimbabwe’s major cities: Harare, Masvingo and Gweru. From the data obtained, the study comes to the conclusion that the Algiers charter is hardly known by Zimbabwean film makers despite its importance. Moreover, while some film makers might be profit oriented, an ever bleeding Zimbabwean economy makes it impossible for the film makers to make financial profits. Finally, the study contends that Zimbabwe’s film industry, has failed to radically divorce itself from the western gaze of the African scenario.

## **Acronyms**

CAFU	Central African Film Unity
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MSU	Midlands State University
NAC	National Arts Council of Zimbabwe
NGO	Non- Governmental Organization
ZANU (PF)	Zimbabwe African Nationalist Union (Patriotic Front)
ZBC	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation
ZCB	Zimbabwe Censorship Board
ZEDERA	Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act

## Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acronyms .....	iii
Chapter One.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Introduction .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Introduction.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Background to the study .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Statement of the problem.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Justification of the study .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Objectives .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Research Questions .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Main question.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Sub questions .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Delimitations .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Limitations .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Assumptions of study .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Chapter Two.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Literature Review and Theoretical Framework .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Introduction.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Filming true ‘African’ cinema .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Film and government regulation .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Commercialization of the film industry.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Theoretical Framework.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Third Cinema theory.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Political economy of film production.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

Conclusion .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Chapter Three .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Research Methods and Methodology.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Introduction.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
A qualitative approach to the study of film productions in Zimbabwe	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
<b>defined.</b>	
Research Design .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Population .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Sampling .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Purposive sampling .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Methods of data collection.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
In-depth interviews .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Methods of data analysis.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Conversation Analysis .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Thematic presentation and discussion of data.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Conclusion .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Chapter four.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Political economy of film production in Zimbabwe .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Introduction.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Historical background.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Film production in Zimbabwe.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Conclusion .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Chapter Five .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Data Presentation and Analysis .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Introduction.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

‘We know nothing about the Algiers Charter’ .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Filmmakers not driven by profit motives .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Narration of Zimbabwean story in local film.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Chapter Six .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Conclusion.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Summary .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Recommendations .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Suggestions for further study .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Conclusion .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Reference.....	65

# **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

## **Abstract**

This study sets motion for systematic academic investigations on the Algiers Charter of 1975 and film production in Zimbabwe and Africa at large. The charter stipulates that filmmakers should be committed to the development of an ‘African’ cinema, radically different from previous cinematic representations of Africa by the Western world, rejecting commercial influence. Despite the centrality of the charter in film production, systematic academic studies on the phenomenon in the Zimbabwean context are scarce. Theoretically informed by Third Cinema theory and utilizing a qualitative research approach, the study investigates the feasibility and relevance of the Algiers charter in the context of film production in Zimbabwe. In-depth semi structured interviews were conducted with five purposively selected film producers drawn from some of Zimbabwe’s major cities: Harare, Masvingo and Gweru. From the data obtained, the study comes to the conclusion that the Algiers charter is hardly known by Zimbabwean film makers despite its importance. Moreover, while some film makers might be profit oriented, an ever bleeding Zimbabwean economy makes it impossible for the film makers to make financial profits. Finally, the study contends that Zimbabwe’s film industry, has failed to radically divorce itself from the western gaze of the African scenario.

# **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

## **Acronyms**

CAFU	Central African Film Unity
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MSU	Midlands State University
NAC	National Arts Council of Zimbabwe
NGO	Non- Governmental Organization
ZANU (PF)	Zimbabwe African Nationalist Union (Patriotic Front)
ZBC	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation
ZCB	Zimbabwe Censorship Board
ZEDERA	Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act



# Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers

---

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acronyms .....	iii
<b>Chapter One</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Introduction .....	1
Introduction.....	1
Background to the study .....	2
Statement of the problem.....	6
Justification of the study .....	7
Objectives .....	8
Research Questions .....	8
Main question.....	8
Sub questions .....	8
Delimitations .....	9
Limitations .....	9
Assumptions of study .....	9
<b>Chapter Two</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Literature Review and Theoretical Framework .....	11
Introduction.....	11
Filming true ‘African’ cinema .....	12
Film and government regulation .....	15
Commercialization of the film industry.....	19

# **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

Theoretical Framework.....	22
Third Cinema theory.....	22
Political economy of film production.....	24
Conclusion .....	28
<b>Chapter Three</b> .....	29
Research Methods and Methodology.....	29
Introduction.....	29
A qualitative approach to the study of film productions in Zimbabwe.....	29
Research Design.....	31
Population.....	32
Sampling.....	33
Purposive sampling.....	34
Methods of data collection.....	34
In-depth interviews.....	35
Methods of data analysis.....	37
Conversation Analysis.....	37
Thematic presentation and discussion of data.....	38
Conclusion.....	40
<b>Chapter four</b> .....	41
Political economy of film production in Zimbabwe.....	41
Introduction.....	41
Historical background.....	41
Film production in Zimbabwe.....	43

# Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers

---

Conclusion .....	45
<b>Chapter Five</b> .....	46
Data Presentation and Analysis .....	46
Introduction .....	46
‘We know nothing about the Algiers Charter’ .....	46
Filmmakers not driven by profit motives .....	51
Narration of Zimbabwean story in local film.....	55
<b>Chapter Six</b> .....	60
Conclusion .....	60
Summary .....	60
Recommendations .....	62
Suggestions for further study .....	63
Conclusion .....	64
Reference.....	65

# Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers

---

## Chapter One

### Introduction

#### Introduction

Contemporary Zimbabwe has witnessed the production of various films albeit without purely distinct genres, ranging from dramas and movies to soap operas. It appears the continued availability of technology and the inspiration from Hollywood as well as Nollywood has motivated Zimbabweans to appropriate production practices and narrative styles of those industries into their own film sector. A significant number of Zimbabwean produced film products such as *Fidelis* (Musowe 2009) and *Sabhuku Vharazipi* (Chindara 2012), among others, have flooded the informal or 'shadow' film market. These film producers have also tried to avoid distribution costs by directly marketing their own products. This research is not interested in examining the general distribution patterns of film products from Zimbabwe's 'culture industry' but to provide a detailed account on the extent to which contemporary Zimbabwe film productions are guided by the hardly spoken about but undeniably important instrument in African film production- the Algiers Charter.

The Algiers Charter is an African specific homemade charter, crafted by African filmmakers in 1975, to address common problems affecting them, and their space in the political struggles of the third world countries, as well as goals in areas of film production and distribution. The Algiers Charter on African Cinema states that film ought to be responsible, committed and 'free' (Black Camera, 2010). Moreover, it emphasizes that the state must free shackles of censorship or any other form of coercion likely to weaken filmmakers' imagination, democratic and mindful activity of their profession. Freedom of expression for filmmakers is important to the development of a critical understanding of the people and the blooming of their possibilities. It is also emphasized in the charter, that filmmakers should be committed to the development of an 'African' cinema that would be radically different from previous cinematic representations of Africa by the Western world. From that argument, 'African' films should not only represent

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

Africa from an 'African' point of view but film makers are to reject commercial profit. Importantly, profitability comes only from the knowledge of whether the needs and aspirations of the people are expressed (Algiers Charter 1975).

Despite the importance of the Algiers Charter in film production, academic studies on film production about Zimbabwe in particular and Africa in general, have under-theorized the charter and its influence on modern film production on the continent. This study, therefore, seeks to unravel the extent to which contemporary film productions in Zimbabwe have been informed by the Algiers Charter. Salient issues in this investigation include the extent to which the films in all their genres-dramas, soapiers among others, are not being driven by commercial interests, [re]presenting Africa from an 'African' point of view. The study also intends to find out the extent to which their productions are 'responsible', committed and 'free' as espoused in the charter. To do this, a cohort of filmmakers selected from purposively identified film productions is interviewed to derive in-depth information.

The conversations with filmmakers are meant to unpack the extent to which purposively selected modern film productions in Zimbabwe are committed to the development of an African cinema that is radically different from previous cinematic representations of Africa. In essence, the study presents evidence to show whether the films are continuously providing distorted images about Africa or are doing what Mignolo (2011) calls epistemic disobedience, challenging stereotypical Western narratives about Africa. To achieve the objectives of the study, I engage in in-depth conversations with purposively selected Zimbabwean film producers among them *Fidelis* (Steve Musowe 2009), *Sabhuku Vharazipi* (Chindara 2012), *Takazviparira* (Mabaleka 2012), *Nhaka ndeyani* (Madora 2014) and *The Show Goes On* (Dzobo 2011) to establish the extent to which their productions are informed and guided by the Algiers charter.

### **Background to the study**

As argued by Tomaselli (1989), for Africa as a whole, cinema has always been a powerful weapon deployed by colonial nations to maintain their respective spheres of political and economic influence. Cinema was used to 'civilize' the natives by the 'white race.' Film during

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

the colonial era was used for propaganda purposes and promotion of minority capitalist interests. Smyth (1988) postulates that, colonial film broadcast units played a significant role to denounce the liberation struggle. Murphy (2000) argues that during the colonial era, cinematic pictures of Africa served to strengthen the Western vision of the 'dark continent' seeing Africa as a wild and savage place, existing outside of history. At the point when African filmmakers started to rise in the 1960s and 1970s, they set out to counter these disparaging Western representations of their mainland. In colonial Zimbabwe, there were a number of films such as *Tiki*, which were used to 'other' the Africans (Saunders, 1999). Undoubtedly film was not meant to provide aesthetic functions of leisure but to 'interpellate' African subjects (see Althusser, 1971) into concrete subject positions.

From 1980, which marks the birth of the modern Zimbabwe nation, the Robert Mugabe lead Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) government, did not seriously invest in film production. In other words, it is plausible to argue that the film industry was somehow neglected. Of course there were film productions in the post 1980 period, which however cannot be directly credited to government efforts. Drag (1993) points out that earlier film productions such as *Corridors of Freedom* (1987), *After the hunger and drought* (1988), *Consequences* (1988) and *The 6 Sanctions Debate* (1990) themes mainly focused on the representation of liberation struggle, identity crisis, social issues such as teenage pregnancy and economic problems.

The donor community immensely contributed to film production in the 1990s. With the government having sidelined film projects, the initiative was seized by independent film makers sponsored by foreign donors. Hungwe (1991) asserts that films which resulted from donor initiatives had their thrust on "message rather than profit". They were educative /didactic. Examples of these films are Godwin Mawuru's *Neria* (1993) based on a story by Tsitsi Dangarembga, which addressed issue of women's rights and against patriarchal custom. Nevertheless, *Neria* proved to be a box office hit in Zimbabwe, breaking all box office records in the country, taking an estimated US\$100,000 in Zimbabwe alone (Hungwe 2005: 91). *Flame* (Sinclair 1996) is about two female friends who are active fighters, fighting both the war, the

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

dissolution of their dreams, and sexual abuse. These films address the issue of women (The Nordic African Institute 2016). The narratives of these films are in line with donor priorities for a rights-based approach to development.

Among the rights articulated by donors were labor rights, protecting the rights of vulnerable groups (women and children), and more recently the relation between HIV/AIDS and human rights. Most of the films produced by the Media for Development Trust utilized donor funds for instance (YHURQH~~W~~ & KL~~OG~~ *More Time*. The best known films produced by donor funded filmmakers in the 1990s are *Neria* and *Flame*, both of which address the problem of women rights (Hungwe 1991) In 2000 a feature film *Yellow Card* (Riber 2000) was produced, focusing on male sexuality and responsibility with a football player as the lead role. However some filmmakers have voiced some disquiet over the influence of donors on film narrative. There are debates over the effects of donor agendas on Zimbabwe's filmmaking. While Thompson (2013) argues that, those who have been more successful in attracting donor money deny that it influences their work, whereas less successful filmmakers tend to blame donors.

Filmmaker of *Consequences* (Maruma1987) portrayed donors as pushing didacticism into the films they funded, weakening directors of innovativeness and keeping their work from becoming art (Thompson 2013). The state drives filmmakers to donors who undoubtedly have their own agenda after failing to support the domestic film industry. As Tsitsi Dangarembga has put it, "Everyone's child is not the film I wanted to make. I didn't want to make another AIDS film on Africa. I was not emancipated to make the narrative that I wanted to make." (Dangarembga 1999). Dangarembga suggests that the donor-funded film agenda has achieved some positive results by breaking taboos, rights of women, HIV/AIDS and political repression. However she criticizes the dominance of Western donors in the financing of film projects that may inhibit the development of alternative African film narratives (Hungwe 1991).

There is no guarantee that Non-Governmental Organization-directed film projects can find the true voice of the oppressed and disadvantaged groups. Some of them may even represent self-interests at the expense of other local developments. However the economic crisis in Zimbabwe drove numerous donor funders to pull out, with wrecking effects on local film makers. An

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

opportunity has to be made for the state to return to its relationship to film. Not long after independence, the Zimbabwe government under the Ministry of Information endeavored to play an active part by welcoming Hollywood companies such as Universal Pictures to film in Zimbabwe. Hungwe (1992) asserts that A promotional document *Why You Should Film in Zimbabwe* was drafted and Zimbabwe was described an immaculate place for film making, with excellent climate, interesting terrain and good infrastructure.

The success of the government was heralded by shooting big-budget movies such as *Cry Freedom* (Attenborough, 1987) and *Uthando* (Allan Quartermain). The first ever Hollywood production shot in Zimbabwe was *The Last City of Gold* (Gary Nelson 1987). The state was keen to invest directly in production and create local film industry. The early post-independence epoch was marked by films such as *Neria* (Sinclair 1996) and *Yellowcard* (Riber 2000), predominantly playing the educative role. The period after 2000, was marked with serious political and economic problems which to an extent harm strung film production. With the arrival of an urban based and trade union supported opposition party –Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) led by Morgan Tsvangirai, threatening to send ZANU PF to political dustbins, ZANU PF embarked on a populist land reform programme to save its hegemony.

However, the land reform programme triggered a crisis as western nations especially America enacted Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZEDERA) of 2001, and imposed sanctions on the Southern African nation. The period which was also defined by contested elections, saw the Zimbabwean currency plummeting in a hyper-inflationary environment. Almost every sector of the economy was negatively affected by the Zimbabwean political and economic crisis. Mhiripiri (2010) contends that the political crisis negatively affected the film industry amongst other things. Finance until now has become a big hindering factor because there's no constant cash flow supporting the arts industry (Mhiripiri, 2010).

