**A Introduction**

This project employs a *Narrative Inquiry research h*as an attempt to engage in a critical dialogue the concept of *curse* as depicted in the biblical text as a metaphor of *resource curse* in Africa. Particular attention will be paid on curse as *chituko* and or *ngozi* among the Shona people of Zimbabwe. The study seeks to problematize the metaphor of *curse* in the biblical text, focusing on the narrative of Noah cursing his son, Ham (Gen. 9:25-27). The study attempts to respond to the following three questions: (1) *Are black people the descendants of Ham whom Noah cursed*? (2) *Are Africans cursed*? (3) *Is natural resource curse in Africa a consequence of curse from the Bible?* The study discusses unresolved questions of political and socioeconomic crises devastating largely the African continent. These crises tend to provoke the concept of natural resource curse among Africans. Because the Bible plays a key role in the ethical and religious lives of African communities, the metaphor of “curse” cannot be ignored.

The present study explores the biblical concept of *curse* from an indigenous knowledge systems (IKS)[[1]](#footnote-1) perspective. The biblical concept of curse is appropriated in the African context as an attempt to draw some similarities and divergences between ancient Israel as depicted in the biblical text and the postcolonial African situation. The biblical concept of *curse* will also be appropriated in a Zimbabwean context as *chituko* (or *ngozi*) among the Shona people in which one could be *cursed* for striking parents, swearing at elderly people, stealing livestock, and or for murder. The consequences of *chituko* include: *Hungomwa* (childlessness), *hurovha* (joblessness), *kurwara* (persistent sickness), *kutanda botso* (mental disorder) and *ndufu* (deaths), and among others. In the final analysis, IKS is challenged so that it is reoriented to focus on the broader spectrum of human life with an aim of producing scientific research results. It is further argued that “protest writing”[[2]](#footnote-2) in African scholarship is not only counterproductive, but also retrogressive. In the final analysis, recommendations are made towards ameliorating natural resource curse in Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular.

**B Statement of the problem**

First, the biblical text infers that the human race was cursed for the sin/s that Adam committed (Gen. 3:17); Ham was cursed for seeing the nakedness of his father, Noah (Gen. 9:25-27). Ham is portrayed as “dark-skinned”[[3]](#footnote-3), representing black people. Presently, this submission is the first of its kind from a typical and indigenous African. I am unaware of any other literature besides the Bible (and other Semitic/Mediterranean myths[[4]](#footnote-4)) which attempt to throw some light on the creation of the human race, particularly on the *curse* concept among Africans. In view of the above observation, this study seeks to critique the Bible as the source of the problem. Second, the scarcity of scholarly contributions on the concept of curse in Zimbabwe from an Old Testament (OT)/theological perspective makes this study inevitable. I concur with Norman R. Whybray who writes that: “The dark side of God is a subject that has received astonishing little attention from OT scholars…”[[5]](#footnote-5) Along the same line of thinking is Jennifer L. Hochschild who writes that, “commentators have spoken endlessly of their poverty – but beyond this comment, not at all of their complexions”[[6]](#footnote-6). In addition, African biblical scholars[[7]](#footnote-7) who argue for the presence of Africans in the Bible do not make references to “curse narratives”[[8]](#footnote-8) as depicted in the biblical text*.* Contributions by African biblical scholars are interrogated in the present discourse.

**C Methodology**

The present study in its entirety utilizes a *narrative inquiry* research method. Clandinin and Connelly[[9]](#footnote-9) maintain that narrative inquiry is an umbrella term that captures personal and human dimensions of experience over time, and takes account of the relationship between individual experience and cultural context. Hence, Etherington concurs that *narrative inquiry* is a means by which we systematically gather, analyse, and represent people’s stories as told by them, which challenges traditional and modernist views of truth, reality, knowledge and personhood[[10]](#footnote-10). *Desk research/secondary data*[[11]](#footnote-11) constitutes the milieu of the data pool in which secondary sources such as book chapters, journal articles, and internet sources will play a critical role in developing the present argument.

**D the concept of Curse in ANCIENT NEAR EAST (ANE)**

Jan Assmann maintains that curses aim at total destruction and annihilation[[12]](#footnote-12). They do not know any measure and limitation in drawing on the imagination of destruction[[13]](#footnote-13). They aim at total dissolution and decomposition of a person in all aspects in this world and in the thereafter[[14]](#footnote-14). In the ancient near eastern world, the “erection of a shrine” and the establishment of a “cult for the *Divine*” was a motivation for a *blessing* and a national economic boom initiated by a Supreme Being[[15]](#footnote-15). The economic stability of a nation was explained in terms of people’s relations with the cult. Neglect of these would result in “curses.”[[16]](#footnote-16) The cult was believed to be attached to the land and sometimes to the moon. The Supreme Being who gave land to the people to inhabit would provide the rains from the “moon” god for the people to reap harvest[[17]](#footnote-17). In that sense, if the cult was dishonoured, the result would be famine in the land because the gods had been angered and had therefore brought curses (e g, famine, sickness, exile, oppression, etc) instead of blessings[[18]](#footnote-18). Alan Lenzi and Jonathan Stökl attest that if Judah had developed some form of contractual understanding with Assyria, it is like that the treaty included curses[[19]](#footnote-19). In such circumstances, added Lenzi and Stökl, both Judean and Assyrian ideologues and theologians would have understood the Assyrian’s action as the carrying out of curses which would have been understood to have been enforced by at least Assur and Yahweh[[20]](#footnote-20). In addition to cursing or threatening to replace rebellious kings and their households in a treaty, the Neo-Assyrian treaties also cursed whole populations, even threatening to deport them[[21]](#footnote-21). As for the Jews, Yahweh would inflict curses if they sinned or deviated from him. Their misfortune was punishment for their sins[[22]](#footnote-22). Various other biblical passages attest to the fact that people would be cursed for either being rebellious, disobedient or stubborn. The following examples will shed more light.The human race is cursed for the sin of disobedience on the part of Adam from whom all humanity is believed to have derived (Gen. 3:15-19)[[23]](#footnote-23). Because of the sin of Adam, all human beings have inherited Adam’s curses such as death and toiling in order to survive. Mitchell Chase remarks that after Adam and Eve disobeyed God, their punishments brought disruption to manhood and womanhood[[24]](#footnote-24). Curse is also portrayed as a consequence of murder. In Genesis 4:11, we read that Cain was cursed for murdering his brother, Abel. We also read that Noah had three sons: Shem, Japheth and Ham. Ham was cursed for seeing Noah’s (his father’s) nakedness and for not “covering” him up (Gen. 9:25). We read that Noah said: “Cursed be Canaan! A slave of slaves, a slave to his brothers! Blessed be God, the God of Shem, but Canaan shall be his slave. God prosper Japheth…But Canaan shall be his slave” (Gen. 9:25-27). Of Noah’s three sons, namely: Shem, Japheth and Ham, the former are blessed for covering their father and the latter is cursed for seeing the nakedness of his father. Apparently, Ham’s curse was also extended to his son, Canaan (Gen. 9:24). Some curses (or misfortunes) were pronounced on individuals or a nation. For example, pestilence, consumption, fever, inflammation, extreme burning, the sword, blasting and mildew (Exod 28:21-22)[[25]](#footnote-25). It appears “cursing” was not exclusive in the Bible, that is, it did not only involve outsiders and or strangers as victims, but also one’s own children. Hence, in Deuteronomy 21:23 we read that one who committed a crime worthy of death should be hanged on a tree, in which the “victim”/“criminal” is described as “cursed by God” (Deut. 21:24). We also read in both books of Exodus (21:15) and Deuteronomy (21:16-21) that children would be cursed for striking their parents and for being contemptuous to their fathers and their mothers. We further read that abandoning Yahweh, “God of your fathers” and serving other gods would also result in a curse (Deut. 29:24-28). Job 4:7 portrays that the upright and the innocent do not suffer, suggesting that Yahweh was punishing Job for sinning; Haggai 1:9-11, depicts that the Judeans suffered famine as a result of drought because they had neglected building the temple for Yahweh; Malachi 3:1 states that the Judeans remained cursed and would not prosper as long as they despised paying *tithes* into the temple treasury; Yahweh had *scattered* the Israelites among the nations for being unfaithful (Neh 1:8-9); according to Ezra 9:5-9, the Babylonian captivity occurred because the sins of the Judeans were “higher than our heads and our guilt has reached the heavens” (9:6).[[26]](#footnote-26) In some instances, God would curse children for the sins of their “fathers” (Lam. 5:7; Jer. 31:29-30), causing both authors of the books of Jeremiah (31:29) and Ezekiel (18:2) to write that “…The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on the edge”[[27]](#footnote-27). Haggai 1:4-11 also conveys the idea that the neglect to rebuild the Temple resulted in Yahweh inflicting the Judeans with curses such as little harvest, having insufficient food and drink, and lack of warm clothes[[28]](#footnote-28). Even if they earned wages, it would not sustain them as if to say they were not paid[[29]](#footnote-29). The exile, enslavement, famine that hit the land and poverty that affected people, were all believed to be consequences of neglecting the “house of God” (2 Chr 36:10-21; Neh 1:4-10, 5:1-5; 9:3-37; Ezr 9:5-9).

