

Electoral and Intellectual Exercises in Validation

The Ebbing Wave in Southern Africa

Stephen Chan

►► **Abstract:** Huntington's third wave of democracy was no such thing. It neither ushered in a democratic era nor was it a wave in any acceptable historical sense. What it did do was to highlight a contrast and competition among norms and values, so that what we automatically regard as undemocratic practice that is norm-free is no such thing. They might perhaps, and with a freight of contingencies, be bad norms—but they are still norms.

►► **Keywords:** democracy, norms, values, Zambia, Zimbabwe

The assumption that democracy, especially with its electoral centerpiece, is the key characteristic of a free, and thoughtfully free, polity is largely unchallenged. I use this description because of the tacit assumption that no thinking person would choose dictatorship, and the pairs—dictatorship and democracy, mindless obedience and thoughtful participation—are established as opposing dyads. I would, however, like to problematize such assumptions. This form of thinking in unproblematic binaries becomes easily vulgarized into discourses on good and bad, and even serious scholarship makes normative assumptions that rely on unproblematized binaries. Once start a process of problematization, and normative discourse on democracy can at least be no longer facile. In this article, I demonstrate the complexity and varieties of norms within both democratic and not-so-democratic environments. I would like also to challenge the free-form historical sketch drawn by Samuel Huntington—of waves of democracy—with its US-centric starting point.

It is on this history that Huntington (1991) builds his three waves. In summary, the first great electorally based democratic wave began with Jacksonian democracy in 1820, amid the turmoil of that time in US politics. The second great wave was in the wake of World War II and the defeat of dictatorships. The third wave was inaugurated in 1974 with the advent of democracy in Portugal and, by extension, reached a great height



in the fall of Communism. It could be argued that the same wave continued through other parts of the world, affecting the developing world and Africa – although Huntington could not argue that at the time, as the African wave had not yet begun; although it did in the year of his book’s publication. The wave then stalled, and some would suggest that a fourth wave began with the Arab Spring. That was premature. I now proceed to question Huntington’s history as seeking to establish far too neat a timeline with its accomplished stages in the globalization of democracy. It was messier than that.

The accomplishment of President Jackson’s democracy was suffrage for white adult males. This was not universal, even within this group, as a small number of residual property requirements persisted until 1850, and some such requirements lingered until 1966. Black people had to wait until 1870 and the civil war that followed. Women had to wait until 1920, and native Americans until 1924. The inhabitants of the District of Columbia could not vote in presidential elections until 1961. It was a most uneven wave, and was certainly both gendered and discriminated against minorities.

The point to be made, however, is that it was not Jacksonian suffrage that influenced the world beyond the United States. A form of limited universal suffrage was in place in Corsica from 1755 to 1769. There was universal suffrage in the short-lived Paris Commune of 1871. There were, in short, European democratic ideals that were the centerpieces of uprisings and revolutions, and which had been prefigured in philosophical work and the “agit-prop” of the era. As for female suffrage, the first state to introduce that was New Zealand in 1893, and the first European state to do so was Finland in 1906, both some years ahead of the United States, with the exception of Wyoming. The Jacksonian wave was only one (quite large) riverlet that fed into a disjointed but global wave.

Huntington’s second wave in the post–World War II years saw an increase in democratic states with electoral systems and universal suffrage. It also saw an increase in communist states without democratic systems or free elections. What the post–World War II years saw was what has been called the Cold War, but certainly a formidable and indeed dialectical relationship between two state systems and two ideologies – with variants; so that Chinese Communism was different from Soviet Communism, as was Yugoslav Communism; and German proportional democracy was different from US winner-takes-all democracy. But the so-called standoff between West and East barely disguised the inter-permeation of ideas, with (continuing) discussion of the role of the centralized state in economic welfare and social provision. In some senses, that debate and its influences have been more profound than the effects of democracy.

The second wave benefited from swollen numbers of democracies as colonies achieved independence in the 1960s, all with plural electoral systems at the outset. Many were fragile, however, but their transition into other forms of government was not always thoughtless.