Perhaps in response to the crisis, Mhiripiri (2010) states, post 2000 Zimbabwe gave rise to short films .Mhiripiri (2010) argues that short films are avoiding political material in an obvious political crisis. Most of the filmmakers who have remained in the country have been forced to deal with themes that appear harmless to the state (Rwafa 2012).This is because the Zimbabwean



## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

government induced form of self-censorship on the filmmakers has resulted in the production of uncritical and unreflective films whose staple diet was embedded in cultural stereotypes. Short films as postulated by Mhiripiri (2010) are departing from the traditional educative approach, making exciting innovations thematically and cinematographically, tackling diversified issues of Zimbabwean personalities and their experiences. It is plausible to argue that the ever deteriorating Zimbabwean economy has to a certain extent pushed film makers to continue venturing in an attempt to earn a living.

Perhaps in Adorno and Horkheimer (1947)'s assertion, this has also resulted to the commodification, and standardization of culture industry- film products, in pursuit of profit. To an extent, this does not resonate well with the principles of the Algiers Charter ,a homegrown charter which was crafted by African filmmakers which Zimbabwe is no exception, to address common problems affecting them, as well as goals in areas of film production and distribution.

The study therefore, interrogates the extent to which the selected film producers are aware of this charter and its implications in their day to day operations in film production. Post 2000 Zimbabwe witnessed the rise of drama which was serialized; these are not proper movies but dramas such as *Sabhuku Vharazipi*, *Gringo the Trouble Maker* and *Fidelis* .While studies (Hungwe, 1991; Mhiripiri, 2010; Rwafa, 2012) lay foundation to film studies on Zimbabwe, they are silent on the Algiers charter on film production. Virtually nothing has been written on the subject. This research therefore is undoubtedly novel as it examines the extent to which selected modern Zimbabwean film makers are guided by the Algiers Charter in their operations.

### **Statement of the problem**

The Algiers Charter of 1975, is an important instrument in the production of films in African countries, Zimbabwe included. Normatively, the charter should provide mental maps to all film producers in African countries. However, it appears the Charter has been pushed to the margins of discussion not only by film producers alone but academic studies on film in Africa as well. This research therefore, critically unravels the extent to which purposively selected contemporary film productions in Zimbabwe are guided and informed by the Algiers Charter of 1975.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

### **Justification of the study**

Film production and distribution remain an important but relatively under-theorized area in Zimbabwe's emerging cultural studies. Available literature on literature predominantly discusses the history of film and its use by the imperialists in the then Southern Rhodesia (Windrich, 1981; Friedriske, 1984; Saunders, 1991). Hungwe (1991) asserts that the aim of Central African Film Unit (CAFU) was to make a series of films with blacks, for blacks and to assist in native development.

There are also studies which illuminate on the development of film in the post 1980 period (Hungwe, 1991; Africa Nordic). It is argued that most of the films in the post 1980 period were focusing on war themes. However, with the government having failed to meaningfully contribute to film production, the donor community took over and most of their products were didactic (Hungwe, 1981). Studies on Zimbabwe have also focused on the post 2000 period following the Zimbabwean crisis (Mhiripiri, 2010, Rwafa, 2012, Thompson; 2013; Mhiripiri and Ureke, 2016). Mhiripiri states that the crisis period crippled the development of long term film projects. Due to the crisis film producers resorted to short film genres, undoubtedly operating on shoe string budgets. In their recent work Mhiripiri and Ureke (2016) have focused on the political economy of film production using new ICTs by university students at a state a state owned university- Midlands State University.

While this body of scholarship is important, literature focusing on the Algiers Charter is absent. This study is thus a timeous intervention on studies about film production in Africa. The study rethinks the Algiers Charter of 1975 which undoubtedly addresses pertinent issues affecting African film makers. The Algiers Charter on African Cinema is an important agreement because it supports the important role of the cinema in educating, creating awareness and informing as well as an incentive to creativeness. The Charter is worth studying because it advocates for filmmakers' freedom of expression, free from government censorship as this will weaken their innovativeness. It is also worth noting that the Charter calls for film producers not to be profit driven but tell the African story from an 'African' perspective. Through conversation with selected film makers, the study will remind film makers to self-introspect, and evaluate their

# **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

work in the context of the charter. The study also fills a huge void on scholarship concerning the ‘forgotten’ charter.

## **Objectives**

The objectives of this study are to:

- x Explore the extent to which contemporary film production in Zimbabwe is informed /guided by the Algiers Charter
- x Explain the extent to which purposively selected modern film productions in Zimbabwe are committed to the development of an African cinema which is radically different from previous cinematic representations of Africa by the Western film producers.
- x Explain the extent to which the contemporary Zimbabwe film productions are/not being driven by commercial interests, [re]presenting Africa from an ‘African’ point of view.

## **Research Questions**

### **Main question**

- x To what extent is contemporary film production in Zimbabwe informed /guided by the Algiers Charter?

### **Sub questions**

- x To what extent are the selected Zimbabwean films committed to the development of an African cinema radically different from previous cinematic representations of Africa by the West?
- x To establish how selected film producers [re]presenting Africa from an ‘African’ point of view?
- x To what extent are selected Zimbabwean film makers driven by profit motives?

# **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

## **Delimitations**

The study focuses on The Algiers Charter on African Cinema of 1975. However, the study is only limited to conversations with five purposively selected film producers in Zimbabwe, to get information on how they are informed/guided by The Algiers Charter in their operations. The researcher collected data through unstructured interviews through the conversations with film producers rather than interpreting texts of the two films because this method of gathering data allows the interviewee to freely express ideas in his/her own words. McLeod (2014) asserts that unstructured interviews are more flexible, as questions can be changed and adapted depending on the respondents' answers.

## **Limitations**

This study has its weaknesses because the researcher dialogued with only five film producers in Zimbabwe to find out how they are informed and guided by the Algiers Charter, yet there are numerous film makers whose views could yield different results when studied for the same topic. In spite of that, the findings of this study remain valid and can be transferable to the production of other films made in Zimbabwe, as the methodology employed was rigorous enough. The insights of those five filmmakers are rich enough to make valid conclusions about film production as practiced in Zimbabwe, without necessarily generalizing such findings to all films produced in the land. This is a key strength of the qualitative research paradigm employed in this research, as shall be explained in Chapter Three.

## **Assumptions of study**

The key assumption in this study is that filmmakers in Zimbabwe are not aware of the important terms guaranteed on the Algiers Charter, that freedom of expression for filmmakers is a pre-requisite condition to contribute to the growth of the critical understanding of the people.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

### **Conclusion**

The background and significance of this research was carried out in this Chapter. In the next chapter review literature and theoretical framework is going to be presented. The third chapter is going to present the methods of data gathering and the fourth chapter will present the political economy of the Musowe Platinum Film Production. The fifth chapter will present data findings and make an analysis and interpretation of conversation with film producers. The last chapter is going to conclude and wrap up the research.

# **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

#### **Introduction**

The Algiers Charter of 1975 occupies an important place as a framework guiding the production as well as distribution of films in Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular. Film makers in Africa must be responsible and should tell the 'African' story from the 'African' perspective. In other words, film makers must not be driven by commercial interests. However, despite the importance of this charter and its mandate to guide film production on the African continent, systematic studies on the subject on the continent as a whole are few and far between.

This chapter reviews studies related to the current research especially on the African continent, demonstrating how it goes beyond previous investigations. Mouton (2006) asserts that the main reasons for reviewing literature are to ensure that one does not merely duplicate a previous study; to discover what the most recent and authoritative theorizing about the subject is and to find out what the widely accepted empirical findings in the field of study are given the scarcity of studies on the subject, most of the discussed works focus on issues to do with political economy of film production in Africa, history of film and regulation in Southern Rhodesia and Zimbabwe among others. The chapter argues for the need for studies on the Algiers Charter.

Finally, the chapter presents the theoretical framework of the study. The study is mainly informed by the Third cinema theory. However, the shortcomings of this approach are complemented by the political economy of the media theory which illuminates on the conditions in which films are produced in Zimbabwe.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

☒

There is a substantive body of literature highlighting debates concerning what constitutes ‘authentic’ African cinema (see Mboti, 2010; Thompson, 2013; Teno, 2014). To begin with, it has been argued that the definition of an authentic African cinema has remained problematic (Harrow, 1999). There is however, consensus among African academics that colonial representations about African subjects were ‘inauthentic’ and distorted (Fredrikse, 1984; Saunders, 1999; Murphy, 2000).

In colonial Africa, just like other media spaces, film was a highly racialized space (Windrich, 1981). Africans were represented as the ‘other’, barbaric and savages (Windrich, Saunders 1999). It is important to that note that the major thrust of the colonial government in Southern Rhodesia and colonial Africa at large was to construct Africans as inferior. The Ugandan scholar Mamdani (1996) contends that the colonial authorities in Africa institutionalised racism by distinguishing settlers and natives in a Janus-faced, diverged establishment. In fact, the natives were subjects while the European settlers were citizens enjoying civil and political rights. Mamdani (1996) contends that in the bifurcated state, citizenship would be a privilege of the civilized (whites); the uncivilized (blacks) would be subject to an all-round instruction. Rhodesia was also marked by contrasting racial divisions (Muzondidya and Ndlovu- Gatsheni, 2007). For example, from 1890 when the Pioneer column - Cecil John Rhodes’ British South Africa Company, arrived, they introduced regulations and institutions which defined population into racial and ethnic categories that is European, Asian and Coloured; and ‘Natives’ (Beach, 1994; Muzondidya and Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2007). Thus Africans or natives were viewed as lesser beings from this period. Consequently, media representations of Africans were distorted. The study argues that while this body of literature is important, it does not tackle the subject of the Algiers Charter and film production in modern Zimbabwe. Moreover, it is a fact that such studies are mainly grounded in history than the present.

Interestingly debates about the representation of Africa or Africans in the media including film have also continued until today. Such debates led to the New World Information Communication Order (NWICO) debate when the so called third world countries including Africa complained

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

about negative western media gaze about them. According to Mboti (2010) behind every movie there is a gaze or a conscious attempt to see the world in a certain way. Interestingly, despite the complaint about negative representation of Africans in western films, African movies or films telling the African story appear to be missing (Teno 2014). For Teno (2014), if there is anything called African cinema then it is in a precarious stage. In other words, films made by Africans for Africans are scarce. This concept is closer to the current research as it mentions the idea of the African story.

Thompson (2013) submits that cinematic arts should contribute to the goals of the developing societies, providing them with relevant knowledge of their own environment and their place within it. Teshome cited in Harrow (1999) argues that indigenization is important to development of an authentic third world film. African culture and values should be made visible and give the youth a sense of self-worth as Africans. This study looks at the extent to which filmmakers in Zimbabwe are in authority, free and committed to their work because development emanates from the knowledge people gather from their artistic work.

An 'African' definition of cinema is problematic because it is not clear what constitutes African. A documentary filmmaker and also a costume designer for *Yellow Card* (2000) Heelen Bhaghat argue that Zimbabwean films are not African but very western. A popular donor funded film production in the 1990s *Yellow card* is cited as one of those productions trying to imitate the western style, largely reflecting the interests of the funders, contrary to narrating the real African story. The study here seeks to find the extent to which the selected filmmakers are re-presenting Africa from an 'African' point of view. The study questions whether film productions are continuously providing distorted images about Africa yet they are made by 'Africans'.

The reality of Africans filming Africa has not produced a unified "authentic" African cinema but radical African film defines a true African cinema, rather it has produced a series of complex and often contradictory visions of the continent (Murphy 2000). He further argues that, true African film must not reject all European or Western stuff only because film is a Western product. Another school of thought argues that an effort to make truthful films does not make sense. The function of movies is to communicate the way people should view the world (Mboti, 2010). Grace Mutandwa an arts editor for the Financial Gazette cited in Thompson (2013) postulates



## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

that, Zimbabwe media should do environmental scanning and consult the societies whose lives they turn into films, so that they give a true representation of their lives unless this meant to be pure fiction.

There are three theoretical possibilities available in interpreting African cinematic texts these are Neo-Marxism, Neo Structuralism and Modernism. From a Neo Marxian perspective, Harrow asserts that African cinematic texts emphasize the value of undermining dominant forms and methods of ideas .Neo Marxists characterizes film texts produced from the Western ideology and capitalists system as less truthful or less valuable than those understood as rooted in an ideology and practice of resistance .Neo-Structuralism view the distinction between African and Western films as already in place within the text or in reality and merely wishes to demonstrate the differences through which meaning can take place.(Harrow 1999)

Mboti (2010) and Thompson (2013) disagree on the issue that film productions represent life or reflect things that happened. Mboti (2010) argues that reality in films does not exist because people change how they perform in front of cameras. He goes on to say reality cannot fit a cinematic frame but merely exceeds it. When someone presses record on camera, reality is systematically “peeled off” leaving a construct. In essence Mboti dismisses the notion that films can be sites of truth or that they can reflect life or mirror things that transpired. On the contrary Thompson believes that, film as a medium should only be used to represent the truth. Unlike Western films that are used to caricature and lampoon Africans, projecting them as stupid, lazy and uncivilized, films should be truthful. For instance *Tiki* a film production in the colonial Rhodesia negatively portrayed blacks as adaptable and simple minded (Moyo, 2003). Contrasting views on film by Mboti (2010) and Thompson (2013) are of importance to this research. In fact, Mboti provides critical insights that media texts or films in particular should not be taken for granted when representing reality. Though Mboti does not ground his discussion in the Algiers Charter, it helps me in examining whether Zimbabwean film makers are faithfully articulating the Zimbabwean story, shifting away from colonial tendencies of othering Africans.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

Murphy (2000) submits that true third world films must abandon structures and thematic concerns of commercial Western cinema, this study problematize this notion considering the fact that Zimbabwe is in an economic crisis, filmmakers would want to make profit and make a living out of their labor. The study unpacks the extent to which Zimbabwean films are being driven by commercial interest or as espoused in the Algiers Charter that they should reject commercial profit.

### **Film and government regulation**

The Algiers Charter of 1975, states that film makers must operate in a free environment which is conducive for them to freely discharge their duties. In light of this, this section discusses literature on media regulation at large and film in particular from the colonial to the post-colonial times in Zimbabwe. The media in Zimbabwe have an important role to inform and educate its citizens what is happening in the country and beyond its borders. However, the desired free flow of information has been elusive due to harsh pieces of legislations since colonial to post- colonial times (Saunders, 1999). African media in general faces the challenge of too much government interference and control (Nyamnjoh, 2007).