In the New Testament, the notion of curse is also very strong. Because God gave his son to the sinful world, the OT curse and other “generational” curses are transferred to Jesus who is now considered the “cursed one” (John 3:16-17; Gal. 3:13)[[30]](#footnote-30). The Gospels depict that God cursed and condemned his son to the death of the Cross for the salvation of the sinful human race[[31]](#footnote-31). In Matthew (27:32-56) and Galatians (3:13), the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross is depicted as a “curse” by God for the sins of the human race.

**E ARGUMENT FOR the Presence of an African in the Bible**

The argument that Africa and the African continent are “cursed” arises largely from the following three observations. First, Evangelical believers hold onto the notion that the human race was cursed by God because of the “generational sin” committed by Adam. Hence, Genesis 3:17 reads that “…cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life”. We also read that: “Cush will submit herself to God” (Psa. 68:31). The majority of people (especially believing communities) regard the Bible as absolute and entirely authoritative. Among these believing communities are Africans who also take seriously the teaching of the biblical text, that human suffering and struggle for survival is a consequence of sin/s committed by Adam[[32]](#footnote-32). Second, in addition to the assertion depicted in the biblical text, numerous scholarly works have presupposed that Ham represents the *Kushites*/*Cushites* who are believed to be the ancestors of the Black people of African origin[[33]](#footnote-33). The implication which has recently gained momentum is that Black people (*Kushites*) are cursed. Contestations continue to be presented of wars, genocide, poverty and starvation devastating largely the African continent as evidence of a fulfilment of Ham’s curse. Some scholars attempt to locate the identities of the African people within those mentioned in the biblical text. Scholars such as Cain H. Felder[[34]](#footnote-34), Norman Cohn[[35]](#footnote-35), David Tuesday Adamo[[36]](#footnote-36), Adekunle Dada[[37]](#footnote-37), Peter Unseth[[38]](#footnote-38), Allen Ross[[39]](#footnote-39), and Daniel Hays[[40]](#footnote-40), among others, have continued to argue for the presence of Africans (*Kushites*) in the Bible. Felder remarks that European thinkers in the 15th century initially explained the existence of the dark-skinned people of Africa within the biblical framework that reified and justified the subservient status of Africans[[41]](#footnote-41). Cohn also pointed out that black Africans had descended from one of Noah’s sons Ham, whom Noah had cursed because of a minor transgression committed after the flood[[42]](#footnote-42).If the Bible is read literally, the readership is confronted with the ideology of “Blackness” and the concept of “curse” in relation to Africa and Africans. Hays brings us closer to this affirmation by presenting the *Kushites* as black people who are mentioned about fifty-four times in the Bible[[43]](#footnote-43). *Cush* (meaning “black”) was one of Ham’s four sons. *Cush* carried the curse of his father Ham who was cursed for seeing Noah’s nakedness and for not covering him. Tokumboh Adeyemo [[44]](#footnote-44)(in his project on the title: *Is Africa cursed?*) is hesitant to mention precisely the depiction that Africa and Africans are cursed. However, before one even reads Adeyemo’s book, the picture on the cover of a young boy holding in his arms a war weapon presupposes an undocumented yet obvious narrative that Africa is at war against itself. Allen Ross, who seemingly supports my argument, also maintains that Africa is indeed a cursed continent[[45]](#footnote-45). Ross makes reference to Ham’s four sons: Cush, Mizraim, Put and Canaan[[46]](#footnote-46) (see also Gen. 10:6). According to Ross, Cush represents Ethiopians, Mizraim (Egyptians), Put (Somalians and Libyans) and Canaan (Palestinians, Phoenicians, etc)[[47]](#footnote-47). However, Meiring[[48]](#footnote-48) does not agree with Ross” opinion of Black people as the remnants of Ham. While the on-going debate on the presence of Africans in the Bible continues coalescing, and that the Kushites are believed to be the descendants of Ham through Canaan, contestation of Africans as “cursed” arises from experiences of wars, genocide, HIV/AIDS[[49]](#footnote-49), poverty, starvation and leadership crisis which continue to devastate largely the African continent. Third, as Nathaniel O. Awojobi noted, Africans continue to be impoverished and Africa remains underdeveloped in a continent with an abundance of natural resources[[50]](#footnote-50). Unless and until African scholarship revises and reverses its position on the presence of an African in the Bible, and believing communities admit that the biblical text should be reread and reinterpreted with caution, problems presented by the text, including that of “blessing” some human species and “cursing” others, remain unresolved. Hence, the Theodosius Dobzhansky’ theory on the origin and development of human species[[51]](#footnote-51) may be taken into account.

**F Indigenous Knowledge Systems**

IKS is the knowledge systems developed by a community as opposed to the scientific knowledge that is generally referred to as “modern” knowledge[[52]](#footnote-52).  In international context, the term “indigenous” is understood (mostly by Europeans) as being similar or synonymous to “traditional”, “aboriginal”, “vernacular”, “African”, “Black”, and “native American”[[53]](#footnote-53). “Indigenous” refers to something local, and contextual, hence, indigenization policy for example in the Zimbabwean context[[54]](#footnote-54). For Nel IKS are “informed by and relate to all domains of life and the environment”[[55]](#footnote-55). The concept of IKS also delineates a cognitive structure in which theories and perceptions of both nature and culture are conceptualized[[56]](#footnote-56). Indigenous knowledge is called a “system” because a *system* refers to the holistic nature of the knowledge as it links up and relates to all aspects of life and the environment as it also refers to the plurality of both its properties and functions[[57]](#footnote-57). However, indigenization should not be used as an inclusion and exclusion mechanism. For example, the aggressive revolution of promoting “indigenisation” by promulgating the Indigenous and Empowerment Act which requires foreign companies to award 51 percent of their ownership to indigenous Zimbabweans[[58]](#footnote-58). IKS is a critical strategy towards fostering, implementing and strengthening African cultural heritage[[59]](#footnote-59). Hence, Brittain says: “It is a delight to come upon a book that really grapples with the realities of human motivation and belief, illuminates the background of African thought, and offers an essential key to deeper understanding”[[60]](#footnote-60). Arowolo affirms that civilisation can also be used in a normative way to indicate cultural superiority of one group of country over another[[61]](#footnote-61).

Nevertheless, Mutema yearns for IKS methodologies which are not driven by blind assertion of African ideas and concepts in order to replace the Western terms without critical reflection[[62]](#footnote-62). The above assertion comes at the backdrop of criticisms against former colonial masters for the deterioration of standards of living among Africans. To some extent, the above assertion could be true. For example, the Dutch Reformed Church in Mashonaland was generally known to be negative towards indigenous forms of religious expression[[63]](#footnote-63). However, Africans, in my view, need to stop to be “crying babies”. Mogomme Alpheus Masoga was right in maintaining that the time of re-awakening and rejuvenation cannot exclude the re-awakening of knowledge[[64]](#footnote-64). My argument in this thesis concurs with Briggs” question: “If indigenous knowledge is so good, why is my farm so poor?”[[65]](#footnote-65) It is argued in the study that in spite of indigenization and independence enjoyed in the African continent, as well as ownership of land, Zimbabwe as a case study, has demonstrated that Africa still has a lot of “homework” to do to become a force to reckon with.

