

## **Rebuking Impunity through Music: The Case of Thomas Mapfumo's Masoja Nemapurisa**

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**ABSTRACT** Popular music has been used since the colonial times as an instrument of criticizing the various levels of authority in Zimbabwe. It was used as an artistic vehicle for denouncing colonialism. After independence, the same medium was used to agitate for social justice. More than thirty years after independence the same genre is being used to denounce impunity and political violence. Through the years what has changed is the language, which migrated from euphemism to confrontational lyrics, not the message, which has consistently attacked the authorities. The paper begins by theorizing popular music as an arts genre. This is followed by an analysis of songs that were critical of the colonial governments and those that criticized the post-independence government. The music of Thomas Mapfumo was singled out as protest music, which consistently spoke to the authorities about their perceived shortcomings. This view is presented using Mapfumo's song titled *Masoja Nemapurisa*.