Huntington begins his third wave, curiously, with Portugal in 1974. Events that year certainly brought democracy to Portugal – but it was accomplished by a coup, prompted mostly by young officers (Birmingham 1993). It was not the result of citizen action. Democracy was one of the coup’s products, but dissatisfaction with the fascist regime’s colonial wars, and the casualties caused among conscripted Portuguese soldiers, were greater motivations for the coup than a quest for democracy. Insofar as democracy was involved, it was as an accompaniment or key aspect of modernization – and it was a desire for a modernized Portugal, then the most backward state in Europe that drove an impatient young generation forward, both within and without the army. Because conscription militarized, as it were, the ideals and dissatisfactions of youth, the overthrow of the government was accomplished by the military and could not have come via a heavily controlled and powerless citizen body.

The ambition of Portugal for modernization and economic growth led to membership of the European Union (as it is now called) and this was the ambition also of Spain and Greece as they cast off military rule. If there was any second wave, it was the consolidation of a range of, not only norms in the broad sense, but operational and bureaucratic norms that ensured transparency and procedural processes that could be monitored and accessed by all citizens – and this was an accomplishment of Europe as an organized and supra-governmental collective that was, in itself, in no way directly elected in his highest offices.

The first problem with most assumptions about democracy, therefore – an assumption that underlies much democratic theory – is that democracy results from a citizen push for democracy. However, it is as much an incidental, if highly desirable, result of a push against certain things and for a range of things to replace them; and they are not always derived from citizens as a civilian collective. In Eastern Europe, at the close of the 1980s, citizens did by and large demand democratic systems, but this was very much facilitated by the decline and demise of Soviet Communism (Sakwa 2010). It was this that cleared the way for citizen action and then for democracy. Without this demise, nothing to do with democratic outcomes would have been possible. In this sense, there has been no third wave. There has been a tranche of democratic outcomes, among other things, but no direct wave in the sense of a wave sweeping all before it. Insofar as some sort of third wave, in the Huntingtonian sense can be discerned, it took place far from the paved and lit squares

of Europe and its statues and histories. This wave almost immediately was forced into narrow channels and lagoons, without losing any of its democratic apparatus and the artifactual evidence of elections. I now turns to Africa and make a series of points in the use of two key case examples – Zambia and Zimbabwe. In doing so, I also question the almost automatically assumed virtues of democracy. A Vietnamese citizen in the 1970s might well have wondered about democracies that validated those whose policies were to bomb Vietnam. For the hapless Vietnamese, the hegemonic value would have been, I suggest, survival in the face of democratic bombing. This is not to traduce the essential merits and virtues of democracy – of which I have been a champion. It is simply to suggest that the ease of declaring such merits and virtues might be challenged – if only to prevent the assumption of virtue from going “soft.” I do challenge such merits and virtues and point out other merits and virtues given priority by those who are not regarded as champions of democracy. Let us say there is a contestation among norms, and democracy is not the only normative game in town.

Validation

It is not as if, after a lengthy furlough, democracy suddenly reappeared in the 1990s in many parts of Africa. Following the early years of independence, most African countries moved away from the constitutional arrangements they had been bequeathed, adopted, or adapted from Westminster and Parisian powers. In fact, in the 1990s, democracy, as identifiable under Western rubrics of contested elections that were free and fair was reasonably alive and well, with documented transgressions in Zimbabwe in 1990 that, all the same, did not affect the final outcome. Even since the political and economic crises of the 2000s, elections are still held in Zimbabwe, and are contested vigorously, but are not universally regarded as free and fair, and even those observers who suggest they may be are able to say so only conditionally.

Throughout the years of independence, as forms of authoritarian rule swept most parts of Africa, elections were commonplace. Their use as validation exercises, as opposed to exercises in choice, meant that an electoral culture of some sort did not disappear. This raises a major problem, however, with the identification of democracy with elections. The popularity of election observation teams – that see nothing of the months of build-up to the elections, but see the period of polling – illustrates a certain fetishization. But, even if observation teams were in the countries for much longer periods, they would not necessarily understand the po-

litical cultures, with significant recent historical roots, of which forms of election are a part. For example, even if single-party elections with one candidate give way for multi-party elections with more than one candidate, key aspects of organizational culture of those elections might persist from the past: the ruling party would use all aspects of governmental incumbency, in a way that would be regarded as unfair in Europe and the United States, as if it were still the only party that could form the government.

Single party states arose not only from a desire to monopolize power but in recognition of small political elites in generally under-developed societies. Elite cohesion was regarded as a greater value than plurally organized politics. Much civil-military relations theory from the period up to and throughout the 1960s and 1970s considered military coups as takeovers by elements of the same elite, disenchanted by an otherwise enforced cohesion of the elite, but being organizationally discrete and able to establish a separate identity (Finer 1962; Gutteridge 1975). Even so, elite theory was a hallmark of political sociological theory of this time (e.g., Wright Mills 1956). In that sense, any third wave affecting Africa may have had not only exogenous influences, as will be discussed below, but endogenous influences such as the natural growth and diversification of the elite.