**G PROTEST WRITInG**

In this submission, an attempt is made to provide representative examples of “protest writings” which have recently dominated African scholarship. By “protest writing,” particular reference is made to contributions which depict the notion that postcolonial Africa continues to experience various layers of political and socioeconomic crises because of the continent’s historical past and the colonial distortions exerted on Africa by Europeans and their allies. One wonders whether this “protest” has attracted some attention or some results at all. A few examples of “protest writings” will suffice. According to Dare Arowolo colonialism, slave trade and missionaries are the bastion of Western civilization and culture in Africa[[66]](#footnote-66). It is not inappropriate for Arowolo to assert that colonialism served as a vehicle of implantation of cultural imperialism in Africa. For Arowolo Africans became “westernized” as a result of importation of western culture and European mode of civilization[[67]](#footnote-67). Kwame Nantambu writes that European and Euro-American scholars were in the past guilty of racist or race-based pseudoscience regarding the history and prehistory of Africa[[68]](#footnote-68). In my view, Nantambu’s determination similarly suggests that in the absence of the distortions on African history by European scholars, African history and culture would have been preserved. However, one wonders whether this would have been possible during prehistoric times in Africa before the advent of technology of reading and writing which was exported to Africa by Europeans and Westerners. However, one would also argue that our postmodern world is better, faster, manageable and creative than it was during prehistoric times because *culture*, as both Amani Buntu[[69]](#footnote-69), and Amani Buntu & Charles Williams observe, is not static[[70]](#footnote-70). Joy A. DeGruy remarks that injustices meted out to Africans over many generations of enslavement and colonialism have manifested as a legacy of reproduced social ills[[71]](#footnote-71). DeGruy’s assertion further “invites” the contestation of the present argument that “protest writing”, in my view, is retrogressive. Tebello Letseka adds that “Africanisation” (or “indigenization”) is a renewed focus on Africa and entails salvaging what has been stripped from the continent through colonization[[72]](#footnote-72). Elias Monhla also affirms that it is impossible to separate what exactly has been distorted by the white enterprise, considering the nature of colonialism, imperialism, dispossession, and dehumanisation in Africa[[73]](#footnote-73). Houtondji also protests that: “The problem today is that in the context of colonial domination, we have to a large extent internalised the discourse of our former masters on our cultures, their denigrating views on African ways of life and modes of thought. As a consequence, we were and are still tempted to under-value our own image heritage, including the immense legacy of indigenous knowledge”[[74]](#footnote-74). For Hellicy Ngambi Africa appears to be caught in a developmental pause: underdevelopment, poverty, poor health, unemployment characterise Africa, he is in a way saying Africa is not moving forward economically and culturally.[[75]](#footnote-75) Ali A. Mazrui concludes that what Africa knows about itself, what different parts of Africa know about each other have been influenced by the West[[76]](#footnote-76). In his reference to Africa being “influenced by the West”, Mazrui attempts to portray the “West”[[77]](#footnote-77) as the perpetrators of Africa’s endless political and socioeconomic crises. Ngugi wa Thiong’o also protests that, “We are drawing from the language and culture we are rooted in and that English should not be substitute for our on languages”[[78]](#footnote-78). Other types of “protest” include Robert Mugabe’s speeches, namely: “Zimbabwe will never be a colony again”[[79]](#footnote-79), and “Blair, keep your England and I will keep my Zimbabwe”[[80]](#footnote-80). Mugabe’s speeches serve to elucidate that political rhetoric is just meant to deliberately exhilarate a certain section of society because one cannot reconstruct the significance and relevance of the statements to postindependence Zimbabwe’s economic development. Elsewhere, some contributions[[81]](#footnote-81) have continued to protest for change of place names in Zimbabwe which neither addresses livelihood complexities in any way nor enhances economic development towards poverty reduction among communities. Recently, a Nigerian colleague, namely Kingsley Amaechi, critiqued my stance by arguing that there are many intelligent Africans who are doing exceedingly well in Africa and abroad. He gave names such prominent individuals[[82]](#footnote-82). Amaechi further argued that my approach appears “Eurocentric” in character, which I have since refuted by preferring the description an “introspection” of Africa’s own shortcomings. I considered Amaechi’s critique very clearly when he voiced that Africa’s history and identity formation have been distorted by colonialists so that Africans begin to depend on Europeans in almost everything. Of special note, according to Amaechi, is the fact that Europeans have put is structure some “identity markers” which would regard products from Africa as inferior, so that the continent’s exports do not attract a lucrative market in both Europe and USA. Nevertheless, although Amaechi’s argument is valid to some extent, the contestations he raised are not representative of the entire continent. Another academic response which emerged from the findings of the current debate was posed by Dylan Mangani[[83]](#footnote-83). Mangani argued that history about Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular has not received a fairer attention which it deserves. Mangani opined that colonialism has had a negative impact on Africa’s history and how Africans are generally perceived by the West. I admit that protest comments and writings primarily by African scholars and Pan-African theorists are innumerable.

**H NATURAL RESOURCES IN ZIMBABWE**

Zimbabwe’s wealth derives largely from the natural resources of the land. According to Kerina Duri, Babill Stray-Pedersen and F. Muller, Zimbabwe boasts of abundant natural resources that include nine million hectares of arable land and more than five million hectares of forests, natural parks, and wildlife estates[[84]](#footnote-84). They further assert that the country is adored for its extensive and varied mineral resources such as platinum, gold, asbestos, coal, nickel, iron, copper, and precious gems such as emeralds and diamonds[[85]](#footnote-85). Natural resources constitute one of the four determinants of economic growth which include: human resources, capital goods and technology[[86]](#footnote-86). Jeffrey Sachs and Andrew Warner have concurred that natural resource abundance is included as a determinant of growth[[87]](#footnote-87). Natural resource exports are defined as the sum of exports of primary agriculture, fuel and minerals[[88]](#footnote-88). Zimbabwe is an agro-economy. Commercial agriculture having been affected by the fast-track land reform program, agricultural productivity had deteriorated drastically, which also affected exports of agricultural products (e.g., tobacco, citrus, cotton, maize, wheat, soya beans, e.t.c.). Zimbabwe is not a fuel producing country. All fuels are imported from outside, whose shipping costs also affect the pricing of goods and services in Zimbabwe. This has a negative impact on the consumer, especially the poor. Minerals are abundant in Zimbabwe. Recently, diamond has emerged as money-spinning for individuals in Zimbabwe, while vandalism and plundering of this precious stone has claimed many lives[[89]](#footnote-89). Ian Smillie, among other sources, has revealed that both the police, the army and ZANU (PF) political figures clashed with the local people in Marange (Mutare) in a desperate bid to secure this natural wealth.[[90]](#footnote-90) It has also been revealed that a Russian mining company has found diamond deposits on the farm confiscated from exiled MDC treasurer Roy Bennett[[91]](#footnote-91). It is further reported that ever since Bennett left the farm in 2004, diamonds were being looted by those in positions of power[[92]](#footnote-92). This might be a tip of the iceberg that a lot more vandalism and looting of natural resources have occurred on a big scale at the expense of sustainable development of the entire nation and its people[[93]](#footnote-93). The negative impact of corruption to economic growth is articulated by Paul Mauro who has reiterated that corruption lowers private investment, thereby reducing economic growth, even in subsamples of countries in which bureaucratic regulations are very cumbersome[[94]](#footnote-94). Mauro goes on to say that the negative association between corruption and investment, as well as growth, is significant, both in a statistical and economic sense[[95]](#footnote-95).

**1 Natural Resource Curse in Zimbabwe**

Natural resource curse occurs when communities get poorer and poorer in a nation endowed with abundant natural resources. Thorvaldur Gylfason and Gylfi Zoega have remarked that abundance of natural resources is the problem only of poor countries; these are the countries with the greatest needs, but they eventually suffer from their own wealth[[96]](#footnote-96). Africa is rich with natural resources, yet African countries have low economic growth[[97]](#footnote-97). In view of Africa’s scenario, Nuno Torres, Óscar Afonso and Isabel Soares see a negative relationship between the wealth of natural resources and their economic growth[[98]](#footnote-98). Scholars, for example Allen Ross, presupposes that natural resource curse is largely connected to government and government responsibility, especially in view of corruption involving the military[[99]](#footnote-99). Ross further points out that in some countries (for example, Zimbabwe[[100]](#footnote-100)), resource industries are controlled by the military, giving the armed forces a greater autonomy and a greater influence on civil government[[101]](#footnote-101). During the mid-2000s (2006 to be precise), Zimbabwe was literally being governed by the military[[102]](#footnote-102). The military take-over meant an explosion in the level of violence in Zimbabwe.[[103]](#footnote-103) Soldiers carried out scores of attacks in Harare and surrounding townships[[104]](#footnote-104). Recently, President Robert Mugabe was forced to resign by the same military wing which orchestrated his continued stay in power for 37 years[[105]](#footnote-105).