From colonial times, the Rhodesian government maintained stranglehold on the media including film (Windrich, 1981; Saunders, 1999). People like Van der Byl and Benson who choreographed Rhodesia propaganda ensured that film would be used as a weapon to protect white minority government hegemony (Saunders, 1999). In other words, film was one of the key propaganda machines alongside the press (Gale, 1962; Fredriske, 1981). A number of media laws such as the Broadcasting Services Act of 1957 regulated film production in Rhodesia (Windrich 1957). Moreover, there was also the Censorship and Entertainment of Control Act (Moyo 2002). In essence, there was the Censorship board falling under the Ministry of Home Affairs which was formed during colonial Rhodesia in 1967. It made sure that it suppresses any political commentary which made an attempt to challenge the political establishment (Eyre, 2001).

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

As argued by Tomaselli (1989), for Africa as a whole, cinema has always been a powerful weapon deployed by colonial nations to maintain their respective spheres of political and economic influence. Cinema was used to ‘civilize’ the natives by the ‘white race.’ Film during the colonial era was used for war propaganda purposes and promotion of the minority capitalist interests. Smyth (1988) postulates that, colonial film broadcast units played a significant role to denounce the liberation struggle. Murphy (2000) argues that during the colonial era, cinematic pictures of Africa served to strengthen the Western vision of the ‘dark continent’ seeing Africa as a wild and savage place, existing outside of history. At the point when African filmmakers started to rise in the 1960s and 1970s, they set out to counter these disparaging Western representations of their mainland. In colonial Zimbabwe, there were a number of films such as *Tiki*, which were used to ‘other’ the Africans (Saunders, 1999).

Interestingly, harsh media laws in general which also regulate films were inherited and even strengthened after independence in Zimbabwe. Zaffiro (2002) argues that at independence in 1980, the young nation Zimbabwe became pseudo heirs of the outgoing Rhodesia system, inheriting both structures and laws. This perhaps confirms the assertion by post-colonial scholar Kwame Anthony Appiah (1992) that the attainment of independence by African nations does not mark the end of colonialism. The colonial is far from being dead. Dumisani Moyo (2002) described it as ‘change without change’. The post 2000 period is one of the key epochs in Zimbabwe’s media regulation history where harsh laws were enacted.

Most importantly, ZANU PF government enacted harsh media laws to control the media (MISA, 2011). These legal instruments include the Broadcasting Services Act (BSA) of 2001, Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) of 2002, Public Order and Security Act (POSA) of 2002 and Interceptions of Communications Act of (2007). The state controlled media were used during this period to create a ‘patriotic’ citizenry (Willems 2005; Ravengai 2009) while the period itself was characterized by the writing of “patriotic history” (Ranger 2004). As the ZANU PF government faced a legitimacy crisis at home, it increasingly began to use narrow and selective forms of ‘patriotic history’ in order to justify its continued rule over Zimbabwe

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

(Tendi, 2008; Ranger, 2004; Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Willems, 2011). For patriotic history to succeed all media forms needed to be regulated and film is not an exception. For instance, laws like BSA Act of 2001, POSA and Censorship and Control of Entertainment Act heavily regulates the film industry. However, studies engaging with such a legislative environment in the context of the expectations of the Algiers charter are missing. This research therefore sets an agenda in African film studies for a rethinking of the Algiers charter, unpacking its feasibility, constraints among other issues.

Zulu (2000) submits that more can be done if the state deregulates, giving up its tight grip on media production, and especially on television will liberate people to fully express themselves. He argues that television must take a leading role in nurturing film production, . . . in our kind of countries there is no way a film industry can develop without being driven by television. Television is where you make short productions. This is where your film-makers develop into the calibre [such as] in Australia .He further argues that when one is given the chance to make production for television broadcasting, one should refine his or her skills.(Zulu 2000:19).

Of late it has been argued that the Zimbabwean Constitution section 61(b) guarantees the right to freedom of artistic expression, scientific research and creativity. However, laws like AIPPA; POSA among others contradicts the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of expression. However, while Moyo (2003) argues that the government in Zimbabwe had a solid plan of creating in reality a one party state and promoting its policies by maintaining a monolithic environment in the media. Hamilton (2014) questions the authority of the government to regulate all forms of entertainment. He argues the government has no authority to regulate the media. It's the duty of the parents and guardians and not of the government to monitor and regulate what their children view for instance (Hamilton 2014). This is especially applicable to Christian parents who must "train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it" (Proverbs 22:6) It's a Christian regulation that is necessary for minimizing government intrusion into the entertainment industry.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

Hamilton suggests that parents should check the film ratings and age appropriateness before allowing their children to view. Regulation arguably exists to prevent vulnerable audiences from becoming victims. When a number of Hollywood studios came to Zimbabwe, for example Canon and Universal Pictures, the Ministry of Information laid rules for the approval of filming projects which was a way of regulation and censorship. The film scripts must be submitted to the authorities for approval. During the time these scripts were expected to conform to the new post-colonial order by avoiding the promotion of colonial attitudes and outlook such as the portrayal of Africans in subservient and primitive roles. These film scripts were also checked for libel.

Artistic expressions can be censored on the off chance that they are regarded undesirable, indecent or obscene, offensive or harmful to public morals; or contrary to the interest of defense, public safety, public order, and the economic interests of the state or general well-being. However the standards have not been clearly defined, leaving room for abuse and arbitrary decisions by the Censorship Board (Freemuse&Nhimbe 2016). In 2015, the Censorship Board denied accreditation to screen the global film “50 Shades of Grey” in its original form. Movie theaters chose not to demonstrate a heavily censored version of the film according to SterKinekor, a local film distribution company. The theaters argued the heavy censorship would compromise the integrity of the film. Not long after the global arrival of the film, pirated copies of the film were generally accessible on the black market. (Freemuse and Nhimbe 2016)

The movie *Lobola* (Kaseke2010) was delayed from screening because the Board delayed in inspecting the copy. The board has in authorizing for premiere of the movies and if any producer go against this their license will be cancelled. On the same token this movie created problems because it shows the mutilation of the African marriage customs by a cosmopolitan groom, shows the disintegration of African caused by migration to the west and of the board is to granite cultural identity of a nation even though culture is dynamic but try to make sure that our local productions portray the real cultured Zimbabwe.

Censorship can operate in different ways, from complete banning to small cuts, or at various stages, from the production of films to circulation. In this study, The Algiers states that the state should free shackles of censorship so that filmmakers freely express their artistic work which contributes to the development of critical understanding of the audiences. The study is unique in

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

the sense that it unravels the extent to which filmmakers are free from censorship which leads to the development of African cinema.

### **Commercialization of the film industry**

There is a significant body of literature across the globe highlighting that the film industry has become commercialized (Wasko, Phillips and Purdie 1993; Kong 2007; Tomaselli, 2011). Studies have criticized the influence of commercialism on the quality of film production (Klein 2007). It is argued that the ever growing film industry across the globe has somehow compromised the quality and intentions of the film productions and their intentions (Klein, 2007). Kong (2007) argues that the commercializing process in which film has become just one product in the profit centre production chain, film has lost the autonomy that it once had and it's being drawn into the service of advertising and marketing products.

The concern over the commercialization of media in general, was first raised by the radical Leftist Neo- Marxist scholars- the Frankfurt school just after the First World War and later grew stronger in the 1990s, in the context of debates about the growth of infotainment (Storey, 1999; Boyle, 2006). In their seminal work *dialect of Enlightenment* published in 1947, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer bemoans that the media as a culture industry are now commercially driven, commodifying culture for profit motives (Kellner, 1995; Storey, 1999). In other words, serious media content became squeezed out by the trivial and frivolous in a bid to increase profits. Film industry has not been an exception. With reference to the Hollywood film industry, Frankfurt scholars accused it of churning out less critical movies which have ascetic, prudish and pornographic (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1947). While Adorno and Horkheimer's study was done in America early in the 1940s, it sets a key foundation for this African based research. In essence, issues of the influence of commercialism are central to this current investigation.

There is little doubt that most films from the western world, Africa and Zimbabwe have become commercially driven. The motive has been to maximize profits (Thompson, 2013). It has been argued that film industry is a vessel for conveying cultural identity while it is also producing a

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

commercial goal that can be traded internationally. Some complain that the film industry focus on profit has diminished the attention given to film as an art form. In China films employ celebrated filmmakers, making use of big name stars and most advanced technology to make film viewing a luxurious visual pleasure. The extensive promotion and advertising also add significantly to the budget and highlight to attractiveness of the product (Kong 2007). Feng emphasizes the emergence of commercial film and the impact it has had on Chinese film by establishing an alternative cinematic tradition different from the previous generations, leading to major structural changes in the film industry as a whole. Since mid-1990s, film commercialization has taken over the business of Chinese film production, with entertainment films accounting for 75% of total films (Zhu 2003:103)

Both Lee and Kong argue that films with larger production budgets draw more people. Lee (2003) asserts that even if these big budget films charm more spectators there will be a financial bust one way or the other. Kong (2007) is of the view that the commercial genre is inextricably linked with production of international quality which is a high budget spectacle. Therefore there is an incentive to produce expensive entertaining films which charm more audiences than making a film with more artistic or documentary approach which gets fewer viewers (Lee 2003). He argues that the economies of scale are preferred since the production of the original copy cause very high costs for the producer but every following copy causes only marginal additional costs.

Lee (2003) contends that motion pictures are vehicles for even further commercial activity in the form of advertising and merchandising. However, Shyam Benegal a film director bemoans the entry of corporates into film production because they trigger a dangerous trend of cinema being viewed as mere business. He argues that corporatization of the film industry has its advantages and disadvantages. The advantages are that corporates pump more money into the industry and that there is financial discipline in production. Benegal submits that the disadvantages include less support to alternative cinema as corporates generally promote only films that sell. This shows that the commercialization affects cinema. This study seeks to differ from earlier theorists by pointing not into the positives of commercializing film; rather it looks at the extent to which films are driven by commercial interest.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

Due to government cutbacks to their public funding and mass demand for popular entertainment, many Chinese film studios were forced to produce commercially oriented films and entertainment films actually began to incorporate elements of genre film. Kong argues the Media corporations' profit oriented approach to filmmaking, producers and filmmakers measure the success of these films primary by their box office receipts. For example in China Martial Arts films have become another revived indigenous commercial genre such that the Martial Arts format has been repeatedly exploited by film directors and producers, both within China and beyond. Art houses, former auteurs were involved in producing commercial genre films aimed at attracting the highest possible box office shows that art has now become complicit with capital in making visual spectacles for emerging urban consumers in both domestic market and global market where Chinese film has now started to make its influence felt. (Kong 2007).

Advertising and marketing which accompany film products have not only become more varied and complex, marketing activities further commercialize Hollywood films in particular and enhance the commodification of culture as argued by (Adorno and Holkheimer1947).The product still has to be kept at high standard to attract people but instead of high artistic quality emphasis is often on technical quality. For example, USA makes big productions with larger production values that attract more people across the globe. The productions are shot in English which is a beneficial for its export market. Lee (2003) argues that viewers usually prefer productions that reflect their own cultural values and native language over foreign language production.

However, most of these studies are not grounded in African realities but discusses Europe, America and Asia to some extent. Studies on film about Zimbabwe hardly discuss about commercialization issues. Mhiripiri's (2010) study shows how the post 2000 Zimbabwean economic crisis promoted the development of short films as an alternative to the political and economic crisis haunting the country. Mhiripiri (2010) argues that short films are avoiding political material in an obvious political crisis. Though in a way short films are closer to the aspect of commercialism of film, Mhiripiri is silent on the subject. Rwafa's (2012) research concurs with Mhiripiri's assertions that films are dealing with themes that appear harmless to the



## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

state (Rwafa 2012). Mhiripiri and Ureke's (2016) study shows how new media technologies have become important in film production by students at state universities.

However, while preliminary studies on film, for example, (Hungwe, 1991; Mhiripiri, 2010; Rwafa, 2012; Mhiripiri and Ureke, 2016) lay foundation to film studies on Zimbabwe important as it examines the extent to which selected modern Zimbabwean film makers are guided by the Algiers Charter in their operations. The study provokes debate on the place of Algiers charter as a framework in contemporary Zimbabwean film productions.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This section presents and discusses the theoretical framework informing and guiding the study. The Third cinema is the principal theory which underpins this research on film production in Zimbabwe. It becomes the conceptual lens of my study. The intention here is to generate rigorous and analytical judgment over phenomena. As mentioned earlier, the study shall also benefit from political economy theory to support the discussion on film production in Zimbabwe.

### **Third Cinema theory**

This research deploys Third cinema theory to discuss the production of film in modern Zimbabwe. The term Third Cinema is attributed to two Argentine film-makers, Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getinos (1976). In their article *Towards a Third Cinema*, they argue that cinema is used to testify injustices, where it was used as a tool of social change. Political and cultural authorities reduce film to a commodity so as to feel the needs of the film industry that creates them.

Influenced by the ideas of "Third Cinema" as theorized by Solanas and Getinos (1976), the black film aesthetics' transformative character should aim to decolonize the mind, contribute to a

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

radical consciousness, lead to revolutionary transformation of society, to develop a new film language and positive images in contradiction to colonial ideas promoted through the Hollywood film paradigm. The study argues that such strands are important given the Algiers charter calls for African film to give Afrocentric narratives about Africa. Moreover, this theory was developed from Argentina, Latin America which also shares some similar problems with Africa. Undoubtedly, the theory can be appropriated for a Zimbabwean film production discussion.

Third Cinema movement called for a politicized tri-continental approach to film-making in Africa, Asia, and Latin America which would foreground issues of social justice, class division, ethnicity, and national identity (Guneratne and Dissanayake 2003). The mood of revolutionary optimism which accompanied the process of decolonization saw the birth of the theory of what was to become known as ‘Third Cinema,’ which was first developed in South America and which stressed the political function of cinema. Those critics who have advocated the theory of a Third Cinema have stressed that authentic third world must abandon the structures and thematic concerns of commercial Western cinema (Murphy 2000). This ideological imperative is clearly at the heart of Sembene’s work, and he has often stressed the need to move away from the preoccupations of Western cinema and, more particularly, from its stereotypical images of Africa (Murphy 2000). *Xala* is a Marxist-inspired attack on the neocolonial state, and it has been hailed as a classic example of ‘Third Cinema.