The second point is the straight-forward one intimated above, and that is to do with the creation and embedding of political cultures grounded in traditional discourses – particularly those to do with centralized and cohesive rule to ensure the special conditions of larger nation-states could continue with the values of governance from smaller pre-colonial entities. I use here the example of Zambia, in colonial times Northern Rhodesia. Its neighbor, now Zimbabwe, was Southern Rhodesia and both were, together with South Africa, part of Cecil Rhodes's corporate colonial project. Zambia alone was untainted by the gross racism of its southern neighbors, but the rebellion of those neighbors against international norms of democracy – that is, that the black majority should enjoy the franchise – meant very difficult years after independence came. For Zambia, freedom from colonial rule occurred in 1964. In 1965, the white minority of Southern Rhodesia issued an illegal Unilateral Declaration of Independence, rather than also be part of the wave of legal independences being granted on a majority-rule basis (Watts 2012). Animosity that was rapidly militarized and economically disabling for Zambia sprang up between the two countries (Anglin 1994). The Zambian leader, Kenneth Kaunda, faced not only the external threat on his borders, but an problem of cohesion (Brownrigg 1989; Kaunda 1962). There was a very small elite – the British had departed, leaving only 99 Zambian university graduates, only two of

whom had received British government scholarships – but Zambia was a large country, with over 70 ethnic groups speaking over 70 fully fledged languages and boasting discrete cultural formations.

Kaunda invented a national philosophy called “Humanism,” which harked back to unified and communal traditions within tribal and village communities. He wrote it large for a national stage. In a curious way, the threat from the south helped him, but the end-result was a unified nation within a state that has never been violently overthrown. The philosophy, although resonating with traditional motifs, was artificial. However, citizens bought into its ethos sufficiently for Zambia both to withstand an economic siege from the southern racist countries and to understand a delicate internal balancing act where Kaunda’s cabinets could be works of art in ensuring inclusivity of all main ethnic groups.

The imposition of a one-party state in 1973 followed some years of careful crafting of the Humanism doctrine. It was intended as a philosophy that served as a cohesive ideology. I use the term “doctrine” because it became an imposed article of “belief.” What it did was to give intellectual flesh to a major constitutional exercise that was carried out partially through formal means – a new constitution was adopted – but also to establish an informal constitutional hierarchy. In other words, it was not expressed in quite this way in the new constitution, but it established a constitutional order whereby the state was first articulated by the party and then by its government. That is, it was the government of the party, not of the state in the first instance, with elections within both party and government, and national elections that validated Kaunda as an unopposed president (Chan 1992). The explanatory clause was that, party elections would choose the presidential candidate, so that an element of possible challenge was always there, but it never materialized or was suppressed.

What this meant was that, in the matter of democracy, three levels were at stake: national election/validation for Members of Parliament who were first elected by party caucuses; elections, which could be genuinely competitive, save for presidential influence, for key senior party posts; and national election/validation of the presidential candidate first elected (sometimes by mere acclamation) by the party. The only part where competitiveness could be a feature deployed a franchise whereby those with the right to vote had to be party members and had, in turn, been elected by local branches as delegates to an eventual electoral conference or college. In some ways, it mirrored party selection of candidates in any Northern Hemisphere democracy. What was missing was the sense of a genuinely national election, with free choices under a universal franchise – but that was explained as unnecessary because of unifying

national doctrine which supervened a higher value, unity, over fully free democracy.

This works only if doctrine and its norms is supported operationally by the delivery of goods and services to the electorate. These goods included actual national unity and its need in the face of external threat. When a large portion of that threat disappeared, i.e. when a threatening white-ruled Rhodesia became in 1980 a majority-ruled Zimbabwe, a key cornerstone of validation, i.e. unity under one President from one party because of threat, disappeared. By 1980 also, 16 years had passed since independence and the 70 odd ethnic groups had grown used to nationhood – so the dictation of a mantra of unity was also no longer pressing. In the 1980s, precisely, global economic downturns, an international banking crisis, and economic structural adjustment policies imposed by the International Monetary Fund tore away the sense that goods could be delivered by the president and party. When in 1989 the scenes from the fall of the Berlin Wall were seen in Zambia, and when in 1990 Nelson Mandela was released in South Africa, signaling the end of military threat from an apartheid regime, dissatisfaction with Kaunda and his party mushroomed into demonstrations. These began at the national university in 1990, but spread rapidly. The entire city of Kabwe rose up in a mass demonstration that, had the television cameras not been preoccupied with Eastern Europe, would have symbolized what was momentary evidence for a Huntingtonian Third Wave. Kaunda had to promise multi-party elections in 1991 and, at those elections, he and his party fell (Mwanakatwe 1994).