Zimbabwe’s “indigenization policy”[[106]](#footnote-106) is a case study which shows that indigenization through “land grabbing” is far from being described as a success story. Close to two decades have lapsed since the land reform exercise was implemented in Zimbabwe[[107]](#footnote-107). However, until recently (at the time of concluding this research in December 2017), Zimbabweans are languishing in poverty and starvation, industries have closed, the economy has collapsed, and people are still being coerced to accept a leadership which is committed to remaining in power. One would therefore question the legitimacy of the implementation of indigenization in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in Africa. Against this background, is also a resurfacing of a colonial system this time with a different, yet a familiar face (which Kwame Nkrumah chose to describe as neo-colonialism[[108]](#footnote-108)) that is determined towards subjugating postcolonial communities who continue to remain on the margins[[109]](#footnote-109). Some African nations received their independence more than fifty years ago[[110]](#footnote-110). However, it is unfortunate that many African countries are finding it difficult either to sustain what they inherited from colonial governments or to come up with new innovations towards developing their respective economies. Julius Nyerere was right to challenge the then Prime Minister Robert Mugabe when Zimbabwe obtained independence from Rhodesia in 1980 that: “You have inherited a jewel; keep it”[[111]](#footnote-111). Unfortunately, 37 years later, Zimbabwe’s legacy as a “Breadbasket of Southern Africa”[[112]](#footnote-112) has been distorted. Hence, Greg Mills laments that sub-Saharan African countries have not fulfilled their potential since independence[[113]](#footnote-113). Africa is largely dependent on Western and European thought patterns in which economic powerhouses continue to play a critical role of a catalyst in salvaging Africa’s dwindling economies as well as functionaries towards the introduction of technological and industrial revolution even in the modern postcolonial Africa. Ideas detect how things should be conducted; ideas rule the world![[114]](#footnote-114) For example, in Zimbabwe, the minority white population comprising about four thousand commercial farmers enhanced the economy of the country of about 12 million (according to 2002 census, Zimbabwe’s population was 11.6 million[[115]](#footnote-115)) before the collapse of the economy in the early 2000s[[116]](#footnote-116). After the notorious widespread farm invasions and expulsion of white farmers, the country became poorer and poorer for a period of close to two decades[[117]](#footnote-117). Indigenous farmers who acquired the land did not have the resources and the expertise to carry out farming business. For example, the businessman-turned-football administrator, Phillip Chiyangwa, occupied a farm near Chinhoyi in Mashonaland West Province, about 120 km northwest of Harare, Zimbabwe’s capital. A source who chose to remain anonymous was contracted by Chiyangwa to repaint his farmhouse. The source revealed that no serious farming activities are happening on the farm and farm workers provide their service without remuneration[[118]](#footnote-118). Hindrances to the agricultural sector were further compounded by vandalism of modern farming equipment left behind by evicted commercial farmers[[119]](#footnote-119). If Zimbabweans were “smart” and “knowledgeable” they would manage farming equipment and machinery following the land reform for the sustenance of the economic development of the nation as a whole after the expulsion of white commercial farmers[[120]](#footnote-120). In addition, the natural vegetation continues to be threatened by man-made deserts because trees continue to disappear as the market for firewood grows[[121]](#footnote-121). Hence, the argument for natural resource curse in the Zimbabwean context would be a reality because of gross ignorance demonstrated through indiscriminate destruction and looting of natural resources without considering the negative impact such actions would have on agricultural productivity and the entire economy of the country. In addition to desert, indiscriminate felling of trees can also cause serious land degradation and soil erosion. Continuous soil erosion would “sweep” away the rich soil and ingredients needed by crops. Zimbabwe is agro-economy. Hence, for close to twenty years, Zimbabwe was incapacitated to export agricultural products due to the haphazard agrarian reform. Generally, numerous critics have argued that Africa is known for being a consumer of Western products, and a producer and exporter of very little. Patrice Lumumba was right in lamenting that Africa consumes what it does not produce, and produces what it does not consume[[122]](#footnote-122). It can be speculated that Scholars and or visitors from Africa to Europe, USA, Asia and Middle East marvel at the advanced levels of technology which largely characterize these destinations[[123]](#footnote-123). For example, the splendour of modern ships and submarines, Smartphones, Aircraft, underwater trains, microscope, satellite, computer software and digitalized equipment are manufactured by companies outside the African continent. To be precise, superior cars such as Mercedes Benz, BMW and VW are manufactured in Germany. Until now, African indigenous knowledge systems (AIKS) are nowhere closer to the technology exhibited by European/American knowledge systems. Hence, Patrice Lumumba mourned over Africa’s lack of visionary leadership[[124]](#footnote-124). Closer home, in South Africa, Thabo Mbeki pioneered what he called an African Renaissance[[125]](#footnote-125). Mbeki argues for a rebirth of the African continent and critiques the mixture of greed, dehumanizing property, obscene wealth and endemic public and private corruption as drawbacks to Africa’s socioeconomic development[[126]](#footnote-126). Both these men, painstakingly attempted to demonstrate their preparedness towards transformation of an Africa that truly engenders its Africanness. One would concur with Andrews, McCallum and Curtboys that history about the past experiences and identity formations helps societies to reconstruct their future and their destiny[[127]](#footnote-127). Olewole also confirms that Africans cannot continue to ignore their intellectual past if they are sincerely interested in promoting the development of a meaningful contemporary tradition of their discipline[[128]](#footnote-128). To the contrary, Zimbabwe’s own history has plunged the country to become a “cursed nation”, unable to solve socioeconomic problems devastating the majority of citizens. In Africa, the term “democracy” exists in theory and not in practice. One would concur with the supposition that in Africa one is eliminated through disappearances and death for demanding delivery of justice[[129]](#footnote-129). It is only in Africa where the political leadership either manipulates the rules or rigs the elections in order to continue staying in power[[130]](#footnote-130). In addition, Africa is usually characterised by election-related violence and killings (representative examples being: Togo [2005], Democratic Republic of Congo [2006], Lesotho [2007], Nigeria [2007], Kenya [2007/8], and Zimbabwe [2008])[[131]](#footnote-131), among others. It is only in Africa where the leadership embarks on a long-term revolution of “indigenization” without counting the cost. As Heather Chingono observes, Zimbabwe’s land redistribution exercise was a disaster because the government miscalculated the reactions of both the Whites occupying the farms at the time and the international community which sympathized with evicted commercial farmers[[132]](#footnote-132). Elsewhere it is argued that when an African assumes a position of power, he perpetuates the same ideology (or worse still) which he previously opposed,[[133]](#footnote-133) which Bertice Berry, in my opinion, had the same thought by choosing to write Black-on-Black Discrimination.[[134]](#footnote-134) In Zimbabwe, for example, the game is not played according to the rules[[135]](#footnote-135). It is argued elsewhere that “to be educated is one thing”, and “to be learned” is completely another[[136]](#footnote-136). In my view, if the Bible is relied upon as the source of information about the creation of the human race in general, and Africans in particular, my contestation for Africa and Africans being cursed derive largely from the sum total of the above factors.

**I *Chituko/ngozi*AS CURSE AMONG the Shona people**

Wächter maintains that the Israelite culture takes a special place when it comes to the views concerning death and afterlife[[137]](#footnote-137). Among African cultural societies, death of a person is defined in terms of either angered spirit of the ancestors, witchcraft or a curse such as *chituko* or *ngozi*. John Mbiti could not have said it better to note that “when someone has died, people often try to find out who used sorcery, witchcraft or magic against the dead person.”[[138]](#footnote-138) David Tuesday Adamo reaffirms the similarities that exist between Yahweh punishing Israel for sinning by allowing the invasion, and loss of the land by Africans to foreigners because they sinned against the gods[[139]](#footnote-139). Although Adamo refers particularly to the Nigerian context, such belief systems are also common in other African cultures, such as the Shona people of Zimbabwe where the gods through “vadzimu” (spirit mediums) can inflict calamities such as loss of land if people profane the sacred[[140]](#footnote-140). Klaas Spronk affirms that unlike the Hittites and the peoples of Mesopotamia, the Israelites did not seem to be familiar with a cult of the dead, in which the deceased ancestors are venerated and believed to have divine power to help or harm the living[[141]](#footnote-141). Although Israelite culture could have been influenced to some extent by other cultures of the ancient Near Eastern world, however, the Torah prohibited Israel from venerating the dead. In Leviticus 21 we read that a normal priest is not allowed to touch a dead person other than close relatives[[142]](#footnote-142). A high priest should not come close to any dead person because too much attention for death and the dead detracts from the correct veneration of the God of Israel[[143]](#footnote-143). The ancient Israelites seem to react to death in a “modern” way, especially in their sober acceptance of death as a reality[[144]](#footnote-144). Death was not viewed as the door to a life after death, but primarily as the conclusion of this life[[145]](#footnote-145). So whether a person dies a natural death or he/she is killed, the spirit of the dead person does not exist after death. Hence, Israel did not believe in avenging spirits.

