

Re/Membering Robert Gabriel Mugabe: Politics, Legacy, Philosophy, Life and Death The Musical Side of Robert Mugabe The Musical Side of Robert Mugabe

Richard Muranda, Wonder Maguraushe and Weston Chimbudzi

Abstract

Robert Mugabe has been both celebrated and vilified in his capacity as leader of both Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF). Pursuant to his legacy constructions and deconstructions, this chapter analyses the musical inclinations of Robert Mugabe during his political life. This may have been influenced by the fact that he set a record for being one of the longest serving statesmen the world over. The late Mugabe was a phenomenally noticeable icon on both the national and international scenes. Some of his notable traits include his contribution to the liberation struggle up to independence as first prime minister in 1980 and executive president from 1987 to 2017. We reflect on Robert Mugabe's support for and taste of music as exhibited directly and indirectly in his life. The chapter focuses on the period from the Second Chimurenga to his demise in 2017. We examine and discuss his view on musicals at graduation ceremonies at selected state universities in Zimbabwe. We place his close interaction with the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) Police Band, and the deployment of liberation songs in the Mugabe era. We also assess Mugabe's love for classical and folk music and how it defined his political personality. We also analyse his support for the academic study of music in higher education institutions. The main submission of the chapter is that Mugabe used music as a medium of political communication to reinforce his hegemony.

Key Words: Musical Side, Politics, Legacy, Philosophy, Life and Death, Robert Mugabe.