But the elite that had combined its forces in his one-party state had not, even by 1991, diversified in sufficient numbers for genuine new political formations to take root. The “new” party that won the 1991 elections, the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) was led by the disaffected of Kaunda’s party. The party that succeeded the MMD in power, the Patriotic Front, was a splinter group of the MMD and its leadership had held ministerial positions both in the MMD government and under Kaunda. All the democratic changes have not led to any voting out of office those who once held power under Kaunda’s doctrine that justified strong centralized presidentialism. The elections are no longer about only validation, but all democratic change has brought is continuity.

A Patriotic Intellectual History

Zimbabwe became an independent majority-ruled country in 1980, following “free and fair” elections with universal franchise. It was not fully democratic in that “sunset clauses,” negotiated at the 1979 Lancaster

House talks about ending the war that had wracked the country, allowed for a guaranteed representation of the minority white population in Parliament for some years, and the size of this representation was larger than their percentage of the population. Even so, the euphoria surrounding the 1980 elections was immense, as if people could not believe democracy emerging from so bitter a period of violent discriminations. Robert Mugabe's party has since won every election. Of those up to 2000, each was in broad terms free and fair. However, they were paralleled by hugely excessive violence and pogroms in the western part of the country in the years surrounding the second elections. There were serious instances of violence and clear localized episodes of rigging in the second elections of 1990, with the advent of a short-lived but serious opposition party. No opposition party of any size threatened Mugabe in 1995, and the elections of that year, as those of 1985, were in the Zambian mode of valedictions, certainly from the majority eastern population. The advent of a fully national and well-organized opposition in 1999, made elections from 2000 on a series of chapters of discontent, increasing rigging and violence, and outright theft of electoral victory (Chan 2003). But every election was held in the period demanded by law, and every election included all the national paraphernalia of several thousand polling stations and the deployment of tens of thousands of officials, and full-scale advertising campaigns and stadium rallies, and assiduous exercises to convince external election observers of their veracity and probity. To see these as only masquerade is to see masquerade as an extraordinarily expensive exercise, and as an indulgence of an authoritarianism that, if it is determined to stay in place, doesn't need it. President Mugabe has had (an often merited) bad press, but why hold elections, if one is determined to stay in power, come what may?

The holding of elections does indeed observe a global emphasis and fetishization of elections as an indicative process associated with democracy. It is, however, an observation that is simultaneously cynical, seeking validation, and, above all, seeking to display evidence of a popular endorsement and participation in a "patriotic history." This term was coined by the veteran Zimbabweanist, Terence Ranger (2005), and developed by Miles Tendi (2010). The account they give of an elaborate and sophisticated construction of intellectual ownership of Zimbabwean history and Zimbabwean thought is revealing. It shows that the manipulation of democracy is not only thoughtful and purposive, but curiously if perversely normative. It serves a peculiar norm of nationalism and nationalization as a thick good, and it justifies "liberation" in an ideological manner with distinct intellectual trappings. It opposes "free democracy" as a norm with "purposive democracy" in the cause of nationalism, na-

tionalization and liberation as a conjoint norm – without ever abandoning the pretense that a free democracy is an established practice. The hugely complex and technologized artifice that “guarantees” successful pretense is again an artefact of great thought and planning. There is a huge investment in validation – and the question is whether this is all in service only of self-validation, or the wish to remain in power, or in power and validation’s names allied to a range of other normative considerations. The missing ingredient in Western analyses may well be an opposing normative one – which accepts superficially the hegemonic nature of the democratic norm while contesting and undermining its essence, but against the backdrop of other norms which are taken to be nationally hegemonic, even if they are not globally so.