IKS[[146]](#footnote-146) in Africa is complex yet very advanced and practical. Among the Shona people of Zimbabwe, as in ancient Israel[[147]](#footnote-147), bad omen (or *ngozi*) has a cause. Africans believe in the potency of curse, misfortune, bad omen or *ngozi* inflicted by either the spiritual world of dead ancestors or through witchcraft (*huroyi*) by either neighbours or traditional ritual by one’s relatives. In this study, curse (*chituko*) is discussed interchangeably with *ngozi*. *Chituko* is a consequence of either beating up one’s parents (especially mother[[148]](#footnote-148)) for stealing or for murder. Among African cultures in Zimbabwe the spirit of person does not completely die. The Shona people of Zimbabwe in particular always perceive that *mushonga we ngozi kuiripa* (the only solution to appease the avenging spirit is reparations or restitution)[[149]](#footnote-149). Technically, *ngozi* is the spirit of a person who has been murdered and then comes back to seek revenge in the family of the murderer by causing unfathomable sorrow through illnesses, misfortunes, or a series of deaths until the perpetrator pays reparations to the offended family[[150]](#footnote-150). Munyaradzi Mawere confirms that *ngozi* is premised on the idea of “teat for tat”[[151]](#footnote-151). For example, it is widely believed in Zimbabwe that the spirit of a person who was murdered or not adequately buried can afflict and even possess members of the lineage of the person responsible[[152]](#footnote-152). Although Schmidt has revealed that *ngozi* can be appeased through appropriate healing rituals, the disastrous consequences of *chituko* would include: deaths of members in the family or lineage of the culprit, *hungomwa* (barrenness), *hupenzi* (insanity) or *hurovha* (joblessness), among other misfortunes or curses[[153]](#footnote-153). In that sense, for a typical African, killing of any form is avoidable. It is believed that even if a person is sentenced to a jail term for murder, the avenging spirit of the dead person continues to torment the killer during and after serving the jail term until the avenging spirit is ritualized and the appropriate compensation made. For Pentecostal churches to perform what they call “demon-casting”[[154]](#footnote-154) on a person who has been cursed may need further research. Among Pentecostal Christians the blood of Jesus is regarded as reversing all forms of misfortunes linked to witchcraft, sorcery, disease, unemployment, barrenness, and gender barriers[[155]](#footnote-155). However, it is believed that even if the wrongdoer and or other blood relatives are converted to Christianity, the *chituko/ngozi* will not cease its menace until compensation is made. The victim of the murder needs to be replaced by compensation in the form of a herd of cattle and a virgin girl, if the murdered person was a man, and a herd of cattle and a small boy, if the murdered person was a woman[[156]](#footnote-156). In this case, one would talk of *ngozi* and compensation in view of the concept of restorative justice[[157]](#footnote-157). *Ngozi* can also be considered a consequence of beating up one’s mother. In numerous instances, children (as they grow up to adulthood among the Shona) are told that *amai havarohwe* (literally, “it is a taboo to strike one’s mother”). *Chituko* or *ngozi* can haunt the guilty person for the rest of their life until proper traditional rituals involving a traditional medicine expert or a *traditional healer* (also known as a “witchdoctor”[[158]](#footnote-158)) are conducted.

**J CONCLUSION**

In this submission, the concept of curse in the biblical text was explored from an indigenous knowledge systems perspective. It was demonstrated that the Hebrew Bible presents two categories of cursing of the humankind: (1) the entire human race was cursed because of the sin/s of the first people to be created, Adam and Eve, and (2) Noah cursed his son Ham for not covering his father’s nakedness when Noah was drunk. Noah’s curse against Ham was also extended to his grandchild, Cush. *Cush* (which means “Black”) was one of Ham’s four sons. It was shown that Cush is believed to be the ancestor of Africans (“Ethiopians”)/Black people. Some scholars have argued for the presents of the black people in the biblical text. Hence, this essay argues that the Bible presents a scenario which depicts Africans/Black people as cursed. The discussion also enlightened that the Bible is the source of the problem because the majority of the readership to date believe on the biblical view of creation, including that of the humankind. Because the Bible is read literally, the narrative of the creation of the first people, Adam and Eve, and their fall is regarded as authoritative. If the position of the biblical text with regards to creation of humanity is “revised” and interpreted otherwise, then the metaphor of curse among Africans may take another dimension. Until the readership gets another theory with a different version on the creation of humans, the Bible presents it that Africans are cursed.

Informed by the above deliberations as the “red thread”, the essay then proceeded to interpret situations which functioned as curse metaphors among Africans such as: natural resource curse and indigenous knowledge systems. It was argued that Africa and Africans are poor yet the continent is rich and endowed with various types of natural resources, hence the notion of *natural resource curse*. It was shown that Africa does not have the capacity to work on its raw materials from natural resources, hence these raw resources are exported to developed countries where they are processed into finished products and sold back to Africa. In addition, indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) is more of a theory than praxis. One would like to see IKS “graduating” to a higher level and become technologically-oriented towards implementing projects which not only create jobs, but also create knowledge technology and manufacture goods and services which can be exported to overseas markets. I have cited indigenization policy in Zimbabwe as an example, particularly the agrarian reform, which became a fiasco. It was argued that four thousand white commercial farmers enhanced Zimbabwe’s agro-economy prior to Zimbabwe’s independence in April 1980. Following the eviction of white commercial farmers which commenced in the early 2000s, and African farmers taking over (who are in the majority), the Zimbabwean economy crumbled for close to two decades. It also argued that Africa must begin to move away from being a beneficiary to become a benefactor. In other words, the continent cannot continue to depend on aid, better explained as *dependency syndrome*. Further still, it was reiterated that “protest writing” has a potential of being retrogressive. Our fellow counterparts[[159]](#footnote-159) neither retaliate nor react to these “protest submissions”, yet it does not seem it is going to end anytime soon. In my view, energy and effort must be expended on developmental initiatives and poverty reduction among communities. Reference was made to Robert Mugabe’s “famous” protest speech, namely: “Blair, keep you England and I will keep my Zimbabwe,” that it did not contribute anything to the country’s economic development. Recently, Mugabe was deposed by the army. Zimbabwe’s socioeconomic crises remain unresolved and are still biting.

The article went further to discuss another layer of “curse” (chituko/ngozi) among the Shona people of Zimbabwe. Among the Shona people, one can be cursed for striking a parent, stealing livestock such as cattle, goats and chickens, and for killing, among other forms of offences. It was explored that consequences of *chituko*/*ngozi* can take various forms such as: *kutanda botso* (“wanderer” as a result of mental illness), *hungomwa* (childlessness), *kushaya basa* (“joblessness”), *hurombe* (“owning literally nothing”), *kurwara-rwara* (“persistent illness”) and *ndufu* (“deaths”), among others. I have presented for the reader that among the Shona people, it is strongly believed that *mushonga we ngozi kuiripa* (remedy to a *curse* is reparation).

**K Recommendations**

First, although the Hebrew Bible portrays the notion that the entire human race was cursed, and Africans in particular were cursed through Ham, Noah’s son (who is portrayed as the ancestor of the Cushites/Ethiopians/Africans), one would recommend that Africans may need to come up with their own narratives about the creation of both the universe and the human race, especially “dark-skinned”[[160]](#footnote-160) people from tropical Africa. The above recommendation is made in cognizance of the fact that for as long as the readership relies on the biblical tradition of creation, Africans will continue to interrogate the text on the legitimacy of the narrative and critique it for its incoherence in addressing convincingly contestations of race. The “provocation” presented by this study of Africa and Africans being “cursed” derives largely from narratives about Africans, their geopolitical space and socio-economic status which have been relayed from a religio-political perspective. If the readership continues to hold fast on the biblical tradition about creation, in my view, the question of Africa and Africans being “cursed” cannot be escaped.

