

(Un)packaging the “sweetness” in the naming of farms by resettled Black sugarcane farmers in Chiredzi, Zimbabwe

A study of selected names

Wellington Wasosa and Mickson Mazuruse
Great Zimbabwe University

This chapter makes a socio-onomastic analysis of farm naming by resettled “Black” sugarcane farmers in Chiredzi District, Zimbabwe. It focuses on the beneficiaries of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme initiated by the government from 2000. The research unravels the motives behind the selection of the names and their significance. This was achieved mostly through interviewing the owners responsible for naming their farms. It was observed that most of the names are in the Shona language and only a few in English, which points not only to the ethnicity of the beneficiaries but also to the change of ownership from “Whites” to “Blacks”. These names are largely celebratory, as they reflect on the elevation of the farmers’ socio-economic status and their hopes and aspirations, whilst some names indicate racial tensions characteristic of the period, the political rhetoric of the regime and the ruling party, as well as the spirituality and identity of the farmers.

Keywords: economic empowerment, land reform, “Black” sugarcane farmers, naming practices, Chiredzi, Zimbabwe

1. Introduction

In this discussion, the labels black and white are marked and punctuated to conform with some current post-colonial discourses which view them as social constructions rather than racial. The study examines the motivations behind the choice of names by “Black” sugarcane farmers under the A2 resettlement model meant for commercial farming and their significance in the context of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme in Zimbabwe. In the process, it also explores how the Fast Track Land Reform Programme redressed the colonial disparity in land

ownership, leading to changes in land ownership structure and thereby economically empowering “Blacks”. The Fast Track Land Resettlement Programme, which commenced in the year 2000, expropriated land from “White” commercial farmers and foreign firms for redistribution mainly to “Black” Zimbabweans, without compensation. The sugar estates in the lowveld were not exempt, with the “Black” farmers being resettled under the A2 model. The expansion of outgrower areas linked to large lowveld sugar estates has been an important component of Zimbabwe’s land reform since 2000. According to Moyo (2011), the coming in of A2 farmers led to significant changes in the ownership structure and production levels of the sugar estates. Muromo (2017) observes that the inclusion of “Black” farmers in the sugar industry broadened the sugar production base, which was previously confined to “White” farmers in the colonial period, resulting in the spreading of economic benefits to a wider section of society. Sugarcane farming is considered a lucrative business and hence entrance by the “Blacks” was perceived to be an opportunity for their economic empowerment. This can be observed in some of the names discussed here and thus they express an intrinsic relationship to the exercise of the land reform itself. It is from such an environment, which offered new opportunities to the “Blacks”, that the resettled farmers gave names to their farms and/or sub-divisions. When a revolutionary phenomenon like land reform takes place, it is logical for the beneficiaries to give names reflecting the change. Farm names are a constituent of the branch of onomastics referred to as toponymy and sometimes as place names or geographical names. As observed by Neethling (2005), the act of naming entities, human or non-human, plays a great role in humanity, as people cannot live a meaningful life without naming entities. The study argues that the transformation of the sugar industry through changes in the land tenure structure culminated in the spreading of economic benefits to a wider section of society.

2. Background

The Fast Track Land Reform Programme initiated by the Zimbabwean Government in 2000 saw the division of large scale farms into small scale farming units. The farms targeted were those owned by “White” farmers or foreign institutions. The land reform process itself was marred with controversies, as it was largely viewed as a political move by the Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front) ZANU (PF) regime to save itself from impending electoral defeat by the formidable Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) opposition in the 2000 general election (Kondo & Kanyenze 2011). However, the government labelled it a historical necessity to address the colonial imbalances in land ownership

and to economically empower the indigenous “Black” people. As a result, the Zimbabwean government was confronted with a lot of criticism both locally and internationally. This was because of the chaotic and violent manner in which the programme was carried out and also how it caused an economic implosion, as there was a drastic reduction in agricultural produce. Because of the violent and disorderly manner which characterized the exercise, it was commonly referred to as *jambanja*, a Shona term for violence. It is without doubt that there was loss of human life, and property destruction was rampant, as the government was somehow reluctant to control its supporters who led the farm invasions. The ZANU (PF) government was accused of using the programme as a gimmick to win the support of the electorate as the 2000 general election loomed. It is interesting to note that the farm invasions commenced immediately after the rejection of the government-backed constitution in a referendum in February 2000, with the general election scheduled for June the same year. Raftopoulos & Savage (2005:ix) observe how this altered the political landscape in the country:

Confronted in 2000 with the first real challenge to its rule, ZANU (PF) radically changed the terrain of Zimbabwean politics towards one of frontal assault that had its major targets the former colonial master Britain, the local white people, the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), the civic movement and in general the farm workers and the urbanites among whom the opposition had gained a substantial number of supporters.