The “patriotic history” in Zimbabwe has the following constituent parts: a conflation of liberation and nationalism; secondly a conflation of the liberation war in the 1970s with the prototypical liberation struggle or *chimurenga* of the end of the nineteenth century (Ranger 1985); a conflation of nationalism and nationalization; and an embellishment of nationalization, insofar as it concerns land, with the sacred motifs of the first *chimurenga*, led by a prophetess, the continuation of at least echoes of the sacred thread through the second *chimurenga* that led to independence, and the use of land as ancestral and sacred in the seizure of farms in what was dubbed the third *chimurenga*. If not a philosophy of liberation, it is a theology of liberation – but it is in fact a political philosophy as well, in that these elements of liberation, nationalism, nationalization, historical continuity, and sacral impulses are married to contemporary thought on nationalism, in a form of Afro-Marxism, and an affiliation to a neo-Marxist *dependencia* analysis of the global political economy, dominated by Western white nations (Mandaza 1987), which Zimbabwe resists via the metaphor of restoring land to its indigenous, liberated, nationalist owners after taking it back from its white owners who represented at the least an earlier wave of colonial peripheralization of the country, absorbing it into the white global economy under literal white ownership. Add to that, a variation of elite formation being based on those cadres who fought in the second *chimurenga* and, in answer to history’s call to complete itself, mandated the third *chimurenga*, and you have a heady and potent mix, which carries immense power in Zimbabwean thoughtfulness. This is also the mix that sits at the center of Robert Mugabe’s electoral campaigns, personalized by vindictive attacks on Tony Blair as the key example of a white colonialist seeking to ensure the perpetual dependency of Zimbabwe upon the white metropole. Against this campaign centerpiece, the Zimbabwean opposition has been trumpeting the values of genuine democracy.

Whether or not it is a proper contest of values, it certainly has not been a proper contest in pure electoral terms. As mentioned earlier, elections have been increasingly rigged in Zimbabwe since 2000. A credible national opposition emerged in 1999, and alarmed the government. Rigging, with violence, reached its apogee in the 2008 elections for both president and parliament. It was so naked that even friends of the Mugabe government realized it was an extreme embarrassment. South Africa's president Thabo Mbeki entered the standoff between a Mugabe Government that claimed victory with rigged figures, and an opposition led by Morgan Tsvangirai that had almost certainly achieved a legitimate victory, despite all the powers of incumbency and intimidation deployed by Mugabe's party and the security apparatus. My own surveys while present at those elections had Morgan Tsvangirai winning the presidency with 56 percent of the vote. Mbeki appeared in the guise of a mediator, but he also had interests in securing a stable country on his northern border, could not risk a civil war and a militarized "solution" if his mediation was unsuccessful there – and thus brought a range of exogenous needs and impositions to a situation with its own complex indigenous factors (Chan 2011).

What Mbeki did in Zimbabwe was not, however, to come up with an original form of settlement. In fact, he had himself pioneered such a settlement in 2006 in Democratic Republic of Congo. A year before the Zimbabwean elections, after the 2007 Kenyan elections, Kofi Annan had – although more speedily, decisively, and with sanctions involving indictments before the International Criminal Court – achieved something similar. All three cases involved power sharing of an extensive sort. In the cases of Kenya and Zimbabwe in 2007 and 2008, they also saw power sharing that did *not* install what many thought were the rightful winners in the respective Presidencies. In each case, specially created positions of Prime Minister were offered and accepted by them. Elaborate and large cabinets catered for the major parties, so that all had a share in the spoils of electoral contest. In a way, the cabinets could be described as "proportional representation," not just in parliament but in cabinet. It gave everyone, in Michela Wrong's terms, a "turn to eat" (2009). There were no outright losers. There was no political wilderness. However, the prevailing values in both Annan and particularly Mbeki's mediation were (1) stability, and that required appointing as president the person most able to command the forces that prevented instability or that guaranteed stability; in Zimbabwe's case, that meant Robert Mugabe as the leader acceptable to the armed forces; and (2) inclusiveness as a higher value than democratic preference. These are not in themselves bad values and, to an extent, they were adopted in for example wartime Britain, where the

opposing parties established coalition governments in the names exactly of stability in the face of violence, and inclusiveness, so that the nation could be rallied as a whole.

What it did in Zimbabwe, however, was to allow a dominant party in the coalition that followed Mbeki's mediation, that is the one with both the presidency and the support of the military, further to embed a national project which was nationalist in the sense described above, with its continuing ethos of nationalization, and therefore seizure, as a heartland policy. Those who had voted for the opposition party to defend their lands found that the opposition was now part of a government that would not defend them.