Second, I recommend that indigenous knowledge systems (IKS), needs to be reconsidered seriously. This article reiterates what has been reconnoitred previously in the current discourse that challenges facing humans on the planet earth are largely explained in terms of the divine; either God has designed it that way or the “forces of evil” (by the “devil”/”Satan”) continue to devastate humans. From that perspective, the above credence tends to exonerate humans from their responsibility to come up with survival techniques to socio-economic crises affecting them; for example, the view that “I am suffering because somebody caused it”[[161]](#footnote-161) is a familiar “song” whose rhythm has since lost taste. This belief may transcend to a broader spectrum of life in general in which one would always reproach someone for the effects of suffering and dysfunctionality. Therefore, my recommendation for Africans to come up with a tradition that explains the creation of the human race including Africans and the causes of suffering is an attempt to “provoke” Africa’s “think-tanks” and proponents of IKS to design a model towards ameliorating poverty and circumventing threats to life and wellness in Africa. If Africans have to succeed in doing this, then the mythology which lingers in their psyche[[162]](#footnote-162) influenced by the biblical view that humans in general (through Adam) and Africans in particular are suffering and poor because they are cursed must be “vomited” (*kurutsiswa*[[163]](#footnote-163)). In my opinion, if one believes something, it becomes part of them. It is therefore my contention that belief in the biblical concept of “curse” is by choice; Africans cannot be held back by the *curse* of the Hebraic/Jewish/Israelite ancestors. Poverty, sickness, and death, among other life challenges, are natural phenomena. In my view, however, one can still evade these, including premature death[[164]](#footnote-164). One way of “running way” from poverty, starvation, and other socioeconomic sufferings in Africa is to appreciate the fact that developing nations need to engage and learn from developed economies and industrialized nations in order to develop their own economies. Two points need to be emphasized: (1) it is undisputed that the present generation of Africans will never be drawn back to the Stone Age lifestyle, and (2) Africa will never be colonized again. This is not to say that the “once-colonized” is oblivious of neo-colonialism.

Third, this essay recommends that biblical commentators who continue to write about the presence of Africans in the Bible may also need to account for the “race-debate” especially the “blackness” of Africans prior to submitting a “concrete defence” that Africans are not cursed. Apparently, as it stands, recent submissions on the presence of Africans in the biblical text suggest that the biblical version of creation of the human race in general and Africans in particular (including the fall, the consequence of sin and curse) is legitimate. If the story of creation is regarded as authentic, and the argument for the presence of Africans in the Bible (which in my view is largely advanced by scholars from an Evangelical persuasion) receives a somewhat fairer treatment, then race and ethnicity matters, such as: “whiteness”, “blackness”, and “demography and geographical locations of humans”, among others, may need to be accounted for. The above observation is made in view of the fact the majority of Africans and believing communities have not had the privilege of accessing divergent sources of information regarding the creation of the human race. The Bible, for them, answers this question.

Fourth, the study has succeeded in demonstrating with valid examples of contributions which support the argument that Africa is endowed with infinite natural resources, namely: platinum, gold, asbestos, coal, nickel, iron, copper, emeralds, and diamonds, among numerous others, yet the continent continues to be impoverished. I recommend that it is time Africa emerged a competitor on the global market by innovating a local technology capable of processing raw materials and export finished products to overseas markets. That way, Africa will create employment, add value and beneficiation on items manufactured locally. Until that materializes, Africa will have to endure a “natural resource curse” a description which is not befitting a continent endowed and blessed with numerous precious natural resources.

Fifth, “protest writing” is equally counterproductive. In my opinion, *protest writing* is different from “critique”. While the former is by nature “protest”, the latter is an informed dialogue, a debate. From an indigenous knowledge perspective, it is recommended that Africa must mature from “pleading for sympathy”[[165]](#footnote-165). Similarly, African scholarship should focus more on concrete and pertinent issues such as production of knowledge technology (because technology embodies knowledge[[166]](#footnote-166)) towards “weaning” the continent from foreign aid and dependency syndrome. Hence, Ngugi wa Thiong’o was right when he penned about *Decolonising the Mind*,[[167]](#footnote-167) to which William Bissell refers as a coloniality nostalgia among twenty-first century Africans[[168]](#footnote-168).

1. John Briggs, “The Use of Indigenous Knowledge in Development: Problems and Challenges,” *Progress in Development Studies* 5/2 (2005):99-114. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Protest writing* has continued to dominate various platforms such the African biblical hermeneutics’ section at SBL annual conferences. Such contributions are also in the majority among African journals. For more information, see Rob Gaylard, “Writing Black: The South African Short Story by Black Writers” (PhD Thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 2008), 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. David Goldenberg, *The Curse of Ham: Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Princeton University Press, 2003); see also Jennifer L. Hochschild, “The Skin Colour Paradox and the American Racial Order,” *Social Forces* 86/2 (2007): 1-28; Davis, F. James, *Who Is Black? One Nation’s Definition* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Alexander Heidel, *Babylonian Genesis: The Story of Creation*. Second Edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963); David A. Leeming, *Creation Myths of the World: An Encyclopedia.* Second Edition (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2010), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Norman R. Whybray, “Shall not the judge of all the earth do what is just? God’s oppression of the innocent in the Old Testament”. In David Penchansky and Paul L. Redditt (eds.), *Shall Not the Judge of All the Earth Do what is Right? Studies on the Nature of God in Tribute to James L. Crenshaw*, 1-19 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Jennifer L. Hochschild, “The Skin Colour Paradox and the American Racial Order,” *Social Forces* 86/2 (2007):2. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. For example, see Adamo, “Understanding the Genesis Account in an African Background”, 17-25. See also Justin S. Upkong, “Rereading the Bible with African eyes”. *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*91 (1995): 3­14 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Peter Bowler, *Theories of Human Evolution: A Century of Debates 1844-1944* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986); Albert I. Baumgarten, “Myth and Midrash: Genesis 9:20-29,” in *Christianity, Judaism, and Other Greco-Roman Cults: Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty* (ed. Jacob Neusner et al.; 4 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1975), 55-71. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Jean D. Clandinin and Michael F. Connelly, *Narrative inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Kim Etherington, *Narrative Approaches to Working with Adult Male Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse* (London: Jessica Kingsley, 2000). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Melissa P. Johnston, “Secondary Data Analysis: A Method of which the Time Has Come,” *Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Libraries* 3 (2014):619-626. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Jan Assmann, “Inscriptional Violence and the Art of Cursing: A Study of Performative Writing,” *Stanford Literature Review* 8 (1992): 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Assmann, “Inscriptional Violence and the Art of Cursing,”53. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Assmann, “Inscriptional Violence and the Art of Cursing,” 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Temba T. Rugwiji, “Appropriating Judean Postexilic Literature in a Postcolonial Discourse: A Case for Zimbabwe,” PhD Thesis (University of South Africa, 2013), 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Rugwiji, “Appropriating Judean Postexilic Literature in a Postcolonial Discourse,” 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Rugwiji, “Appropriating Judean Postexilic Literature in a Postcolonial Discourse,” 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Rugwiji, “Appropriating Judean Postexilic Literature in a Postcolonial Discourse,” 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Alan Lenzi and Jonathan Stökl, *Divination, Politics & Ancient Near Eastern Empires* (Atlanta: Society for Biblical Literature, 2014), 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Lenzi and Stökl, *Divination, Politics & Ancient Near Eastern Empires*, 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. A similar notion is also depicted in the biblical text about the Babylonian captivity of the Judeans. See for example, Ezra 9:6. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Izak Spangenberg, “The Job and the Powerless God.” In Willie Wessels and Eben H. Scheffler (eds), *Old Testament Science and Reality* (Pretoria: Verba Vitae, 1992), 305.