*Touki-Bouki*, on the other hand, is a complex and confusing meditation on culture, modernity and alienation, and it was immediately greeted by many critics as Africa’s first genuine *avant-garde* movie (Murphy 2000). Most theorists of ‘Third Cinema’ sought to characterize the cinematic production of the entire Third World, not just Africa, as revolutionary and fundamentally opposed to Western hegemony. Solanas and Getinos (1960) state that, third cinema is a film movement which seeks to do away with capitalism, neo-colonialism and the desire for cinema to make profit. Third cinema was also created for the purpose of entertaining its audience, to inspire revolution against class, racial and gender inequality (Solanas and Gettinios 1960). They further contend that “new cinema” which is third cinema should be about the ordinary and not commercialized entertainment.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

New cinema should be grounded into people's lives, where film is used to communicate social and economic development. The argument on commercialism is also important to the research as it is mentioned by the Algiers charter. I examine through interviews whether film makers in Zimbabwe are driven by commercial imperatives. Solanas and Getinos (1960) contend that third cinema agitates for the protection of third world culture and national identity. They claim, Third Cinema seeks to preserve and conserve what is left. Third Cinema should be embedded in ordinary people's lives and not commercialized entertainment. "Third cinema in our opinion, is a cinema that recognizes the most gigantic cultural, scientific and artistic manifestation of our time, the great possibility of constructing a liberated personality with each people as the starting point-in a word, the decolonization of culture", (Solanas and Getinos 1960).

The issue of identity is also central to the research as I look at whether the Zimbabwean identities are being promoted in film as required by the charter. I explore whether the film makers in Zimbabwe are carrying faithful innocent images about Zimbabweans divorced from the western gaze or not. As a liberation of oppressed, especially from racism and colonialism, third cinema seems to be a very necessary product, since film might be the best way to convey messages and ideas to the others, even though there should have been many other forms of art before film that was to liberate the oppressed people (Li Sun 2010). This is important to the study because The Algiers Charter asserts that cinema and culture should play a part in pressing the need to improve liberating terms ,the problematic of development. However, as mentioned earlier, the study also borrows theoretical strands from the critical political economy theory. Below, I discuss the political economy of the media theory in the context of film production.

### **Political economy of film production**

The Marxian concept of political economy is critical in this study as it sheds light on the feasibility as well as limitations of the Algiers charter in the context of Zimbabwean film production. Mosco (1996:6) defines Political economy as "the study of social relations, particularly power relations that mutually constitute the production, distribution and consumption of resources including communication resources." In simple terms political

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

economy is mainly interested in how ownership, funding and control patterns have traceable consequences on the range of discourses and images that appear in the mass media. Methods of political economy are derived from sociology, political science and economics.

The political economy approach to mass communication analysis gives prominence to production and is often associated with macro questions of media ownership and control, interlocking directorships and other factors that bring other media industries and political and social elites. Unlike conservative economic studies, political economy places emphasis on 'ethical and normative questions (Hesmondhalgh 2002). Political economy also stresses on historical transformation, the totality of social relations, a commitment to moral philosophy and a unity of thought and practice.

Hesmondhalgh (2002) further argues that political economy approaches see the fact that culture is produced and consumed under capitalism as a fundamental issue in explaining inequalities of power, prestige and profit. Furthermore the political economy approach is concerned with the extent to which cultural industries serve the interests of the wealthy and powerful. The media are assumed to be independent and to owe loyalty only to the public, if they are funded by the public and organized through a competitive market. Through a discussion with film makers in Zimbabwe, the study clarifies on whose interests are served by Zimbabwe's culture industry-film. The study seeks to find the extent to which issues of funding of the film productions compromises expectations of the Algiers charter.

It must be noted that the political economy approach is excellent for providing insight into the creation of texts. Political economy is concerned with structures be they government, mass media corporations or channels of delivery. As such production, regulation and to a certain extent, texts are the fields that approach favors. This is where it differs from cultural studies which are concerned with consumption, identity and to greater extent texts. Such issues to do with regulation and the environment in which film producers are operating in Zimbabwe are relevant to this investigation.

There are also other scholars in the discipline of political economy who have been regarded as instrumentalists. Among them are Edward Herman, Noam Chomsky and Robert McChesney.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

These scholars argue the media are instruments in the hands of their owners hence they rebuke control of the media by the state since this defeat the spirit of democratization in society. Thus they emphasize on the principle of ‘laissez faire’ that is getting rid of the state on the market. Their perspectives on media or film production environment are also important.

The field of political economy has also been understood as the study of how values of all kinds are produced, distributed and consumed (the economic), how power is produced, exchanged, exercised (the political) and how these aspects of the social world are related at any given place and time in history. Political economy of communication also has its roots in the concept of knowledge monopolies. He illustrated how through history certain privileged groups (priests, kings, soldiers, and scientists) have enjoyed a monopoly of access to certain kinds of knowledge. Political economy became a recognizable field because of Harold Innis disciplinary background as an economic historian. He provided a historical materialist method for studying political economies of communications. By separating communication ‘content’ from technology form, he provided a means for seeing how new media can sustain, erode or otherwise transform various kinds of civilization’s throughout history based on the types of technologies used to maintain ‘knowledge monopolies’.

Marshal McLuhan (1964) extended the technology as medium perspective to the point at which people felt implied to deploy ‘technological determinism’ as a negative epithet to describe Marshal’s work. He is crucial in the development of Political economy of communication because of his emphasis on the human sensory apparatus, its relation to various values that, for example oral and usually –oriented media produce and to the political and cultural affects that technological transformations entail. They helped show that technology have a communicative dimension and play a significant role in political economy formations. As much of means of production for capital or whichever system of political economy in which specific technologies appear they are also a means of producing culturally and historically specific systems meaning.

McChesney (2000) argues this emphasizes structural factors and labor process in the production, distribution and consumption of communications. How economic factors influence politics and social relations-critique- economic factors are taken for granted and separated from political and social relations economic- (subject) –act upon- political and social relations (the object).Clement

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

and Williams (1997) opines that political economy is the ‘study of processes whereby social change is looked in the historical interaction of the economic, political and cultural ideological moments of social life, with the dynamic rooted in socio-economic conflict. It is also concerned with an array of media ownership questions: consolidation diversification, commercialization, internationalization, globalization and public versus private media.

Mosco (1996) suggests several entry points into political economy analysis namely: commodification, spatialization and structuration. By commodification, this refers to the process of transforming use values communication processes technology and contribute to the general process of commodification of the economy as a whole (cybernetic commodity also included). As for spatialization this refers to the effect of the constraints of space and time in life (akin to Innis theories). Political economy of communication uses spatialisation to address ‘institutional extension of corporate power in the communication industry’ for example media ownership: horizontal, vertical, cross media concentration and conglomerate ownership. It is also concerned with issues of market and state regulation, commercialization, liberalization, privatization, internationalization and globalization. By structuration, Mosco (1996) contends it is a process by which structures are constituted out of human agency, even as they provide the very medium of that constitution. It incorporates the issues of agency, social process, social relation and social practice. Issues of space in which film producers are operating in Zimbabwe, the structures and discourses of commodification cannot be over emphasized in this discussion.

The economic political economy approach investigates at how corporate interests tend to influence media content. Habermas (1989) contends the public sphere has been ‘re-feudalized’ due to commercial and political interests. In the Western world commercial interests tend to override media operates. Such a syndrome has been condemned by James Curran (2000) in his ‘Rethinking Media and Democracy’ thesis. Curran (2000) argues due to profit needs, media organizations have become corporate mercenaries. It is those commercial interests which resulted in News of the world, to eaves drop on people’s telephone conversations, a move which resulted in it shutting down. I also unravel what has influenced the ‘re-feudalization’ of the film industry in Zimbabwe as a public sphere.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

The political economy perspective holds that if we wish to understand media content and especially its ideological character, then we must begin by examining ownership and control of the media industries and their relationship to other political and economic elite groups in society. If cultural production is predominantly by relentless search for profit and is increasingly undertaken by media organizations that have a wide range of economic interests, then the political economy perspective would lead us to conclude that one of the first casualties tends to be media content that directly challenges the prevailing capitalists' interest. This explains why this research engages with film makers to understand how they operate and forces influencing their decisions at large.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the literature review for the research, showing how the current research goes beyond previous studies. The theoretical for the study has also been discussed. The next chapter discusses the methodology and research methods for the study.

# **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

## **Chapter Three**

### **Research Methods and Methodology**

#### **Introduction**

The main thrust of this study is to find out the extent to which Zimbabwe's growing 'culture industry'-film productions are informed and guided by the Algiers Charter of 1975. The study argues that despite the importance of this African made instrument in film production, systematic academic studies on the subject in the African context in general and Zimbabwe in particular are scarce. This research therefore, utilizes strands from the Third Cinema and political economy theory of the media. It provides a detailed account on the extent to which purposively selected contemporary film productions in Zimbabwe are committed to the guidelines of the Algiers Charter. The study also unravels forces that might be constraining film producers from operating along the normative expectations of the Algiers Charter.

This chapter presents and discusses the methods and methodology of the research. Methodology refers to the way in which information for a particular research is gathered and this includes the methods, techniques and procedures used to collect and analyze information (Patton, 1990). In other words, methodology encompasses research approach, design, setting, sampling approaches, limitations of the approach; methods of data collection and analysis (see Bryman, 2012). Every research in the positivist and phenomenological world has to be systematic. This research is largely qualitative in approach as detailed in the sections below.

#### **A qualitative approach to the study of film productions in Zimbabwe**

Research normally falls within two broad research paradigms-qualitative and quantitative. Over the years, researchers in the natural sciences usually prefer the quantitative or positivist approach due to its emphasis on empiricism. However, researchers in the Humanities and Social Sciences have a huge bias towards the qualitative approach (see Bryman, 2012). However, often the dichotomies between these theoretical paradigms are often ignored as researchers fuse the two approaches into mixed method approach to complement each other. This study is grounded in the qualitative research approach due to the nature of the phenomenon under investigation.



## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

Qualitative research is an approach to human science research in which the researcher studies people, cultural practices or beliefs, institutions, or communities in their natural settings (Spradley, 1980; Stokes 2003, Blanche, Kelly and Durreim 2006; Bryman, 2012; Nwoye, 2013). In essence, in qualitative studies, opinions of those studied or the *meanings* which such people bring to specific issues happening to them are treated as important. Thus a qualitative research approach is inclined towards studying people's experiences at a specific given moment (Nwoye, 2013). This research is a study of selected people's experiences in film production in Zimbabwe. According to Crossley (2000), in qualitative studies, the emphasis of the researcher is on the experiential or the personal dimensions of human experience. This study on film production in Zimbabwe therefore, valorizes experiences of selected film producers in Zimbabwe. The researcher firmly believes that the data on the extent to which Zimbabwe's film industry is confining to the expectations of the Algiers Charter can only be found from the film producers themselves who are involved in the production processes. Consequently, the researcher has to engage with the participants to enable a 'thickest description' of the phenomenon (see Geertz, 1973).

It has also been asserted that qualitative research studies mainly stress detailed explanations than quantification in collection and analysis of data, predominantly emphasizing an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research, in which emphasis is placed in the generation of theories (Bryman 2004, Stoke 2003). This study employs an interpretive strand of the qualitative research approach in gathering, interpreting and presenting data for the research. The interpretive prism or approach acknowledges that findings depend on how the work is interpreted and thus do not assume to know all (Ruddock, 2001; Bryman, 2012). The study hopes to provide a detailed account on the experiences of film makers in Zimbabwe by interacting and listening carefully to what they say. This undoubtedly is important for the researcher to illuminate on how these selected film makers' productions are in sync with the Algiers Charter framework.

The researcher is however, aware of the criticism often levelled against the qualitative research approach especially by researchers inclined to the positivist tradition. For example, qualitative

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

research approach is criticized for largely depending on subjectivity and generalization, and lack of transparency due to the fact that at times researchers and their sample selection and data collection approaches are not always clear (Bryman, 2012). Nonetheless, the researcher argues that this is the best approach for this kind of study. Moreover, interviews utilized by the study shall be complemented by analysis of some of the techniques used by the film producers. It has also been argued that researchers at times are overwhelmed by their background which may end up distorting findings of the research. The researcher however made an attempt to minimize biases as much as possible

It cannot be over emphasized that the qualitative research approach is the best for this current study. In most cases, the qualitative research approach is suitable when there is a need to allow often marginalised groups to share their stories and hear their voices (Nwoye, 2013). This approach therefore allows for the film producers to articulate their position and challenges with regards to confining to the Algiers Charter. Moreover, the qualitative research approach is often utilised when there is need to develop theories in circumstances where only partial or inadequate theories do exist for certain populations and samples (Nwoye, 2013). The study asserts that there is need for further study on the Algiers Charter and film production in Africa at large as systematic studies on the subject are scarce. The section below discusses the population of the research.

### **Research Design**

Research design is different from the method by which data are collected and it is not uncommon to see a research design treated as a mode of data collection rather than as a logical structure of the inquiry. De Vaus (2001) argues, it is more than just a work plan. It ensures that the evidence obtained answers the research questions. The study is an exploratory research, conducted for a problem that had not clearly defined. As the name states, the study explore the extent to which Zimbabwean film producers are guided and informed by the Algiers Charter of 1975 and does not intend to offer final and conclusive solutions to existing problems. This study is designed as a qualitative research in the form of in depth interviews that are often seen as prime examples of

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

qualitative research which adopt an interpretive approach to studying phenomenon within their context and consider the subjective meanings that people relate to their situation (Yin, 1993).

Research design 'deals with a logical problem and not a logistical problem' (Yin, 1989). According to Mouton (2006) a research design is a plan or blueprint regarding how one intends to conduct the research focusing on the end product as opposed to the research methodology which focuses on the research process and the kind of tools and procedures that are to be used. The researcher used in-depth structured interviews conversation analysis and semiotic analysis for texts that could not be accounted for conversation analysis.

### **Population**

The population of this research is constituted by purposively selected contemporary film producers in Zimbabwe. In research, the term population generally refers to the larger pool from which a sample is drawn (Fourie, 2007). However, more often, terms, population, universe and unit of analysis are used synonymously though in practice exact analyzed units are drawn from a population or research universe.

Babbie (2001) asserts that, population is defined as the entire group a researcher is interested in, the group about which the researcher wishes to draw conclusion. In media studies, population can be constituted by media houses, newspaper units, film products, journalists, film producers among others. As mentioned earlier, the target population for this study was constituted by film producers purposively drawn from Zimbabwe's three cities Harare, Gweru and Masvingo. These include *Fidelis* (Steve Musowe), *Nhaka ndeyani?* (Madora 2013), *The show goes on* (Abel Dzobo 2011) and *Sabhuku Vharazipi* (Wellington Chindara). Though it would have been desirable for the researcher to interview, film producers from all major cities in the country, financial resources and time constraints made it impossible. However, this did not compromise the validity and reliability of findings presented in this research. Moreover, the population for the study also includes two films *Fidelis* and *Sabhuku Vharazipi* which were analyzed to deduce whether cinematographic techniques employed by these film producers are in tandem with the Algiers Charter of 1975.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

### **Sampling**

Not everything about the population can be studied hence a representative group can be sampled for generalization. There are two approaches to sampling namely probability and non-probability sampling. Patton (1990) defines sampling as the act, process or technique of selecting a suitable sample or a representative part of the population as such it is studied to learn something about a larger grouping of which it is a part. For Searle (1995), sampling is the selection of units of analysis such as people or institutions for the study. The idea is about selecting a few samples from a bigger group (sample population) to become the basis for estimating or predicting a fact, situation or outcome regarding the bigger group. In other words, sampling is a statistical practice concerned with the selection of individual observations intended to yield some knowledge about the population of concern, especially for the purpose of statistical inference. Though sampling is cost effective it is associated with problems of determining the population involved and how to estimate value from a sample.