According to Kondo & Kanyenze (2011), the invasions had the blessing of the government, as it arguably sought to regain the lost trust of a restive populace facing a myriad of economic challenges and a shrinking democratic space. Pro-government organizations like the War Veterans Association spearheaded the invasions. Apart from them, an affluent urban class of “Black” Zimbabweans who were interested in making inroads into commercial farming with public assistance joined the call for accelerated land reform (Masiwa & Chipungu 2004). However, prior to the fast track reform exercise, the government had attempted a somewhat more orderly approach. As noted by Masiwa Chipungu (*ibid.*), in June 1998 the Zimbabwean government published its policy framework on the Land Reform and Resettlement Programme Phase II, which envisaged the compulsory purchase over five years of 50,000 square kilometers of the 112,000 square kilometers owned by “White” commercial farmers, public corporations, churches, non-governmental organizations, and multinational companies. In September of the same year, 1998, the government called a donor conference in Harare on the Land Reform and Resettlement Programme Phase II, to inform the donor community of its objectives and to involve them in the programme. According to Masiwa & Chipungu (2004), 48 countries and international organizations attended and

backed the land programme, observing that it was essential for poverty reduction, political stability, and economic growth. Also agreed was that the inception phase had to start immediately, particularly given the political imperative and urgency of the proposal. The Commercial Farmers Union offered 15,000 square kilometers for the government to purchase for redistribution, but the “White” landowners resisted and this was a recipe for conflict with the government. Consequently, the government sanctioned the farm invasions, which were officially termed the “Fast Track Land Reform Program”, signaling the takeover of the land allocation by the government through compulsory land acquisition without compensation (Moyo 2011).

Sugarcane production in Zimbabwe is mainly confined to the South Eastern Lowveld, Chiredzi District, in the three estates of Hippo Valley, Triangle, and Mkwazine. The estates are owned by Tongaat Hullet Zimbabwe but there were out-growers who were mainly “White” farmers. Apart from the “White”-owned farms, the company also had to cede part of its own land to the resettled “Black” farmers. Consequently, there were tensions between the resettled “Black” farmers, the former “White” farmers, and the company. With this development, the government introduced the A2 agricultural model to incorporate “Black” farmers (known as A2 farmers) into the commercial farming sector previously dominated by foreign firms and “White” farmers. Thus, according to Moyo, an A2 farmer refers to a new breed of a commercial farmer who was allocated land by the government for commercial farming purposes under the Fast Track Land Reform Programme. In the sugar estates each A2 farmer was allocated at least 20 hectares under a 99-year leasehold tenure, resulting in over 900 “Black” farmers being resettled across the three estates in its initial stages (Scoones et al. 2010). It was during this period that approximately 16,000 hectares of the sugarcane plantations that had previously belonged to Tongaat Hullet Zimbabwe and to “White” commercial farmers were compulsorily acquired and redistributed to A2 farmers (Moyo 2011). Increases in output levels, which are also reported in the Tongaat Hullet annual report 2013 cited in Muromo (2017) and in Scoones et al.(2010), are an outcome of the efforts by these new out-growers. The productive capacity of the new “Black” land beneficiaries invalidates assertions made by various scholars that new land beneficiaries were bound to fail owing to their lack of training in agriculture (Zamchiya 2011). This shows that the resettled farmers are very enterprising and this has led to a general improvement in their economic well-being.

3. Conceptual framework

The discussion of the naming of farms is premised on the tenets of the socio-onomastic approach. As Neethling (2005) posits, this approach links the naming process to the communities from which names emerge and the context in which they operate. Therefore, in this research, the Fast Track Land Reform Programme, the causes, the manner in which it was executed, and the results become significant in analyzing the names adopted by the resettled “Black” farmers. As observed by Mamvura (2014), place names are also sources of historical knowledge, since they are social documents. The process of place naming being tied to the prevailing social conditions implies that names that are chosen are intricately linked to the realities obtaining in the societies from which they emerge. Meiring (2010: 95–96) corroborates this idea and argues that:

The study of geographical names in any country involves the exposition of many factors that gave rise to the choice of these names. Naming is a basic human activity and reflects how people see the world around them, how they experience life and what they value and remember.