    Rugwiji, “Appropriating Judean Postexilic Literature in a Postcolonial Discourse,” 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. See R.J. Berry, “Adam or Adamah?” *Science and Christian Belief* 23 (2011):23-48; Menachem Krakowski, “Reclaiming the self: Adam’s sin and the human psyche,” *Hakirah: Flatbush Journal of Jewish Law and Though* 5 (2007):151-170. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Mitchell Chase, “God’s Judgments on His Blessing: How Genesis 1:28 Informs the Punishments of Adam and Eve,” *JBMW* (2013):16-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Assmann, “Inscriptional Violence and the Art of Cursing,” 43-65. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Rugwiji, “Appropriating Judean Postexilic Literature in a Postcolonial Discourse,” 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Nahum M. Waldman, “Parents Have Eaten Sour Grapes,” *The Jewish Bible Quarterly* 1/69 (1989):1-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Rugwiji, “Appropriating Judean Postexilic Literature in a Postcolonial Discourse,” 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Rugwiji, “Appropriating Judean Postexilic Literature in a Postcolonial Discourse,” 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Martin Hengel, *Crucifixion: In the Ancient World and the Folly of the Message of the Cross* (London: SCM, 1977); Morna D. Hooker, “Interchange in Christ,” *JTS* n.s. 22 (1971):349-361. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. This concept has been contested variously in recent years. I will develop this notion in another study. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Jerome S. Buthelezi, “A Critical Analysis of the Doctrine of Salvation in Free Evangelical Assemblies in Swaziland: A Contextualized Theology” (MTh Diss., South African Theological Seminary, 2011), 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. For further discussion on this argument, I will return to that later in the following pages of the present conversation. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Cain H. Felder, *Troubling Biblical Waters: Race, Class and Family* (New York: Orbis, 1990), s a [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Norman Cohn, “Noah’s Flood: The Genesis Story in Western Thought” (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), s a [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. David T. Adamo, “The Deuteronomist(s)” Interpretation of Exilic Suffering in an African Perspective,” *Old Testament Essays* 3/1 (2010):9-27; Adamo, *Reading and Interpreting the Bible in African Indigenous Churches* (Eugene, OR: WIPF and Stock, 2001); Adamo, “Understanding the Genesis Account in an African Background, *“Caribbean Journal of Religious Studies* 10/2 (1989):17-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Adekunle O. Dada, “Repositioning Contextual Biblical Hermeneutics in Africa Towards Holistic Empowerment,” *Black Theology: An International Journal* 8/2 (2010):160-174. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Peter Unseth, “Hebrew Kush: Sudan, Ethiopia, or Where?” *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology* 18/2 (1999):143-159. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Allen P. Ross, “The Table of Nations in Genesis 10: Its Content,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 138 (1980): 22-34. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Daniel J. Hays, “The Cushites: A Black Nation in Ancient History,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 153/611 (1999), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Felder, *Troubling Biblical Waters: Race, Class and Family*, s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Cohn, “Noah’s Flood: The Genesis Story in Western Thought,” s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Hays, “The Cushites: A Black Nation in Ancient History,” s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Tokumboh Adeyemo, *Is Africa cursed?* (Nairobi: Christian Learning Materials Center, 1997), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Ross. “The Table of Nations in Genesis 10: It’s Content,”22-34. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Ross, “The Table of Nations in Genesis 10: It’s Content,” 22-34. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Ross, “The Table of Nations in Genesis 10: It’s Content,” 22-34. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Jacob J.S. Meiring, “Shem, Ham, Japheth and Zuma - Genesis 9:25-27 and ­–Masculinities in South Africa,” *Stellenbosch Theological Journal* 2/1 (2016):223-240. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. It is an actuality that the HIV/AIDS pandemic has caused the death of people not only among the Shona people but the world over. See Dennis Masaka and Agrippa Chingombe, “The Relevance of “Gata” Among the Shona of Zimbabwe in the Context of the HIV/AIDS Pandemic,” *Journal of Pan African Studies* 3/1 (2009):190. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Nathaniel O. Awojobi, “Corruption and Underdevelopment in Africa: A Discourse Approach,” *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management* 2/10 (2014): 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Theodosius Dobzhansky’ and Yves Coppens’ theories suggest that humans evolved and developed over a period of time from a gorilla or an ape. These theories will be problematized in a future project. For further reading, see Theodosius Dobzhansky, Mankind Evolving. The Evolution of the Human Species (London: Yale University Press, 1962), xiii; see also Yves Coppens (ed.), Earliest Man and Environments in the Lake Rudolf Basin. Stratigraphy, Paleoecology, and Evolution (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Lanre T. Ajibade, “A Methodology for the Collection and Evaluation of Farmers” Indigenous Environmental Knowledge in Developing Countries,” *Indilinga: African Journal of Indigenous Knowledge Systems* 2(2003):99-113. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. J.A (Bobby). Loubser, “Unpacking the Expression “Indigenous Knowledge Systems,” *Indilinga: African Journal of Indigenous Knowledge Systems* 4/6 (2005):76. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Busisiwe Monica Shumba, “An Evaluation of Indigenisation Policy in Zimbabwe” (MSc Diss., University of KwaZulu Natal, 2014), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Peter Nel, “Indigenous Knowledge Systems: Conceptualization and Methodology” (Unpublished Lecture Presented on 21 October, 2008), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Catherine O. Hoppers, “Culture, Indigenous Knowledge and Development: The Role of the University,” *Centre for Education Policy Development*. Occasional paper no. 5 (2005):3. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
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70. Amani Buntu and Charles Williams, *The Destruction of Black Civilization: Great Issues of a Race from 4500 BCE to 2000 AD* (Chicago: Third World Press), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
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73. Elias Monhla, “Africanisation within the URCSA: A Critical Focus on How the Church Order Relates to African Marriages” (MA Diss., University of Pretoria, 2014), 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
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82. The conversation with Kingsley Amaechi on 24 January 2018 came out from our informal discussion at the University of Venda. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Conversation with Dylan Mangani on 22 January 2017 was significant. Mangani is a Zimbabwean PhD candidate in his final year at the University of Venda (Univen). Mangani was also party of a team of researchers (which I led) to Alexander (Johannesburg, South Africa) for field work in August 2017. The project on themes of migration and identity in Africa will culminate into a book publication towards the end of 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
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88. Sachs and Warner, “Sources of slow growth in African economies,” 341. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. David Moore, “Progress, power and violent accumulation in Zimbabwe,” *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 30 (2012):6. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. See Ian Smillie, “Zimbabwe, diamonds and the wrong side of history, *“Partnership Africa Canada*. Occasional Paper No. 8 (2009), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. J. Nqindi, “Diamonds found on Zimbabwe farm” (*Sunday Times* 24 June 2012), 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Nqindi, “Diamonds found on Zimbabwe farm”, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
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97. Elissaios Papyrakis and Reyer Gerlagh, “The Resource Curse Hypothesis and its Transmission Channels,” *Journal of Comparative Economics* (2003): 1-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. Nuno Torres, Óscar Afonso and Isabel Soares, *A Survey of Literature on Resource Curse: Critical Analysis of the Main Explanations, Empirical Texts and Resource Proxies* (Porto: Centro De Economia e Financas da UP, 2013), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Ross, *The Oil Curse: How Petroleum Shapes the Development of Nations*, s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Insertion is mine. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Ross, *The Oil Curse: How Petroleum Shapes the Development of Nations*, s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. “Zimbabwe Soldiers Behind Wave of Heists,” *The Sunday Times (South Africa)* (2 July 2006), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. “Zimbabwe Soldiers Behind Wave of Heists,” s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. “Zimbabwe Soldiers Behind Wave of Heists,” s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. President Robert Mugabe was forced to resign by the military under the leadership of the Commissioner-General of the Armed Forces, Cde Constantine Chiwenga. Although the Armed Forces leadership declined to define their action as a “Cool,” the international community regards it as such. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Shumba, “An Evaluation of Indigenisation Policy in Zimbabwe,” s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Rugwiji, “Appropriating Judean Post-Exilic Literature in a Postcolonial Discourse,” 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Kwame Nkrumah, *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (New York: International Publishers, 1965), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Emmerson Mnangagwa is now new President of the Republic of Zimbabwe after the ouster of Robert Mugabe. Previously, Mnangagwa was vice President who was sacked by Mugabe. The question that everyone is asking is the constitutionality of the assumption of power by Mnangagwa in the absence of democratic elections. Elections are penciled for September 2018. Mnangagwa assumed the position of Presidency before the endorsement as the party’s 2018 presidential candidate at the ZANU (PF) 2017 Annual Congress. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Martin Meredith, *The Fate of Africa: From the Hopes of Freedom to the Heart of Despair—A History of Fifty Years of Independence* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006), 752; see also Peter Pham, “What Happened to Africa?” *Human Rights and Human Welfare* 8 (2008):25-137. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
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112. Edward Shizha and Michael T. Kariwo, *Education and Development in Zimbabwe: A Social, Political and Economic Analysis* (Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2011), 4 [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Greg Mills, “Why Is Africa Poor?” *Development Policy Briefing Paper No. 6*. Centre for Global Liberty and Prosperity (6 December, 2010), 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Lawrence Lessig, *The Future of Ideas: The Fate of the Commons in a Connected World* (New York: Random House, 2001), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
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116. Lloyd M. Sachikonye, *The Situation of Commercial Farm Workers after Land Reform in Zimbabwe* (London: CIIR, 2003), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. Rose C. Sakuhuni, Clainos Chidoko, Netsai L. Dhoro, and Caleb Gwaindepi, “Economic Determinants of Poverty in Zimbabwe, *“International Journal of Economic Research* 2/6 (2011):1-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. The source who also painted my house located in Ruvimbo Phase 1 in Chinhoyi in July and December 2017, revealed that the few farm workers employed by Chiwanga have been working for years without wages. According to sources, the plight of the farm workers is deliberately denied media coverage because it will expose the fondled land reform. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. See Moore, “Progress, power and violent accumulation in Zimbabwe,” 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Rugwiji, “Appropriating Judean Post-Exilic Literature in a Postcolonial Discourse: A Case for Zimbabwe,” 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. An anonymous source has revealed that firewood used by urban consumers to extract energy for various domestic and or industrial needs are sold to merchants by newly-settled farmers. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. Lumumba, Patrice, *Lumumba Speaks: The Speeches and Writings of Patrice Lumumba, 1958-1961*(Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1972), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Zimbabwe is ranked among the lowest countries in the world for information technology, placed