In most cases, qualitative studies employ non-probability sampling techniques. Thus this study being qualitative specifically employed two non-probability sampling approaches purposive sampling and snow-ball sampling. It has been argued that in qualitative research studies, there are no strict criteria for sample size (Patton, 1990). While in quantitative studies, the principal sampling strategy is probability sampling, which depends on the selection of a random and representative sample from the larger population, on the other hand, *purposive sampling* is the dominant strategy in qualitative research (Maxwell, 1992; Bryman, 2012).

In essence, in qualitative research, the sample size can be one unit, like in situations where an individual is the subject of the study (Boyd, 2001; Nwoye, 2013). The study therefore argues that five film producers interviewed are adequate for the study to gain insight on the aspect under investigation. The study concurs with Creswell's (1998: 65) assertion that 'long interviews with few people' within the context of a phenomenological research study is sufficient to get the typical pattern in a data from the participants on a given theme.

# **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

## **Purposive sampling**

This study employs purposive sampling as the principal sampling technique for the research. Purposive sampling targets an individual or those persons with the relevant data for achieving the goals of the study (Bryman, 2012). Nwoye (2013) contends that the absence of randomization in sample selection in qualitative studies does not mean that issues of sampling and those of representativeness where applicable, are not important in qualitative research.

Purposive or judgmental sampling became handy in selecting five film producers interviewed in the research process. The rationale for their selection was that they were perceived as experts in the area of film production in Zimbabwe, with rare important insights to share. This technique was also critical in selecting films for analysis to deduce whether production norms are in harmony with the Algiers Charter of 1975.

Purposive sampling was also complemented with snow-ball sampling. The term snowballing refers to a method of expanding the sample by asking one informant or participant to recommend relevant others for interviewing (Babbie, 1995; Bryman, 2012). In the context of the research, I also benefited from this approach as some of my respondents suggested other 'experts' on film production in Zimbabwe. At some instances, participants would actually facilitate interviews with the suggested interviewee.

## **Methods of data collection**

Data collection is the actual process of going in to the field of study and conduct the actual data collection. Primary research is first hand collection of data that is done for a specific problem and does not exist. There is a plethora of data collection methods often used in qualitative studies. These include interviews, observation, focus group and document analysis among others (Bryman, 2012). Bryman (2012) postulates that research instruments are, measurement tools designed to obtain data on a topic of interest from research subjects. The topic under interrogation, objectives of the research and theoretical approach usually determines the nature

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

of methods to be employed by a specific study. This study mainly employs in-depth interviews, given that it intends to solicit views of selected film makers in Zimbabwe regarding the Algiers Charter framework.

### **In-depth interviews**

Interviews are the principal data collection strategies employed by this research. The motive for the study was to produce what Geertz (1973) conceptualized as ‘thick descriptions’, of the often marginalized in scholarship Algiers Charter in film production. Interviews are very important when intending to get firsthand experience about a specific phenomenon by the participants. Dooley (2003) contends that interviews can be understood as the process of using questions to get answers. The interviewer must always control the pace of the interview (Bryman, 2012). Denzin (1970:186) argues that interviews could be viewed as “any face to face conversation whereby one person extracts information from one another. Interviews provide the best window on how people think and feel, allowing one to research into areas that are not immediately understood. This study argues that interviews are the best instruments to solicit perceptions of film makers on the Algiers Charter and the state of the film industry in Zimbabwe.

According to Hesse Biber and Leavy (2006), interviews are a common method used to collect data in qualitative studies using individuals as the point of departure for the research process. In-depth interviews are premised on the assumption that individuals have unique and important knowledge about the social world which can be shared through verbal communication (Hesse Biber and Leavy, 2006:119). In most cases, those rarely researched individuals or communities possess hidden experiences and knowledge that have been excluded from our understanding of social reality (Hesse Biber and Leavy, 2002:123). Thus through interviews, the study made an attempt to capture important experiences of some of the film makers in Zimbabwe.(see appendix). It was critical for the research to set an agenda for studies on the Algiers Charter, which has hardly been discussed in Zimbabwe’s mainstream cultural studies of film.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

Interviews normally contain a list of questions that the interviewer wants to explore during each interview (Bryman, 2012). Moreover, qualitative researchers agree that interview guides are useful in that they ensure good use of limited interview time and help to keep interactions focused, ensuring that data are generated for all aspects of the research (Nwoye, 2013). I specifically utilized semi structured interviews to allow my conversations to flow naturally. McLeod (2014) asserts that semi-structured interviews are more flexible; as questions can be changed and adapted depending on the respondents' answers. This allowed the film producers to freely express ideas on how they are informed and guided by the Algiers Charter as well as their perceptions towards the state and future of film industry in Zimbabwe. Most of my interviews preferred discussions outside their work places where they felt more relaxed. We therefore, either discussed in parks or restaurants. In most cases our conversations could last for an hour or even more. Where permission had been granted, I used my mobile phone to record. However, those who declined to be recorded, I had to use my note book to take notes.

Our discussions mainly centered on the environment in which film operators are making their productions, challenges faced by film producers in Zimbabwe. My questions also became specific as I made an attempt to unravel their knowledge about the Algiers Charter, their perspectives concerning its feasibility in a world driven by profit motives. During a conversation with the Director of Fidelis film, I would ask about specific techniques which I had observed from their productions. I also asked them about the serialization of their films. Such discussions broadened my scope of understanding the politics of film production in Zimbabwe in general, the conditions of film production and the role of the Algiers Charter in Zimbabwean film productions.

After interviewing five film makers, I became convinced that I had reached saturation point. This refers to a stage in qualitative research where the topic under discussion has been exhausted and interviewees no longer introduce any new more perspectives on the topic (see Bryman, 2012). It was therefore, not necessary to continue with the interviews.

# **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

## **Methods of data analysis**

Smith (2002) argues that data analysis is a method in which raw data is ordered and organized so that useful information can be extracted from it. Data analysis is the process of noting and gathering recurring patterns of behaviour in attitude, responses in variables under study.

Data analysis is the process of noting and gathering recurring patterns of behaviour in attitude, responses in variables under study. Qualitative research studies usually rely on qualitative techniques of analyzing data. Such methods trace their origins from literary studies and semiology. These include hermeneutics of interpretation, critical discourse analysis, textual analysis, semiotics among others. This research specifically employed Conversation Analysis (CA) and semiotics as discussed below.

## **Conversation Analysis**

This research utilised conversation analysis (CA) due to the nature of the study and its objectives. The principal theorist behind this technique is Harvey Sack, who got inspiration from social movement theorist Erving Goffman's concept of interaction order and Harold Garfinkel's ethnomethodology (Bryman, 2012). The theory was developed late in the 1960s and is now commonly used in disciplines like anthropology, sociology, communication and media studies.

The main rationale behind the use of this technique is to study verbal and nonverbal communication in people's everyday life (Goodwin, 1981; Couper-Kuhlen, & Selting, 1996). This research is based on the conversations with selected film makers in Zimbabwe. CA is therefore the best technique in interpreting these conversations. The method is critical when it comes to analyzing recurring patterns in the data (Sacks, 1992; Bryman 2012).

It is argued that Conversation analysis is a technique for investigating the structure and process of social interaction between humans (Goodwin, 1981). It focuses primarily on talk, but integrates also the nonverbal aspects of interaction in its research design. During the interviews



## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

with selected film makers, the researcher was also interested in their non-verbal gestures beyond the verbal talk. This therefore makes conversation analysis the best technique for such a study.

Strivers (2008) asserts that conversation analysis can focus on either on ordinary conversations taking place between family members, or on institutional encounters where the participants accomplish their institutional tasks through their interaction. Moreover, in conversational analysis studies, talk and interaction are examined as a site where intersubjective understanding concerning the participants' intentions, their state of knowledge, their relation, and their stance towards the talked-about objects is created, maintained, and negotiated (Heritage and Atkinson 1984). Such an approach suits the purpose of this research.

In order for the researcher to produce a thick description of Zimbabwean film makers' perceptions towards the state of the film industry and their knowledge of the Algiers Charter, it was critical to examine their responses and treat them as sites where intersubjective understanding and knowledge about the phenomenon is created, maintained and negotiated. The study complemented Conversation analysis with semiotics as discussed below.

### **Thematic presentation and discussion of data**

This study being qualitative in nature, it also employs qualitative techniques in presenting and discussing the data. A thematic approach is the main method to be employed by the study. Nwoye (2013) contends that the first important step is for the researcher to know and understand his or her data. Consequently, I therefore had to read and re-read the text of the data collected from interviews as a way of familiarizing with it. I listened to the audio conversations I had with the film makers and also analyzed the notes I had taken in my diary.

My analysis the data was mainly informed or guided by the research questions and objectives of the study laid out in chapter one. Then moved on to create themes from my data, according to interesting specific themes emerging from reading and reading of the data (See Bryman, 2012; Nwoye, 2013). From this point, data was organized in a pattern which gives clarity to the issues under discussion. Precisely, data was categorized under sub themes which were identified to

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

make it more accessible to the readers of the research. Most of these sub themes makes an attempt to address the research questions of the study.

Finally, the themes of the data are discussed making a connection to the intention of the study. In a way, data was interrogated to ensure that it remained meaningful in the context of the research. In other words, at this stage data was interpreted and given significance. This interpretation was guided by the third cinema theory which is the principal theory to the research. Nwoye (2013) asserts that qualitative findings are not only interpreted, they are also discussed. Thus, I do not only present but also discuss findings of this research. Moreover, a connection is made to previous existing studies showing how the current research both complements and goes beyond previous studies. The researcher is cognizant of Burnard's (2004: 179) assertion that there should be no sense of 'bending' the data to force it to resonate with what has gone before; enough evidence must be presented to establish that such links are really there.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethics are rules and regulations one should abide. These are norms and standards that distinguish right and wrong. Ethical standards prevent against the fabrication or falsifying of data and therefore, promote the pursuit of knowledge and truth which is the primary goal of research (Bryman, 2012). It is argued that promoting acceptable ethical practice in qualitative research is one of the key priorities of researchers in this field.

Since this study is dealing with interviews, it was very crucial for the researcher to procure informed consent from each research participant. The researcher therefore developed a specific informed consent 'agreement' form articulating that participants were participating in the study on voluntary basis, participants were told about the intentions of the study, possible risks and benefits of participating in the study, issues of confidentiality of the study among others. Moreover, I also explained to my participants that they were allowed to withdraw their participation whenever they felt like doing so.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

In short, participants in this study were not coerced but volunteered information. Data was collected at minimal ethical risk.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has provided a detailed account on the methodology of the study. The research methodology and research approach were clearly laid out. Moreover, these methods were justified why and how they were utilised in relation to the research problem. The next chapter discusses the political economy of film production in Zimbabwe.

# Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers

---

## Chapter Four

### Political economy of film production in Zimbabwe

#### Introduction

This chapter gives an overview of the political economy of film production in modern Zimbabwe. However, given that this study does not focus on specific organization(s), but experiences of film makers in general. The chapter therefore, randomly discusses history of Steve Musowe's film production company *Musowe Platinum Film Production* leading to the production of the serialized *Fidelis*. The study will also look at the political economy of *Musowe Platinum Film Production*, looking at ownership, funding and control patterns. A political economy approach is used to analyze the relationship between the film producers, advertisers, government and the kind of cinematic images that are produced. This approach enables one to critically study films and the biases they embrace. Golding and Murdock (2005) contend that political economy examines patterns of ownership and control of media organizations and the consequences of such ownership and control on the activities of the media organizations.

#### Historical background

Film production in modern Zimbabwe owes its origins from the colonial epoch, in Southern Rhodesia. The inspiration drawn from the Hollywood and Nollywood productions has moved Zimbabweans to seriously consider establishing their own 'culture industry'. Resultantly, an important number of Zimbabwean produced film products such as *Fidelis* (Musowe 1999,) *Nhaka ndeyani?* (Madora 2015) and *Sabhuku Vharazipi*, among others, have flooded the informal film market industry. With some of them being serialized, these are not proper films but dramas. Steve Musowe, the owner of *Fidelis* from *Musowe Platinum Film Production*, started writing scripts at a very tender age, when he was six years of age at primary school level. By the time he reached seventeen, he worked with Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) the

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

country's sole broadcaster in 2001, where he produced *Kurauone* with the help of Dorothy Chidzawo.

Musowe has contributed tremendously to the Zimbabwean film industry; he produced different dramas that were broadcast on ZBC the likes of *Kurauone* (2001), *Zvinengozi* (2002), *Shamiso* (2005) *Nzungu Muriva* (2005). In 2002 that's when he moved to Gweru. His organization began as Stevian Media which later on changed name to *Musowe Platinum Film Production*. Musowe is an accomplished film producer who has been in the film business sufficiently long to contribute to the production of serialized films like *Fidelis*, *Zibhondo*, *Diaspora* (2014) and *Muchabaiwa*. The organisation wholly owned by Steve Musowe has additionally created some musical recordings for artists like Mathias Mhere. The Gweru based producer has also managed to fetch some expertise from Midlands State University's Department of Film and Theatre Arts. This certainly impacted on the progression and competency of *Musowe Platinum Film Production*. This clarifies the motivation behind why he has delivered the series up to *Fidelis 20*. This expertise has come in the form of editing and camera work (Munyukwi2015).