This vindicates the idea that the choice of names arises from particular social contexts in particular historical epochs.

4. Categorization and analysis of farm names

The researchers gathered the data on farm names mainly through semi-structured interviews. However, it is interesting to note that some of the farmers were unwilling to have the researchers disclose their real names, which could be a result of the feeling of insecurity prevalent among the resettled farmers, as they do not have title deeds. They feared that their sentiments may offend the government, which has the privilege of withdrawing their offer letters if need be. Table 2.1 below shows the names of the farms whose owners disclosed their identity.

After observing similarities in the naming trends by the farmers across the three estates, the researchers attempted to categorize the farm names based mainly on the motivations behind the naming process. However, there may be some degrees of overlap and similarities in the discussions on the naming processes in the different categories.

Table 1. Ownership

Owner	Location	Trade name/Farm name
Lot Sanangurai	Triangle	Tanaka
Rueben Madzingo	Triangle	Mahamba
Tobias Vhudzijena	Mkwasine	Tagwireyi
Emmanuel Nhendo	Hippo Valley	Ganyamatope
F. Sakala	Mkwasine	Mutounonaka
Gono	Hippo Valley	Mabhunumanya
Moyo	Mkwasine	Dhewa
Anatolia Garai	Mkwasine	Garai
Victor Dzvova	Triangle	Gabarinocheka
Changamire	Triangle	Tanyaradzwa
Talent Majoni	Hippo Valley	King Dhavhiti
Oscar Chabata	Mkwasine	Wejena
Beaula Matava	Hippo Valley	Captain Barbosa
Martin Mukora	Hippo Valley	Mukora

4.1 Names and identity

The first category of farm names reveals a connection with the owners' identity, as they are either family names or clan praise names based on the owners' totems. This is not unusual as, among other things, place naming has been linked to the process of identity creation (Mamvura 2014). The use of the family name or surname as a farm name is common among the farmers and this could be interpreted as a way of reminding the family that they are the ultimate beneficiaries of the land reform. The Shona people, as part of their existential philosophy, emphasize the need to take care of one's relatives when the conditions allow. Just like other Africans, they adopt a communal approach to life which supersedes individualism. This can be observed from the Shona axioms *Rume rimwe harikombi churu* ('One man cannot surround an anthill') and *Chara chimwe hachitswanyi inda* ('One thumb cannot crash a louse'). Mbiti, cited in Kaphagawani (2006: 336), summarizes this communal approach to life by Africans by noting that:

[...] whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole group and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual. The individual can only say 'I am because we are and since we are, therefore I am' [...]

This approach forms the basis of *unhu/ubuntu*, which is the bedrock of the existential philosophy of the Bantu languages and cultural groups. As Ramose (1999: 49) argues, “*Ubuntu* then is the wellspring flowing with African ontology and epistemology [...] *ubuntu* may be seen as the basis of African philosophy”. Furthermore, Tutu, cited in Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru & Makuvaza (2014: 7), describes *ubuntu* as:

[...] the essence of being human. It speaks to the fact that my humanity is caught up and is inextricably bound up in yours. I am human because I belong. It speaks about wholeness, it speaks about compassion. A person with *ubuntu* is welcoming, hospitable, warm and generous, willing to share [...]

Still on this subject, Mandova & Chingombe (2013) note that *unhu/ubuntu* has been described as a social philosophy which embraces the ethical values of generosity, consideration of humaneness towards others in the community, mutual assistance, humility, industriousness, co-operation, hospitality, solidarity, and social cohesion. Some family names used are *Tagwireyi*, *Mukora*, *Garai*, *Mahamba*, and *Tagwireyi*, among others. Thus, one can argue that the farmers use family names to indicate that the benefits go beyond individuals to include the entire family, including the extended family.