     132nd out of a total of 134 countries in 2009. See *Executive Summary*, “Moving Forward in Zimbabwe: Reducing Poverty and Promoting Growth” (12 October 2009), 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Patrice Lumumba, *Congo, My Country* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1962), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. Thabo Mbeki, *Africa – The Time Has Come* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1998), 298. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. Mbeki, *Africa – The Time Has Come*, 298. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. Molly Andrews, *Shaping History: Narratives of Political Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); see also Kerry McCallum, “Remembering Our Indigenous Past: Local Talk as Public Opinion About Indigenous History,” Australian Media Traditions (2007):1-26; Ann Curtboys, *Freedom Ride: A Freedom Rider Remembers* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2002), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. S.B. Olewole, “Orica’s Mission in African Philosophy,” In *Sagacious Reasoning* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1999), 161. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. Lorna Davidson and Raj Purohit, “The Zimbabwean Human Rights Crisis: A Collaborative Approach to International Advocacy, *“Yale Human Rights and Development Journal* 7/1 9 (2004): 110. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
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131. Dimpho Mostamai, “When Elections Become a Curse: Redressing Electoral Violence in Africa,” *EISA Policy Brief* 1 (2010): 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. Heather Chingono, “Zimbabwe Sanctions: An Analysis of the “Lingo” Guiding the Perceptions of the Sanctioners and the Sanctionees,” *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations* 4/2 (2010):066-074. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. Norman Gottwald (1985:375) explains that the leaders of the Judean society were responsible for the deterioration of the old tribal order of communal equity. Both people and property were violated by these leaders in enriching themselves and strengthening their position of power. Abuse of office and power by those in positions of influence appears to be a human problem among postbiblical societies in general, and Zimbabwe in particular. See also Charles S. Shaw, *The speeches of Micah. A Rhetorical Historical Analysis* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1993), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. Bertice Berry, Black-on-Black Discrimination: The Phenomenon of Colorism among African Americans. (PhD. Dissertation, Kent State University, 1988). [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. Zimbabwe is currently under military rule following the ouster of President Robert Mugabe who had been in power for 37 years, from 1980 to 2017. However, army chiefs were reluctant to pronounce their action as a “cool” fearing that the international community would not recognize the government, and would slap the “new regime” with bilateral and economic sanctions. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. # A learned person is someone who has successfully understood certain instructions to accomplish a specific task or set of tasks, but when it comes to other tasks (no matter how relevant they are!) he can easily be confused and even frustrated! While an educated man is someone who has successfully formed a flexible broad understanding of the universe by putting the different pieces of the puzzle together (Some science mixed with history plus a touch of art and with a lot of philosophy!); and there is hardly any task that could confuse such a man. See Mohamed Khedr, “Is there any difference between someone who is educated and someone learned?” Available online:

     # <https://www.bayt.com/en/specialties/q/69021/is-there-any-difference-between-someone-who-is-educated-and-someone-learned/>. Accessed 17 December 2017.

     [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. Ludwig Wächter, *Der tod im Alten Testament* (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1967), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. John S. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion* (Cape Town: Heinemann International Literature & Textbooks, 1975), 117. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. Adamo, “The Deuteronomist(s)” Interpretation of Exilic Suffering in an African perspective,” 9-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. Mircea Eliad, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (New York: Brace and World, Inc, 1963), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. Klaas Spronk, “Good Death and Bad Death in Ancient Israel According to Biblical lore, *“Social Science and Medicine* 58 (2004):987-995. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. Spronk, “Good Death and Bad Death in Ancient Israel According to Biblical Lore,” 987-995. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. Spronk, “Good Death and Bad Death in Ancient Israel According to Biblical Lore,” 995. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. Spronk, “Good Death and Bad Death in Ancient Israel According to Biblical Lore,” 995. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. Spronk, “Good Death and Bad Death in Ancient Israel According to Biblical Lore,” 995. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. To be discussed below. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. Proverbs 26:2 reads, “Like a sparrow in its flitting and a swallow in its flying, so a curse without a cause cannot alight”. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. According to the patriarchal African culture, a wife remains “an outsider” who joins the man’s family through matrimony and becomes part of it through birth. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. Itai Muwati, Zifikile Gambahaya and Fainos Mangena, “Echoing Silences as a Paradigm for Restorative Justice in Post-Conflict Zimbabwe: A Philosophical Discourse,” *Zambezia* XXXIII i/ii (2006): 6 [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. Munyaradzi Mawere, “Life-After Bodily Death: Myth or Reality?” *The Zambezia Journal of Humanities* 32/2 (2005): 26-46; Pamela Reynolds, “Children of Tribulation: The Need to Neal and the Means to Heal War Trauma,” *Africa* 60/1 (1990):1-38. [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. Munyaradzi Mawere, “Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) for Establishing a Moral, Virtuous Society: Lessons From Selected IKSs in Zimbabwe and Mozambique,” *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa* 12/7 (2010): 218. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. David Lan, *Guns and Rain: Guerrillas Mediums in Zimbabwe* (Harare: James Currey Publishers, 1985), 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. Heike Schmidt, “Healing Wounds of War: Memories of Violence and the Making of History in Zimbabwe’s Most Recent Past,” *Journal of Southern African Studie*s 23/2 (1987):302. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. Francis Machingura and Godfrey Museka, “Blood as the Seat of Life: The Blood Paradox Among Afro-Christians,” *Perichoresis* 14/1 (2016):59. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. Machingura, “Blood as the Seat of Life: The Blood Paradox Among Afro-Christians,” 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. Mawere, “Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) for Establishing a Moral, Virtuous Society: Lessons From Selected IKSs in Zimbabwe and Mozambique,” 218. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. Muwati, Gambahaya, and Mangena, ““Echoing Silences” as a Paradigm for Restorative Justice in Post-Conflict Zimbabwe: A Philosophical Discourse,” 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. Shirley A. Thorpe, *African Traditional Religion* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1991), 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. By “fellow counterparts” reference is made to scholars and readers who are not indigenous Africans. [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. See Hochschild, “The Skin Colour Paradox and the American Racial Order,” 1-28. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. An informal discussion with individuals portrayed this notion. “Protest writing” discussed previously in this study, attempted to explain this notion. [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. See Krakowski, “Reclaiming the Self: Adam’s Sin and the Human *Psyche,”* 151-170. [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. For example, among the Shona people of Zimbabwe, the only way of reversing the potency of *muti* (poisonous traditional concoction) from someone suffering from its effect is by drinking another *muti* which causes vomit. “Vomit” in in this study is used as a metaphor towards counteracting what Africans have been told to believe. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. I will develop this argument in another study in the near future. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. This *pleading for sympathy* in my view, is on its own a *dependency syndrome* which “refuses” to detach itself from the former colonial master. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
166. Dennis R. Herschbach, “Knowledge as Technology: Implications for Instruction,” *Journal of Technology Education* 7/1 (1995):31. [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
167. Ngugi wa Thiong’o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (Nairobi: Heinemann 1986), s a. [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
168. William C. Bissell, “Engaging Colonial Nostalgia,” *Cultural Anthropology* 20/2 (2014):215-248. [↑](#footnote-ref-168)