Musowe groomed actors who were new to the profession without any previous history of having been involved in some previous productions, for example the main actor in *Fidelis*, his talent was nurtured by Musowe. The organisation has been involved in the whole process of production, marketing and distribution of the film all across the country. Musowe's company has been registered with the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe (NAC) in an offer to draw in support and also recognition of works that it is doing. Munyukwi (2015) states that the production company has even made efforts to acquire funds from the Culture Fund in attempting to enhance terms of equipment as well as to come up with more successful film productions yet however these applications are still to get acknowledgment.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

### **Film production in Zimbabwe**

Political economy is the study of power relations, production, distribution and consumption of media products. Ownership and control patterns of the organizations have possible implications to the way films in Zimbabwe are made. It is these ownership, funding and control patterns of *Musowe Platinum Film Production* that can then be used to understand the economic and power relations behind the production of *Fidelis*. The study is of the view that those who fund the operations, for instance film producers, advertisers and the government have influence on what films produce. He who owns the media has the power to control the content and the operations. *Musowe Platinum Film Production* is a name which was coined along from his name Steve Musowe, this means that even the story line of his films are determined by him. The evidence of the ownership is also quite clear in the way Musowe holds the most powerful positions in the production process as the script writer, director as well as the producer. Musowe goes on to determine even the content, shooting locations and actors that contribute to his productions. It is the ownership of Platinum House that has molded the nature of *Fidelis* and even determined the various camera shoots and angles. It should be noted that Musowe controls pre-production to post production processes which he does at his home in Riverside Gweru. It therefore follows that ownership can be said to be in the hands of Musowe since he has the power to control and shape all its productions.

Musowe has always acted as the primary funder of his productions, having initially invested capital in it during the production of *Fidelis*, hence 'he who pays the piper dictates the tune'. However films in modern Zimbabwe are facing serious funding challenges. With the Zimbabwean crisis [re]-curing, most media houses including film have been facing funding challenges. *Munyukwi (2015)* argues that funding of *Fidelis* as a production has faced various constraints with Steven Musowe having initiated the whole production process by selling his own personal fortunes for its production in 2011. The post 2000 period witnessed a galloping inflation, shortage of basic commodities and closure of industries including newspapers among others. The coming on board of the government national unity in 2009 and the introduction of the multi-

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

currency regime has not served the situation. Musowe as the primary funder of the productions has a controlling hand in all its operations, 'he who pays the piper dictates the tune'.

Cash springs from Musowe's pocket to support the production process of Fidelis. It should be noted that the organisational control is monopolized; as a result it becomes difficult to have new innovative ideas as most of the ideas are coming up Musowe. Haynes (2011) contends that Africans have battled with funding, and this has made it difficult for them to come up with their own successful film productions. Ownership and control patterns of the different film organizations have possible implications to the way the films are produced and distributed. Wasko (1999) argues that film is a form of mediated communication. In addition, discourses available in the cinematic images can be influenced by those who fund their operations such that they can exercise some power over the output. However in this study the shadow industry is characterized by filmmakers who hold various posts alone, from being a producer, director, editor, camera person. It should be noted that the owners of the film production subsidize themselves in their operations henceforth that has a direct bearing; it narrows and limit their horizons.

Government intervention through Zimbabwe Censorship Board has seen a number of films denied airplay on ZTV for story lines that are unfavorable to Zimbabwe's cultural identity. The government assumes full control of all sectors including film production. The ruling government has unrestrained access to censor film production without any opposition from a non-existent board. Through the Censorship Board which falls under the Ministry of Home Affairs regulates filmmakers in Zimbabwe suppressing any political commentary which made an attempt to challenge the political established (Eyre, 2001). However the Zimbabwean Constitution section 61(b) guarantees the right to freedom of artistic expression, scientific research and creativity, but the pieces of legislation inhibit the constitutionally guaranteed rights. This is bound to have an effect on the artistic work of film producers considering the fact that producers are aware of the implications that are involved, so they practice self-censorship. Thus there is no doubt that the government controls and has influence on what film produce.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

Without advertising many of the world's media houses would not have existed (Schudson 1984). Musowe Platinum Film Production has managed to add in advertisements in some of its productions, and this is their source of funding. Advertisements constitute the lifeblood of any media organization. Advertisers develop power and control over media due to the fact that they buy and pay for audience (Chomsky, 1988; Napoli 2003). Advertisers equally have the power to determine the nature or appearance of productions.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter laid down the history of Steve Musowe's film production company. The study also looked at the political economy of *Musowe Platinum Film Production*, looking at ownership, funding and control patterns.

The chapter argued that the political economy of the film production influence the content of the films. The government and the producers themselves control the film outputs.



# Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers

---

## Chapter Five

### Data Presentation and Analysis

#### Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the research. Data presented in this chapter was largely obtained through in-depth semi-structured interviews with five purposively selected contemporary Zimbabwean film producers as chronicled in the methodology chapter. Findings are thematically organized. This research examined the extent to which Zimbabwe's 'culture industry'- film industry, is guided by the hardly spoken about but undoubtedly important framework in African film production the 'Algiers Charter' of 1975. Through conversations with film makers, the study demonstrates the extent to which selected Zimbabwean film makers are committed to the development of an African cinema divorced from previous cinematic representations of Africa by the West. The chapter also shows the extent to which modern film makers are driven by profit motives. Finally, the chapter also grapples with issues to do with the environment in which Zimbabwean film makers operate.

µHNQRZQRWKLQJDERWVKH\$OJLHUV&KDUWHU¶

Despite the importance of Algiers Charter as a framework bound to guide African film production, the charter remains a mystery to most film producers in contemporary Zimbabwe. Data obtained by the research demonstrates that virtually nothing is known about the charter by the film producers. In essence, interviewed participants actually asked the researcher to educate them about this charter and its intentions in film production.

For a start, one of the participants Steve Musowe, a Gweru based renowned film producer, who has over the years produced well known dramas which became popular at Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) television *Kurauone* (2001), *Nzungu Muriva* (2005), *Zvinengozi*

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

among other recent ones that are serialized- *Fidelis*, *Diaspora*, *Zibhodho* and *Muchabaiwa*, professed ignorance over the existence of the charter .

...Honestly, I have been in film production for so many years, but this is my first time to hear that such a Charter exists...please may you kindly elaborate on what the Algiers Charter entails” (Interviewed, 10 September 2016).

Wellington Chindara from *Ziya Cultural Arts Trust* who produced the popular serialized *Sabhuku Vharazipi* comedy, also corroborated that the Algiers Charter is largely unknown not only to him but to most Zimbabwean film makers. Such sentiments were also expressed by Abel Dzobo, a Harare based film makers who produced a popular documentary ‘The Show goes on’ (2011), an inspirational cancer awareness documentary about the late prolific Zimbabwean musician Tongai Moyo who succumbed to cancer despite having battled against the ailment for years. Dzobo is also the producer of ‘The Girl Child Genocide’, Tale of maternal mortality in Zimbabwe (2015), an Amnesty International (Zimbabwe) commissioned film on the maternal mortality scourge in Zimbabwe. The film shows how harmful cultural practices lead to maternal mortality. Dzobo has also produced titles ‘The cannibalistic Doctrine’ and ‘Graveyard riches’ (2016). However, regarding the Algiers Charter, the Harare based film producer had this to say:

The Algiers Charter is not known in my circles because we are largely self- taught film makers; we didn’t really study film at school... Also even if one knows it, it’s useless in our environment. We work in extremely difficult conditions, with a spooky political climate... (Interviewed, 12 October 2016).

The argument by Dzobo that Zimbabwean film industry is dominated by self- taught film producers, venturing in various film genres, shows that a shadow, complicated film economy is in existence in Zimbabwe. From the data collected, it became evident that most of these film makers are not aware of the guidelines or principles of the charter. I therefore argue that most of them deploy a ‘to whom it may concern’ kind of approach in film production. This approach is not specific or cannot be placed in the specific context of the Algiers Charter.

While the Algiers Charter of 1975 calls for African film makers to operate in a free environment, respondents told the researcher that the environment in Zimbabwe is holistically challenging. A volatile political environment especially in post 2000 Zimbabwe where the ruling ZANU PF

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

government is hostile to any opposition views, makes it difficult for the film producers to freely execute their duties. For example, Dzobo said:

...Film makers get beaten and arrested, for instance James Jemwa was arrested while filming protests in Harare in August and detained at Chikurubi maximum prison for weeks... ZANU PF is bent on ruling at all costs, full stop... And the masters of paranoia. They don't want to see any camera that is not from ZBC. You need to get police clearance to film an event. The men in suits (members of the Central Intelligence Organisation) are always hovering around. There is this culture of fear, and after the disappearance of Itai Dzamara the danger is real. James Jemwa as I earlier mentioned, was arrested and bashed for filming... (Interviewed, 12 October 2016).

Given the above background, it is not feasible to pursue some of the guidelines of the Algiers Charter largely due to the political environment. Post 2000 Zimbabwe is marked by political animosity especially between ZANU PF and the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009). In early 2000, the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) government embarked on a fast track land reform programme to redress land ownership imbalances created by the colonial system. Those seen to be opposing ZANU PF policies and sympathizing with the MDC were demonized as 'sell-outs' and imperialists' (Chiumbu, 2004; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009). Until today, anyone challenging ZANU PF risks being demonized as a sellout. Thus film productions challenging ZANU PF legitimacy and hegemony are also accused of being 'western' sponsored. This therefore limits the freedom of film production. Moreover, an activist Itai Dzamara cited by Dzobo in the excerpt above, mysteriously disappeared two years ago and there is a common belief that ZANU PF security agents had a huge role on his disappearance. Some film producers therefore also expressed that they are not free to make politically explicit film productions for fear of falling into the 'Dzamara trap'.

The Algiers Charter states that government should not censor films; filmmakers should express themselves freely without any objection that may weaken their creative artistic work. In essence, the charter states that the state should free shackles of censorship so that filmmakers can freely express their artistic work which contributes to the development of critical understanding of the audiences. However, while Chapter 61 of the Zimbabwean constitution guarantees freedom of

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

artistic expression, scientific research and creativity, such freedom is not at all a liberty. Interviewed film producers questioned the existence of a free environment in film production since they are restricted in so many ways in their day to day running of their operations. Interviewed film makers stated that film is not free from regulation and censorship. These film producers expressed concern over statutory censorship of film productions in Zimbabwe. For example, Dzobo said;

... the Censorship and Entertainment Control Act, which is meant to criminalize every kiss or a miniskirt as sexually explicit...But when you see the buttock-jiggling, sexually explicit kongonya dance by the ZANU PF kowtow Mbare Chimurenga Choir, you start wondering... (Interviewed 12 October, 2016).

This view was also corroborated by Gweru based budding film maker popularly known as ‘Mula’ from *Mula Design Productions* who revealed that at one moment he wanted to make a political satire of Zimbabwean’s economic and political crisis called *μ: KHQ ZLOO WkH VXQ VA* but could not produce the movie fearing for his life. Gweru based film maker Kudzai Madora who produced dramas: *Hatidzori Tsvimbo, Nhake ndeyani, Behind my back* among others, stated that filmmakers are not allowed to fully express themselves. He argued that the National Arts Culture of Zimbabwe will ask you *ĐSDZDLGDN&L*..(what was your intention here?’, “...as a *result WRW \ D NXEDWZD QH & (H@V@W@K@S@%2016)U G ´*

Such a phenomenon demonstrates that argument by Mhiripiri (2010) that short films in Zimbabwe have risen as an alternative during Zimbabwe ‘economic meltdown, avoiding political themes in an obvious political crisis. Contrary to the expectations of the Algiers charter, there is no doubt that filmmakers are restricted to enjoy their guaranteed liberties.

Kudzai Madora from Koolnet Productions stated, “...ZBC will tell you to edit out some scenes, for instance sexual or violence scenes; they censor even the language used and won’t allow for movies on political issues” (Interviewed, 1 October 2016). The study therefore argues that the Algiers charter perhaps needs rethinking as some of its expectations or provisions are chimerical in an African context like Zimbabwe. The desired free flow of information in the media, film included is often short-circuited by the socio-economic and political realities.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

Apart from statutory censorship, film makers expressed that government institutions for example, schools, hospitals and the police restrict them to use their premises or even uniformed regalia in their films. Wellington Chindara (*Sabhuku Vharazipi, producer*) revealed that film producers cannot freely use a Zimbabwe uniform or even a police station, unlike in other African countries. If one has that particular scene on the script he has to make use of other alternatives. “We find it difficult to bring out what we are supposed to bring out as we operate in a very unfree environment...unlike if we are to compare ourselves with America or even South Africa” (Chindara interviewed 10 October 2016). In contrast, in American movies they can afford to have someone playing the role of Barak Obama, which is not feasible in a Zimbabwean context.

Film makers stated that in most cases they are denied permission to make use of government facilities to shoot their productions. As Musowe noted, “...Assurances of official replies to formal request from the authorities often amount to little and when they reply they often come too late” (Interviewed 10 October 2016). Hence filmmakers find it difficult to fully express out their ideas through filming because there is restriction. The same sentiments were also echoed by Kudzai Madora (*Nhaka ndeyani producer*) who stated that filmmakers are not allowed to use government property without applying for permission thus it becomes a challenge for them. On the contrary, Musowe (*Fidelis producer*) argues the Charter is essential since it supports and promotes film production that tries to expose the living conditions of the general population even. For, example, a letter below from the Ministry of Education to Steve Musowe testifies how the film producer was denied permission to stage a film at a school set up.

## Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers

Figure 1: Steve Musowe's response from government authorities



The study thus contends that while the Algiers Charter calls for a free film production environment, the situation on the ground calls for a rethinking of the Charter as some of its provisions are not feasible. The legislative environment largely constrains film production in Zimbabwe as elsewhere.

### Filmmakers not driven by profit motives

In spite of professing ignorance over the existence of the Algiers Charter, interviewed film makers expressed that they are not driven by profit motives. The study therefore, contends that

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

such a phenomenon is in tandem with what revolutionary cinema calls for, third cinema seeks to do away with capitalism and the desire to make profit (Solanas & Gettinós 1960). Renowned Frankfurt scholars Adorno and Horkheimer in their seminal work *Dialect of enlightenment* argue that the media are a culture industry, which is highly commercialized, and film is no exception. Products of the culture industry are highly commercialized, standardized and formulaic (Storey, 1999). However, the Algiers charter stipulates that film should shun such profit intentions. The study argues that this is somehow naïve and problematic given that film production is actually a source of living for some other people. Gone are the days when film used to be a pastime activity. In essence, film production has become a full-fledged culture industry in Zimbabwe.

The study shows that even though some of the film producers might target profit maximization, the situation on the ground makes it impossible. For instance, Harare based film maker Abel Dzobo said:

...In Zimbabwe we can't talk of profit... Talking about profit motive among Zimbabwean film makers is mischief of the highest order because there is no revenue or income generated from the film. Just managing to do a production and complete it is a miracle. Companies don't see film as part of corporate social responsibility; they only care about sponsoring soccer. There is no television station to pay for content. ZTV does not pay for content but is against product placement. All productions are done out of passion. There is no Box Office in Zimbabwe, just a greedy Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) salivating over what is not there... (Interviewed, 10 October 2016).