However, most of the names in this category are clan praise names of the people who identify themselves with particular totems. A totem is an animal, an organ, or an object which was chosen by the progenitor of the clan as a way of distinguishing its members from others (Musiyiwa 2003). According to Musiyiwa, a clan is a group of genetically related kinsmen and kinswoman who trace their descent to a founding ancestor. Names such as *Mukanya* are praise names for those who belong to the *Soko* totem, whilst *Ganyamatope*, *Dhewa*, and *Wejena* are used by people of the *Moyo* totem. The motivations behind such names can be accounted for in the context of the significance of totems among the Shona people. Totems link people to their history as they were chosen by the founders of certain clans. They are treated as sacred and people who share the same totem are believed to be related. It is for this reason for example, that those who belong to the same clan are discouraged from marrying each other. Totems are also sources of pride, as members of the group usually refer to themselves using praise names such as *Mukanya* and others listed above. Therefore, based on this, having a clan praise name as a farm name is not only celebratory and an indication of being proud of the achievement, but can also be viewed as an attempt to thank the ancestors for the acquisition of the property. This is because the Shona believe that the ancestors are involved in their daily activities and they consult them when something either good or bad happens to them. In this case, the farm names could be viewed as part of thanksgiving to the ancestors. It is for this reason that

Helleland (2009) argues that place names trigger mental relationships between those who use the place names concerned and the named landscapes.

4.2 Names and the farmers’ socio-economic status

Whilst the above names have been mainly linked to identity building, those in the second category are largely celebratory and signify the high hopes the new indigenous farmers have, particularly of changing their socio-economic status through sugarcane production. Sugarcane farming is considered to be a lucrative venture, hence the resettled “Black” farmers saw their entrance into farming as a step towards poverty reduction and elevating their status. This can be observed in such names as *Tagarika* (‘We are at peace/we are comfortable’) and *Tanaka* (‘We are fine/comfortable’), which signal good living and probably the end of poverty. The same can be said about *Taguta* (‘We are full/satisfied’), which indicates satisfaction with the gains from the business. Apart from these, some farmers are boastful of now being rich, hence the name *Tapfuma* (‘We are now rich’). However, some names can be said to be mere indicators of the joy the farmers are experiencing from the “lucrative” business; these are such names as *Mutounonaka* (‘sweet sap’). Other names reflect a “royal” feeling among the owners, which again is a pointer to the satisfaction they have as sugarcane farmers. The name *Pamuzinda Pashe* (‘The king’s city’), *The Duke*, and *King Davhiti* (David) signify that the owners feel elated and have probably assumed a higher status than they previously had before acquiring the farms. According to one of the farm owners, the name *King David* was inspired by the biblical story found in 1 Samuel 17, in which the diminutive David courageously fought the giant Goliath in the war between the Israelites and the Philistines. David fought for the Israelites and he won the battle for them through his victory over Goliath. Later on, David became the king of the Israelites, establishing a royal dynasty. In the context of the land reform programme in Zimbabwe, the name David could imply the courage and unexpected victory of “Blacks” in repossessing their land from the mighty “White” settlers and their subsequent change of socio-economic status. The issue of the transformation of the economic status of the beneficiaries of the land reform programme is captured by Muromo (2017), who notes that redressing the racial imbalance in land ownership in the sugar estates and economic empowerment for the previously disadvantaged “Black” people of Zimbabwe have been evoked as major reasons for the transformation of the sugar estates. In reality, the land reform exercise has allowed the resettled farmers access to a wide range of natural resources, which was previously impossible. These have provided alternative sources of income, which have in turn influenced accumulation patterns among a large group of the resettled farmers. Muromo (ibid.) further argues that empirical studies carried

out in some parts of Africa and elsewhere on land and agrarian reforms, particularly with reference to out-grower schemes, reflect positive results for small farmers in terms of income. Thus, the land reform brought with it some transformations in most of the resettled “Black” farmers’ lives, in a manner typical of any revolution:

A revolution that does not produce new space has not realised full potential; indeed, it has failed in that it has not changed life itself, but has merely changed ideological superstructures, institutions and political apparatuses. A social transformation, to be revolutionary in character, must manifest a creative capacity in its effects on daily life, on language and on space [...] (Azaryahu 1996: 318)

In essence, the lifestyle of the resettled “Black” farmers and the properties such as buildings and cars they own are a pointer to the economic class to which they belong. This resulted in self-contentment, as conveyed in names such as *Paidamoyo* (‘What the heart craved for’), showing that possessing the farm and prospering was owner’s ultimate wish. On property acquisition by resettled farmers, Mazwi & Muchetu (2015) state that between 2011 and 2013 the number of farmers with tractors increased by 10 percent, while a 15 percent increase was registered in the ownership of double-cab trucks. The increase in the acquisition of vehicles, tractors, and trailers on sugar family farms pointed to a degree of profitability in the farming business. With the land reform being largely accepted as irreversible, and the sugarcane farms beneficiaries doing well, this out-grower model of land reform has proven, against multiple odds, to be successful. These successes are implied and captured in the names chosen by the farmers.