A Personal Recapitulation

Here I want to recount my own experiences in Zimbabwean elections. I was the international civil servant who anchored the Commonwealth observation in both the western Matabeleland provinces during the January to March 1980 military truce and electoral campaign (Chan 1985). Thereafter, I attended every Zimbabwean election except the largely uncontested ones of 1985 and 1995, although I was in the country either a short time before or a short time after. I attended both rounds of the highly contentious 2008 elections, and I have comparative election or referendum monitoring experience in Eritrea, Kenya, South Africa, South Sudan, and Zambia. In a real way, the observation and monitoring techniques pioneered by the Commonwealth Observer Group in Zimbabwe in 1980 established a template that has survived almost entirely intact to this day. There had been no election observation before 1980. I should say that we made it up as we went along.

The heady sense of change, occasioned by casting a ballot in Zimbabwe in 1980, was later echoed in 1991 when Kenneth Kaunda was defeated at the polls in Zambia (which I also attended). The very real sense of taking charge of one's destiny was apparent everywhere and certainly supported, in those fleeting moments of history, the sense that democracy's advent was indeed a cleansing wave.

But elections since those times have seen the steady grub and grind of politics asserting itself and even the appearance of a dynamic opposition in Zimbabwe from 1999 seemed a conditional apparition, dependent on whether or not the ruling party and the ruling elite wanted to play a truly democratic game, or impose a quasi-democratic order. In several Southern African and other African countries, the desirability of having an opposition party in Parliament is accepted. It is evidence of

“democracy.” It is just that, as in Singapore and Malaysia, which are the consciously-emulated templates, the opposition may never be allowed to win – and, depending on the circumstances of the moment, allowed to gain more than one-third of the parliamentary seats if that would allow the opposition a “blocking third” that would, in some jurisdictions, prevent any easy constitutional change desired by the ruling party.

That is the technical grubbing of politics in many countries. What has been highly apparent in Zimbabwe, however, as the years and elections have passed, is the growth of justifying rationale for such behavior (which is all the same always denied; the results are always declared the voice and choice of the electorate), and the slow but consciously consistent and persistent growth of a patriotic history that is given complexity and intellectual flesh, again as I have described above, almost election by election. In this sense, elections are not the key manifestation of democracy but become the landmarks of the consolidation of a political regime and its political thought.

Conclusion

Samuel Huntington, and the Western political and intellectual salons that saw his work as epochal, or describing an epoch that had begun and which would sweep the world, were involved in crafting and reifying a secular soteriology. Democracy would save the world and its value as salvation was not in question. What I have done in this paper is to pose certain questions drawn from two case examples, but particularly the case example of Zimbabwe – a contentious and controversial choice, but precisely a choice that is often regarded as having nothing to teach us. After all, President Mugabe is bad, and therefore nothing good can come of his hegemony in this once prosperous and cusp-of-democratized country. Of course, the Rhodesian predecessor state to Zimbabwe, with its white minority rule, was certainly not democratic – and its inception in 1964 was at a time when civil rights for black people still had to be fought for in the greatest democracy, the United States.

President Mugabe is bad. I have argued that and tried to do so in as objective a manner as possible, examining evidence judiciously and fairly, and offering a sober conclusion. But that does not mean that nothing in his regime is without thought, complexity, and values. The patriotic history of Zimbabwe insists that these values were the result of tremendous sacrifice and that the Western world demands that sacrifice continues. The lie to this is at least partially given by the militarized oligarchs around Mugabe who are so splendidly wealthy that they would

own English football teams if sanctions were lifted on them with the surety of never being reapplied. For them, sacrifice is an historical experience. For the hundreds of thousands of destitute Zimbabweans, it is not.

Yet not all these destitute citizens are coerced into voting for Mugabe and his party in election after election. Mugabe has a bedrock of support that, despite all assumptions, believes in his carefully crafted history, philosophy, and normative ethos. His version of history may be as selective and self-validating as Huntington's is of the American experience, both at its inception and in its "victory" in the Cold War. For Mugabe, democracy, even if guided and gerrymandered, is the validation of all he has done in the world's new history, racialized to be sure, but resonant in many parts of Africa and, with ameliorations, in other parts of the world, of the fightback of black against white.

The pity is that the collateral damage is inflicted also on those black.

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