This perspective was supported by Gweru based Steve Musowe who noted, "...you will be a disappointed person in the world if you expect to earn profit from making films, this job does not pay well in Zimbabwe....*unonyura ukatarisira kuita mari*" (Interviewed 12 October, 2016). However even if Musowe rejected being driven by profit motives in making films, he continuously produces serialized dramas like *Fidelis*, *Muchabaiwa* and *Diaspora*, he recently produced *Fidelis 20*. Musowe contends that he is continuously producing *Fidelis* because it has more followers, and that he is doing it for the love of his fans so that they stay captivated. However I find this problematic, the truth behind the serialized dramas is because he gets proceeds from his produce, considering the fact that there are numerous costs incurred when producing a film. These resources range from filming equipment, transport needed from one setting to another, marketing expenses, distribution costs to mention just but a few.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

It should be noted that filmmakers in Zimbabwe do not have sponsors, they subsidize their own budgets. There is no way one would continuously produce a series if they are not looking forward to earn profit.

Though some film producers downplayed the issue of profits, some film producers like Wellington Chindara and Kudzai Madora revealed that profit is their major thrust albeit it is not possible to get it or break even in Zimbabwe's film industry. "We should earn something out of our business, I have to send my children to school, put food on the table...my wellbeing should be catered for" (Madora interviewed 11 October 2016).

This was also corroborated by Chindara who stressed that it is illogical to say they shouldn't be driven by profit, because they live on filming. "...unless if one is doing film production as a part time job, he wouldn't be looking forward to earn much from it, profit is the motive behind my work" (Interviewed, 12 October 2016).

Gweru based film maker Steve Musowe highlighted that there is a cash crisis in Zimbabwe and that there is high unemployment rate such that people won't prioritize purchasing their products as a necessity. Musowe said that film does not bring profit but is only a platform is where one gains popularity and preference over competitors. "Due to their popularity, film makers are hired for video filming and photography at weddings, corporate events, funerals, and so on" (Interviewed 12 October 2016). In a way, film production is unlocking other avenues for those involved in it.

The post 2000 period in Zimbabwe have been referred to as the decade of crisis in academic circles (Hammar and Raftopolous 2003). The economy has been on a free fall resulting in most companies, film included finding it difficult to operate. In fact, there has been a higher mortality rate of media house. Not even the introduction of a multi-currency regime has managed to save the economy in Zimbabwe. Consequently, even film makers aiming at making profits cannot realize their dream in a constantly crisis ridden post 2000 Zimbabwe.

Walter Benjamin in his seminal essay *Work of Art in the Age of mechanical reproduction* shows how developments in technology have impacted on audio visual productions. Benjamin (1972)



## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

submits that artwork has lost its aura. The study argues that continued developments in the area of technology in Zimbabwe as elsewhere, has also made it impossible for film makers to make profits even if they want to do so. A shadow economy is in existence not only in the production but distribution of film products. It is now a common practice to find counterfeit DVDs and CDs being sold for US\$1 at every street corner. This is in violation of the Copyright and Intellectual property act. Film producers hardly benefit from their productions except reputation capital. While the Algiers Charter calls for government to make the film production environment conducive in various way, feeble attempts have been made by the government to fight piracy. As Chindara stated, "...the government supports piracy, because they won't drive away vendors who pirate and distribute our DVDs without our permission" (Interviewed 11 October 2016). Such a phenomenon testifies that the Algiers charter needs serious rethinking in contemporary times.

The study also established that filmmakers through their dramas have created their own brand names on the market; they succeeded in getting themselves known to the extent that they are invited to do health awareness campaigns in the form of infotainments. These filmmakers work best because they naturally generate lots of attention from people. They are invited to do live performances because they have a broad appeal, usually organizations stick to tried and tested formats to better position their brands, so they make use of filmmakers whose work they have seen. Thus films may not be profitable, but can lead to a plethora of opportunities. Masvingo based film producer Chindara expressed that "...it's an advantage to be popular, we appeal to many people and they would want to hear what 'Chairman' (his stage name) has to say for instance when doing an awareness campaign" (Interviewed 14 October 2016).

Chindara works for Ziya Cultural Arts Trust which creates theatre for development, because of their successful production *Sabhuku Vharazipi*, there are doing programs for organizations such as PSI, PLAN, NAC, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture. From a social marketing background, presenting a familiar face is one of the fastest and easiest ways for organizations to create brand associations in the minds of consumers'.

## Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers

---



**Figure 2: Sabhuku Vharazipi crew conducting an awareness campaign for PLAN**

Filmmakers interviewed agreed on the fact that they largely get their disposable income from video filming, photography not necessarily from film production.

### **Narration of Zimbabwean story in local film**

Though the Algiers Charter calls for African film makers who are dedicated to the development of Zimbabwean films committed to the development of an African cinema radically different

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

from previous cinematic representations of Africa by the West, the study found the issue to be facing feasibility challenges. The study submits that most of the Zimbabwean film productions are inspired by the American popular Hollywood film industry. To an extent, Zimbabwean film productions are also adopting the Nigerian-Nollywood style. For example, when a particular movie becomes successful, producers would theme their movies along that same line. If a film that has a theme on witchcraft becomes successful, it would become the trend for producers until another theme comes on board.

While the Algiers charter calls for film producers not to be profit driven but tell African story from an 'African' perspective. Schramm (1964) asserts that cinema could be used to contribute to a feeling of nationhood. However, participants expressed reservations over such provisions. For example, Dzobo said:

Do Zimbabweans exist in the first place? Then when you talk about an authentic African story it becomes problematic. Is there an Africa to talk about? Africa is a hotchpotch of Anglophone, Lusophone and Francophone. Each speaks the language of the former colonial master and has ties to the colonial master. Then we have hopeless renegades like Zimbabwe that are looking East- China. So there is no authentic African story because Africa itself is not authentic... (Interviewed 10 October 2016).

There is a significant body of literature confirming that a homogenous Zimbabwean identity remains elusive (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009; Muzondidya and Ndlovu Gatsheni 2007; Chiumbu 2004, Mhlanga 2013). Ethnicity is cited as one of the major problems constraining the attainment of a homogenous identity. Zimbabwe is home to various ethnic groups among them the Shona, Ndebele, Venda among others. However, the Ndebele constantly express that 'Zimbabweanness' is being manipulated and constructed from the Shona perspective thus rendering them as second class citizens (Ndlovu -Gatsheni 2009). This has triggered the rise of Ndebele radical groups such as Umthwakazi liberation movement which is advocating for the secession of Matabeleland to stand as an 'independent' state (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009).

Moreover, it has also been argued that 'nativism' has strongly dominated and narrowed the definition of the Zimbabwean national identity in the post 2000 era (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009). The

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

nationalist discourse in the post 2000 era have therefore seen the Zimbabwean national identity being restricted to political allegiance to ZAU PF and those from opposition circles are puppets.

Kamete (2003) also argues that since urbanites have been singled out as the strong support base for the MDC in Zimbabwe, Harare urbanites have often been labeled ‘totem less’ which implies that they have no home and ‘roots’, hence cannot be treated as ‘authentic’ citizens of Zimbabwe. Hall (1996) has however warned that identity is a production that is it has more to do about ‘routes’ and less about ‘roots’. For Ranger (2003), the post 2000 epoch has been marked by ‘rewriting of the Zimbabwean history’ and the development of ‘patriotic history’. Ranger (2005) highlights that the Zimbabwean ‘patriotic history’ has been so narrow, dividing the nation up into ‘revolutionaries and sell outs’ denying some from being called ‘Zimbabweans. Identity problems also cascade to other African countries like Mozambique, South Africa among others (Seleti 1997; Fourie, 2007). In light of those developments, I find the above assertion by Dzobo plausibly demonstrating why it is not feasible to talk about an ‘African’ or ‘Zimbabwean’ film. An African definition of cinema is problematic because it is not clear what constitutes Africaness.

The study also presents strong evidence to show that it is not feasible for film makers to produce ‘authentic’ Zimbabwean films in circumstances where there is donor funding. Donors are the major funders of film; one would change script to suit their needs. For instance, Dzobo said that his film *The Girl Child Genocide* (2015) is funded by Amnesty International, “when I wanted to address cultural imperialism, I was forced to talk of sexual and reproductive health rights”. Dzobo further noted:

The cliché that he who pays the piper the tune comes into play. Donors are some of the major funders of film in Africa. Look at my own list and you will find there is Amnesty, Chiedza... So when I want to talk of cultural imperialism, am forced to talk about sexual and reproductive health rights... Then afterwards look at exhibition. Who pays commensurately for content? It’s BBC, Aljazeera etc. and film festivals such as Durban Film festival, Cannes, Amsterdam etc. So because ZBC pays peanuts or does not pay at all, then one is forced to come up with content that fits the editorial policies of those film festivals and TV stations... (Interviewed 10 October 2016).

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

The above assertion demonstrates the argument by political economy theorists (see Graham and Mudork, 1978; McChesney 2001; Mosco, 1996; Herman and Chomsky 1988; Fuchs, 2007). It is argued that ownership, funding and control patterns of the media traceable consequences on the range of discourses that we find in the media.

Moreover, Dzobo expressed that the situation on the ground makes it difficult to come up with a ‘proudly’ Zimbabwean story. For example, Dzobo noted:

... But is there a happy story in Africa or Zimbabwe to tell the world at the moment? Misery increases. Rampant corruption in high offices. When a nonagenarian (Robert Mugabe) wants to stand for election in 2018 at 95, or the wife intends to succeed him, you then wonder whether there is anything to celebrate. We are at the mercy of the weather like wild animals. Israel is a desert but grows food and has surplus, while Zimbabwe with abundant water resources is hit by El Nino cycle. Ebola, HIV, hunger etc. are at home in the continent. So what happy story is there to tell when mortality, infant mortality, unemployment rate is so high. There is no Africa to talk about (Interviewed 10 October 2016).

While Dzobo’s assertion is plausible, I find it problematic. Third cinema theory and even the Algiers charter states that African or third world cinema must be radically divorced from the west. A western gaze on Africa is evident in Dzobo’s attitude and perception of the African continent, which contradicts expectations of the Algiers charter. Radicals of post-colonial theory contend that nothing is hardly ‘post-colonial’ (Cesaire, 2000). Such critics contend that the official might have been removed but the political, economic and cultural links established by colonial domination remain evident, albeit with some minor changes (Cesaire, 2000). Moreover, post-colonial theorists (Appiah, 1992; Mbembe, 2001; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2011) contend that ‘development colonialism’ continues to prevail in post- colonial Africa. In Karl Marx’s words, “Tradition from all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living” (Crowling and Martin 2002:19).

However, some of the interviewed film makers expressed that their productions are representative enough of their culture as Zimbabweans. They stated that their films are faithfully articulating the Zimbabwean story which is radically different from Western movies. “My films

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

talk of salvation yet the Western movies are light-hearted, that represent utopian worlds, I don't have such luxury in my film scripts...you can actually hear women and children wailing and fathers groaning" (Musowe, interviewed 11 October 2016). This position was also reinforced by Madora who produced *Nhaka ndeyani* (2014). Madora revealed that Zimbabwean cultural aspects are brought out in his films. In his film he portrays the implications that were there before and nowadays in terms of sharing inheritance, this is an African practice they were showcasing. The Algiers Charter states that for African societies to develop, culture should be popular. For example Dzobo's popular documentary *The Show goes on* (2011). The documentary is about the late Tongai Moyo's inspirational cancer battle, it portrays how he would not let cancer keep him away from his fans. The documentary follows how he would have a blood transfusion at 10am and at 9pm he would be on stage playing his guitar and singing to his fans. Given this background, there is no doubt that Dzobo managed to represent the life of the great musician, narrating Tongai Moyo story to the world. Some of his productions include *the girl child genocide* (2015), *The Cesarean Crime* (2016), *Grapevine Riches* (2016).

It can also be argued that some of the films in Zimbabwe make an attempt to place the Zimbabwean culture at the centre of their productions. For instance, most films have Shona titles and are in Shona- a dominant local language in Zimbabwe. Films like *Zvinengozi*, *Kurauone*, *Sabhuku Vharazipi*, *Nhaka ndeyani*, *Takazviparira* are in Shona. However Zimbabwe is a multilingual nation, other linguist groups that include the Tonga, Kalanga ,Ndebele among others are not equally represented in narrating the Zimbabwean story to the rest of the world. Media representations of other races is distorted. Teno (2014) contends that African films telling the African story appear to be missing. This simply means that films made by Zimbabweans for Zimbabweans are limited; they are not representing Africa from an African point of view. This then shows that filmmakers are not innocently narrating the Zimbabwe story to the world. I therefore argue that the Algiers charter needs rethinking in contemporary African times.

# **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

## **Chapter Six**

### **Conclusion**

#### **Summary**

This chapter serves as the conclusion to the research. The study sought to set a research agenda on film production and the Algiers Charter in Zimbabwe and Africa at large. As mentioned earlier the Algiers Charter is an African homemade charter, crafted by African filmmakers in 1975, to address common problems affecting them, and their space in the political struggles of the third world countries, as well as goals in areas of film production and distribution. The charter stresses that that filmmakers should be committed to the development of an ‘African’ cinema that would be radically different from previous cinematic representations of Africa by the Western world. In other words, ‘African’ films should not only represent Africa from an ‘African’ point of view but film makers are to reject commercial profit. Importantly, profitability comes only from the knowledge of whether the needs and aspirations of the people are expressed (Algiers Charter 1975).

However, in spite of the importance of the Algiers Charter in film production, systematic academic studies on film production about Zimbabwe in particular and Africa in general, have under-theorized the charter and its influence on modern film production on the continent. This research therefore placed selected Zimbabwean film makers at the heart of investigation. This research explored the extent to which Zimbabwe’s modern film industry is guided by the ‘Algiers Charter’ of 1975. The study also sought to demonstrate the extent to which selected Zimbabwean film makers are committed to the development of a radical African cinema divorced from previous cinematic representations of Africa by the West. The issue of film production and the profit motive in capitalist societies was also at the heart of the interrogation. Adorno and Horkheimer (1947) contend that the culture industry is driven by profit motives. I therefore wanted to find out the applicability of such a phenomenon. The Algiers charter is against the commercial motives of African film productions. Finally, the research also examined the environment in which film makers operate in Zimbabwe.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

Theoretically, the study was informed and guided by third cinema theory. The study argues this was the best lens to look at this phenomenon given its African setting. As argued by Solanas and Gettinós (1969) third cinema should be revolutionary, it should seek to do away with capitalism, neo colonialism and the desire for cinema to make profit. It seeks to challenge Hollywood because first cinema is for commercial purposes. It includes a radical form of production, distribution and exhibition that seeks to expose the living conditions of the people at grass root level, criticizing those that are responsible for social inequality in the country (Solanas and Gettinós 1969) Political economy of the media theory was also utilized to complement third cinema theory. Methodologically, the study utilized a qualitative research approach, specifically an interpretive design. Five purposively selected film makers drawn from Zimbabwe's major cities Harare, Gweru and Masvingo were interviewed. Conversation analysis was the principal technique for analyzing data. The study however, acknowledges some of the limitations of the methodological approach albeit, validity and reliability were not compromised. For instance, purposively selected participants were drawn from three mentioned cities, excluding other cities like Bulawayo, Mutare and Kwekwe. Future research might also need to consider such places.