The name *Tanyaradzwa* (‘We have been comforted’) gives the message that the owner has been consoled or comforted after so much time languishing in poverty. Prior to the acquisition of the farm, the owner felt that he had been living in poverty, only to find comfort after. As for *Yard by Yard*, the owner seems to suggest that he is slowly overcoming the challenges. The benefits of land reform to people are explicated by Muromo (2017), who notes that land reform throughout the world has been viewed as an important vehicle in the transformation of people’s lives, as it incorporates notions of both material and non-material welfare aspects of the human condition. Above all, it is a process that creates environments in which the beneficiaries can expand their capabilities and opportunities, both for current and future generations. The same perspective is shared by Scoones et al. (2010), who argue that any objective land redistribution should involve the redistribution of wealth, income, status, and capacity for saving, which will not only provide incentives for increased agricultural production and labour productivity, but also improve the socio-economic status of the resettled.

4.3 Names, racial tensions and political rhetoric

There are some names which are reflective of racial and political tensions, whilst others are in tandem with the rhetoric of the governing party, ZANU (PF), on the Fast Track Land Reform Programme. As noted earlier, the period was chaotic, with violence being unleashed mainly against the “White” farmers who resisted the compulsory acquisition of their land without compensation. There are a lot of emotions attached to the land reform exercise. This was viewed in some quarters as revenge for the colonial land imbalances, which favoured the “Whites” whilst discriminating against the “Blacks”. Legislation enacted by the colonial regime, such as the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 and the Land Husbandry Act of 1951, ensured that “Blacks” were evicted from arable land to pave the way for the “White” settlers. Some of the farm names after the resettlement exercise carry innuendos against the former “White” farmers and celebrate their eviction. This is the sense envisaged in the name *Mabhunumanya* (‘Whites have lost’). Some of the names are embodiments of the ZANU (PF) party and government rhetoric that the country’s independence was incomplete without the resettlement of the indigenous people. Thus, allocating land to the “Blacks” was viewed as the ultimate realization of freedom. These names include *Zimbabweyaya* (‘Zimbabwe is now real’) and *Rusununguko* (‘Freedom’), whilst *Totonga* (‘We are now in power’) has connotations of the power and sovereignty the “Blacks” were now enjoying. It can be argued that the choice of the names was motivated by the “Blacks” feeling that they were now in control of the land and therefore a sovereign people. For the new farmers, the land redistribution resulted in the gaining of access to high-value irrigated land and the associated infrastructure. Mamvura (2014) argues that the ability to control place naming systems is directly related to power. This is supported by Vuolteenaho & Berg (2009), who emphasize that place naming is always a social practice that involves power relations. In this discussion, farm names are therefore embedded in the power politics of the day, as evidenced by the names which indicate that the country’s independence was incomplete without land reform and also that the “Whites”, who had long oppressed the “Blacks”, had now met their fate. Pinchevski & Torgovniki (2002:366) advance a similar view that the very act of assigning a name to the landscape is “a political act, for a name is always given to someone or something by [...] a force having the legitimacy to do so”. They further note that decisions over place names are conducted by political actors who endeavour to engrave their ideological views in the social space, and further into the collective memory. As was observed earlier, most of the beneficiaries were supporters of the ruling ZANU (PF) and the party’s ideology and rhetoric are carried in some of the farm names discussed above. For instance, the party has always argued that the country of Zimbabwe is a sovereign country

and the foreigners (“Whites”) cannot determine its policies, as in the case of land reform. This is what names such as *Totonga* and *Rusununguko* imply. On this matter, Yong (2007) asserts that place names express the ideological orientation of the section of society with access to power, whilst at the same time they also reflect the political outlook of that particular society.

