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PRESENTS

A PUBLIC LECTURE

“The Transformations of ZANU (PF) and the Making of Modern Zimbabwe 1984-2018”



With

Gerald Chikozho Mazarire

Midlands State University in Gweru, Zimbabwe

Friday, September 14, 3:00 - 5:00 pm

Room 433 Paterson Hall (History Lounge)

Carleton University*

Abstract

ZANU (PF)'s 1984 Congress was a public expression of a liberation movement struggling to transform itself into a modern political party. Being the second such gathering after the first congress held in 1964, it exhibited the fissures and anxieties wrought upon it by the struggles within ZANU PF that had fermented in the two decades of a protracted armed struggle. The contradictions already apparent were either silenced, negotiated or, at best, postponed as the party straddled the thin line between constitutionalism, rewarding its own heroes and running a government. This paper argues that in managing these roles, the party became heavily dependent on its leader, Robert Mugabe, who re-organised it through subsequent 'congresses' by balancing the twin factors of incumbency and entitlement in a format that allowed him unbridled control over ZANU PF. The paper traces the various stages of transformation that the party underwent both constitutionally and by strategic 're-organisation' of its civilian and military arms to explain how this created the necessary ingredients of a subsequent implosion. It explores this in the context of the November 2017 'Operation Restore Legacy' and the implications of military takeover of both the party and government.

Biography

Professor Gerald Chikozho Mazarire is an Associate Professor in the History Department of the Midlands State University in Gweru, Zimbabwe. He holds a DPhil in History from the University of Zimbabwe. His research interests are on Zimbabwe, pre-colonial communities, liberation movements and the state.

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For more information, please contact the Institute of African Studies at
613-520-2600 ext. 2220 or African_Studies@carleton.ca

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