From the data, the study demonstrates that Zimbabwean filmmakers are not aware of the African homegrown, Algiers Charter on African Cinema of 1975, because they are largely self-taught filmmakers who didn't really study film in school. The study found out that the Charter is not feasible since filmmakers in Africa particularly in Zimbabwe do not operate in a free environment ,they live in fear of being arrested/tortured, as a result it doesn't contributes to the development of critical understanding of the audiences. Hence film producers are not informed and guided by the Algiers Charter.

The Algiers Charter rejects the notion of commercializing film like what Hollywood is doing. The study discovered that film producers are not driven by profit motives because film does not pay considering the unending economic crisis in the country, not forgetting piracy which has taken the industry by storm. However filmmakers succeed in getting themselves known such that they are hired for video filming and photography at weddings, corporate events, funerals, and so on; hence they earn money from doing extra activities, rather than from making films. The study also found out that films are produced out of passion and not because they are chasing after



## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

money. However the desire to make profit is the driving force for other film makers because they survive on making films. It is also found that filmmakers are serializing their films so as to keep up their fans.

For this study it was found that Africans are not representing Africa from an African perspective. Zimbabweans filmmakers are not innocently narrating the Zimbabwe story to the world since it's difficult to define what constitutes a Zimbabwe. The study also established that filmmakers are imitating Nollywood because their productions are a success among all African countries. To an extent, Zimbabwean film makers deploy the western gaze to view the African situation. However films from the selected film producers largely are in Shona, with Shona titles for *instance Sabhuku Vharazipi, Nhaka ndeyani? Kurauone, Takazviparira*. Again these Zimbabwean films are a true reflection of the Zimbabwean tradition and culture.

It is plausible to assert that this dissertation is the first on its kind on undergraduate dissertations interrogating discourses intertwined with film production in Zimbabwe. The dissertation has set motion for future researches on film production and the Algiers charter in Zimbabwe and to some extent Africa.

### **Recommendations**

Basing on the collected data, I make the following suggestions. The Algiers Charter state that cinema should be committed to the development of an African cinema which is radically different from previous cinematic representations of Africa by the West. Film productions in Zimbabwe must not only focus on aspects of urbanization, where one migrates from the rural to the urban city with ignorance. For instance, on *Fidelis*, a character by the name Chenai is portrayed as backward because she is coming from rural areas. Witchcraft themes are often found in local films, for instance *Sabhuku Vharazipi* and *Fidelis* where a character cast a spell on someone because of lust. It should be noted that the dramas are not empowering the Zimbabweans or the ordinary because they portray witchcraft as a norm in African societies. This would imply that what the West say of Africans as 'the dark continent' or as evil will

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

indeed be true. I recommend that they should research first before writing a script so that they narrate a true reflection of what is transpiring in the Zimbabwean society. These productions should be radically different from earlier derogatory representations of Africa, where they were viewed as savages, thieves, murders as so on. Their themes should come naturally, when they have done their research. In fact, Zimbabwean film makers should not fall in the same trap with western film makers who always see evil on the African continent.

In addition, the African media faces a challenge of too much government interference and control (Nyamnjoh, 2007). The Zimbabwean government should loosen up their various forms of regulation so that filmmakers can freely express themselves with fear of victimization. This is because heavy censorship would compromise the film's integrity. The constitutional guaranteed rights that are espoused in the constitution should be abided by. Section 61 of the Constitution guarantees the right to freedom of artistic expression, scientific research and creativity. The government has no authority to regulate the media.

Filmmakers should not be ignored by the government but should be assisted with sponsorship like what other African nations do. Other African governments immensely contribute to film production, for instance South African government offer bundles of incentive to advance film production and its post-production industry because they view it as a sector with excellence. More so, very few opportunities existed in Zimbabwe for training filmmakers; only a few individuals have proper filming equipment. I recommend the establishment of film incubators that give short courses in promoting film training and production to enhance the quality of our local films in Zimbabwe.

### **Suggestions for further study**

There is potential to broaden the interplay between film production and its reception dynamics. It would be interesting to find out how viewers interpreted and appreciated local dramas in Zimbabwe. Finally, this research has set an agenda on the Algiers Charter and film production in Africa. More studies are still needed in the area.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented and discussed data linking it to existing literature as well as the theoretical framework. The following chapter serves as the conclusion to the research.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

### **Reference**

- Adorno, T.W and Horkheimer, M (1977) *The culture Industry: Enlightenment as mass deception*, in Curran J, Gurevitch M and Woollacott (eds) *Mass communication and Society*, London: Edward Arnold.
- Armes, R, (2006) *African filmmaking: North and South of the Sahara*. Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh
- Babbie, E. (1995). *The practice of social research* (7th ed.), Belmont, CA, Wadsworth.
- Bakari, Imruh, and Mbye Cham (eds). 1996. *African Experiences of Cinema*. London: British Film Institute.
- Black Camera. (2010), "The Algiers Charter on African Cinema, 1975" in *Black Camera*, Vol.2(1), pp165-167.
- Boyd, C.O. (2001) 'Phenomenology the method.' In P.L. Munhall (Ed.), *Nursing research: A qualitative perspective* (3rd. ed., pp. 93-122), Sudbury, MA, Jones and Bartlett.
- Bryman A (2012) *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Burnard, P. (2004). Writing a qualitative research report. *Accident and Emergency Nursing*. 12:176-181.
- Chomsky, N. and Herman, E. (2000), *Manufacturing Consent: The Political economy of the Mass media*, Illinois University, Illinois, USA.
- Cloonan(2006) 'Popular Music Censorship in Africa'.UK: Routledge
- Couvares, F, G. (2006) *Movie Censorship and American Culture* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition: Amherst and Boston. University of Massachusetts Press
- Creswell, J. W. (1998) *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five Traditions*, Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

Crossley (1999a) 'Making sense of HIV infection: discourse and adaptation to life with an HIV positive diagnosis', *Health*, 3(1): 95-119. Censorship Entertainment and Control Act (2) p.d.f .Google books

Crossley, M.L. (1998a) 'Women living with a long-term HIV positive diagnosis: problems, concerns and ways of ascribing meaning', *Women's Studies International Forum*, 21 (5): 521-33.

Curran, J. and Gurevitch, M. (2000), *Mass Media and Society*, London, Arnold Publishers.

Eyre,B(2001) 'Playing with Fire ,Fear and Self –Censorship in Zimbabwean Music' ,Copenhagen

Freemuse&Nhimbe (2016) Universal Periodic Review Zimbabwe available @[http://freemuse.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/UPRZimbabwe\\_FreemuseNhimbe.pdf](http://freemuse.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/UPRZimbabwe_FreemuseNhimbe.pdf)

Free Speech and Artistic Expression in Zimbabwe: World Justice Project

Read more: <http://www.pressreference.com/Uz-Z/Zimbabwe.html#ixzz4EVLsm0PT>

Gramsci, A (2000) *Hegemony Theory and the ideological role of the Mass Media*, Oxford Press, Newyork.

Golding and Murdock (1989) *Culture, Communications and Political Economy*, in Curran J and Gurevitch M (2000) *Mass Media and Society*, London, Arnold.

Goodwin, C. (1981) *Conversational Organization: Interaction between Speakers and Hearers*. Academic Press, New York.

Goodwin, M.H. (1980): Processes of mutual monitoring implicated in the production of description sequences. *Sociological Inquiry* 50: 303–317. Hammersley M and Atkinson P (1983) *Ethnography: Principle in Practice*. London: Tavistock.

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

Goodwin, C. (2000) *Gesture, Aphasia, and Interaction*. In: McNeill, D. (Ed.), *Language and Gesture*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 84–98.

Guneratne, A R, and Dissanayake W (2003) *Rethinking Third Cinema*. Routledge .New York

Gunter, B. (1995). *Television and Gender Representation*. London: John Libbey

Habermas, J (1962) *The Structural transformation of Public Sphere*, Cambridge, Polity Press.

Haralambos and Holborn (2004) *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, London,

Hammersley M (1995) *The Politics of Social Research*. London: Sage

Heritage, J. & Atkinson, J. M. (1984) Introduction. In: Atkinson, J. M. & Heritage, J. (Eds.), *Structures of Social Action*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 1–15.

Hungwe, K.(1991) *Southern Rhodesian Propaganda and Educational Films for Peasant Farmers*: University of Zimbabwe. Harare.

Kong,S(2007)*Genre Film,Media Corporations and the Commercialisation of the Chinese Film Industry:The Case of “New Year Comedies”* .China:Routledge

Kumbula, Tendayi. "Press Freedom in Zimbabwe." In *Press Freedom and Communication in Africa*, eds. Festus Eribo and William Jong-Ebot. Africa World Press, Inc., 1997.

Lee,S (2003). *Trading in Film: The Role of Government Regulation*. Korea Information Society Development Institute, 2003(2), pp. 103-134. L

Marx, K (1976) *Preface and Introduction to a critique of Political economy*, Peking, Foreign Language Press.

Mboti ,N.(2010)*To show the world as it is ,or as it is not :the gaze of Hollywood films about Africa*

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

Mhiripiri, N.A and Ureke, O. (2016), 'Mobile Journalism, Cellphims and the Use of the Story Maker Multimedia Software at a Zimbabwean Media Training University in L. Briz-Ponce (Ed.), Handbook of Research on Mobile Devices and Applications in Higher Education Settings (in press)

Mboti, N. (2010) To show the world as it is, or as it is not: the gaze of Hollywood films about Africa

McLeod, S. A. (2014). The Interview Method. Retrieved from [www.simplypsychology.org/interviews.html](http://www.simplypsychology.org/interviews.html)

: <http://www.pressreference.com/Uz-Z/Zimbabwe.html#ixzz4EUfKCAxx>

McQuail, D. (1994), *Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction*, London Sage, Publications.

Moyo, L. (2003) Status of the Media in Zimbabwe. In Johnston, D.H. (Ed.), *Encyclopaedia of International Media and Communications*. New York: Academic Press.

Murphy, D (2000) Africans filming Africa: questioning theories of authentic African Cinema

Mhiripiri, N. A. (2010) Thematic concerns in the emergent Zimbabwean short film genre:

Mouton, J. & Marais, H.C. (1990) *Basic concepts in the methodology of the social sciences* (Revised ed.), Pretoria, South Africa, Human Sciences Research Council.

Mouton, J. (2006). *RZWR VXFHHGLQRKODVWHUVDQG'RFWRUDO6WXLHV\$6RWK\$IUFLDQ Guide and Resource Book*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Murphy, D (2000) Africans filming Africa: questioning theories of authentic African Cinema

Munyukwi, T (2015) *Exploring the Film Friendliness of Gweru in the straight video Drama Fidelis*. Honors Dissertation, Midlands State University.

Nwoye, A. (2006b) 'Theory and Method of Marriage Therapy in Contemporary Africa. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 28(4): 393-504

## **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

Ruddock A (2001) *Understanding Audiences: Theory and Method*. London: Sage.

Sacks, H. (1992a) *Lectures on Conversation*, Vol. 1. Blackwell, Oxford.

Sacks, H. (1992b) *Lectures on Conversation*, Vol. 2. Blackwell, Oxford.

Schramm, Wilbur (1964). *Mass Media and National Development*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Stivers, T. (2008) Stance, alignment, and affiliation during storytelling: When nodding is a token of affiliation. *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 41(1): 31-57

Nilsson,P(2015)Chinese Government's role in Commercialisation of the film industry.Lund University: China

Press Freedom in Zimbabwe, The Willie Madarurwa Memorial Trust (1993) Harare; Zimbabwe.

Storey, J.(1999) *Cultural Consumption and Everyday life*, London, Oxford University Press.

Thram, D (2006) 'Zvakwana!-Enough! Media Control and Unofficial Censorship of Music in Zimbabwe'. London: Routledge.

Tomaselli, K .*The Cinema of Apartheid* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 53.

[www.kubatana.net/html/archive/artcul/04051](http://www.kubatana.net/html/archive/artcul/04051)

Tomaselli, K .*The Cinema of Apartheid* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 53.

Smyth, R. The British Colonial Film Unit and Sub-Saharan Africa, 1939-1945. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 8, 1988.

### **Interviews**

Musowe,S.(2016)Interview on film production in Zimbabwe (01/10),Gweru.

Dzobo,A.(2016)Interview on film production in Zimbabwe(10/10),Harare.

Chindara,W.(2016)Interview film production in Zimbabwe(14/10),Masvingo.

Madora,K.(2016) Interview on film production in Zimbabwe(01/10),Gweru.

Mabaleka,K.(2016) Interview on film production in Zimbabwe(01/10),Gweru



# **Rethinking the Algiers Charter in contemporary film production in Zimbabwe: conversations with film producers**

---

## **Appendix**

### **Interview guide questions**

My name is .....a student in the Department of Media and Society Studies. I am conducting a study to determine the extent to which Zimbabwean filmmakers are guided by the Algiers Charter (1975) in their production endeavors. I am interested to get your insights on the matter. If you consent, I would like to ask you a few questions on the matter. The data will be used strictly for academic purposes. The questions are as follows:

1. What motivated you to become a film producer?
2. Can you briefly share with me some of your high and low moments in film production?
3. What's your knowledge about the Algiers Charter of 1975?
4. From your viewpoint, to what extent are film producers in Zimbabwe guided by this charter?
5. The Algiers Charter states that film producers in Africa should operate in a free environment? From your view point is this what is happening on the ground? Can you explain the challenges?
6. The Algiers Charter also states that film producers should tell an African story from an African perspective. From your view point, do you think Zimbabwean film makers in particular are innocently narrating the Zimbabwean story to the world? If not, why?
7. The Charter states that film producers should not be driven by profit motives. Can you briefly explain the actual situation on the ground?
8. Do you think your film productions are radically different from western movies or they replicate western movies? Why?