It is interesting to note that the Fast Track Land Reform Programme has been referred to as the Third *Chimurenga* by the ZANU (PF) government. *Chimurenga* is a Shona word for ‘war of liberation.’ Prior to the land reform programme, the “Blacks” had fought the First *Chimurenga* between 1896 and 1897, just after the advent of colonialism, in which they were defeated. The protracted Second *Chimurenga* was waged from 1964 to 1979 and this saw the attainment of independence. However, since the struggle for independence was mainly centered on the land issue, when the Fast Track Land Reform Programme commenced it was dubbed the Third *Chimurenga*, as the process of liberation was said to be incomplete without land redistribution to its legitimate owners, the “Blacks”. It is therefore not surprising that some of the beneficiaries chose farm names which reflect the mood of combat, similar to those chosen by the fighters of the second war of liberation. In other words, some of the farm names are similar to those used by some of the farm owners during their time as freedom fighters, “names that won the liberation struggle”. These are names such as *Gabarinocheka* (‘Sharp-cutting tin/weapon’) and *Magamba* (‘Heroes’), which celebrate the farmers for their heroic deeds as they fought to repossess the land from the “Whites”. The former freedom fighters were an important force of the land reform programme. On this, Muromo (2017) notes that guerrilla veterans of the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) and the Zimbabwe People’s Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) began to emerge as a radical force in the land redistribution exercise. This is evidenced by the fact that the former guerrilla fighters forcefully presented their position that white-owned land in Zimbabwe was rightfully theirs, on account of promises made to them during the Rhodesian bush war (Chaumba et al. 2003).

One interesting farm name is *Captain Barbosa*. This is derived from a fictional character in the *Pirates of the Caribbean* film series, a legendary and ferocious pirate of the Caribbean and Pirate Lord of the Caspian Sea. Despite being treacherous, ruthless, and cunning, he controlled his fate and ultimately survived against the odds.¹ The choice of the name, again, can thus be linked to the farm owner celebrating his heroic deeds in the process of acquiring the farm, in which in the end he was successful.

1. See [https://pirates.fandom.com/wiki/Hector_Barbossa] (accessed 20/12/2023).

One farm name refers to the significance of the soil to the beneficiaries in particular and to the nation at large. The name *Ivhundonyika* (‘The land is the nation’) implies that landownership is key to the nationhood which was lacking after the attainment of independence in 1980 without land reform. Put differently, the sense of belonging to the nation is incomplete without ownership of the land. For Africans, the land carries with it immense significance in their lives. Apart from the economic benefits, it also has religious and historical importance. The land links a person to his ancestry and therefore the dispossession the “Blacks” suffered was tantamount not only to condemning them to poverty but also to disconnecting them from their own history. It was therefore not surprising that during the war of liberation “Blacks” would refer to themselves as *vana vevhu* (‘sons/daughters of the soil’). Therefore, in the end, place names do not merely reflect the world but they have the potential to construct the world in the ways deemed proper by the namers. After the resettlement wave, it was expected that the new farmers would use indigenous names to reflect the new dispensation.






4.4 Farm names and the owners’ spirituality





Some farm names are linked to the owners’ spirituality and they apparently attribute their acquisition to God’s grace. The owners of the farms confirmed during the interviews that they were Christians. It is common among Christians to acknowledge and thank God for the good that would have happened in their lives. Thus through naming, the owners could be argued to be establishing their affiliation with God. These names include *Makomborero* (‘Blessings’) and *Nyashadzogadzoga* (‘Plenty of grace’). Above all, the names may also reflect the attachment the owners have to the land. In general, place attachment refers to the affective bond or link between people and specific places (Hildago & Hernandez 2001). Attachment also refers to the special feelings people have towards places in their environment, as they give emotional and symbolic meanings to places. In the process, they develop personal attachments to the places concerned. Place attachment offers a paradigm shift from conceptualizing places and landscapes in simple physical and textual terms to “understanding the subjective, emotional, and symbolic meanings associated with natural places and the personal bonds or attachments people form with specific places and landscapes” (Williams & Vaske, cited in Kyle et al. 2004: 213).

5. Conclusion

This discussion has reinforced the idea that place names, apart from their denotative function as localizing devices, assume a number of functions in society. It has been noted that the choice of farm names is motivated by a number of factors which are linked, overtly or covertly, to the Fast Track Land Reform Programme. Some of the reasons for the choice of the names include the effort to create identity, whilst the majority can be said to be celebratory as the “Blacks” repossessed their land and also saw the transformation of their economic status as their living standards improved. Other names carry political and racial overtones reflective of the conflict associated with the programme.

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Address for correspondence

Wellington Wasosa
Great Zimbabwe University
28411 Hillside Extension
Masvingo
Zimbabwe
welliewasosa@gmail.com

Co-author information

Mickson Mazuruse
Great Zimbabwe University
mickson_mazuruse@yahoo.co.uk

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