

59th KUASS (Kyoto University African Studies Seminar)

Date and Time: December 1, 2016 (Thu) 17:00-19:00

Venue: Small Seminar Room No. 2, Inamori Center 3rd Floor, Kyoto University

Title:

The Apex of African Neo-colonialism: Zimbabwe's War Veterans Vanguard against Mugabe's Dynastic Rule Establishment

Speaker: Dr. Zvakanyorwa Wilbert Sadomba (Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe)

Abstract:

Africa, despite all its efforts and struggles, has failed to rupture the vessels of colonialism and its orbit around global imperialism. This is partly because of the mechanisms put in place to ensure continued exploitation of the rich resources of the continent. A neo-colonial strategy of global imperialism seems to have thrived most and best on the continent than anywhere else in the world. A closer examination suggests that success of this socio-economic and cultural predicament is fashioned on establishing extroverted regimes that are loyal to outside powers and brutally suppress contradictory desires and will of the citizens to self determination. Ironically this has not spared any nation including those that were engaged in anti-colonial liberation struggles. Zimbabwe is one of them. Its history reveals a brief period when an attempt was made to craft an ideology that would transcend neo-colonialism but this was nipped in the bud. Mugabe came in as a surrogate of metropolitan Britain, and was nighted for his loyalty. This was in direct conflict with the ethos of the liberation war but owing to class, age and ethnic contradictions within, revolutionary forces were defeated. Zimbabwe became a neo-colony under a Machiavellian schemer who nurtured an idea of establishing a dynastic system that would outlive him. It only became clear when the nonagenarian who has been at the helm of the liberation movement for thirty-nine years started to disband that movement crafting a zealous youthful group headed by his wife, to get the reigns of power from him. Over the (almost) half a century of his rule Mugabe managed to establish a personality cult as a basis to dynastic rule. The climax of this adventure was war veterans resistance to this project that threatens total erasure of the history of the country's liberation. This is the political condition gripping Zimbabwe currently. When Mugabe expressly and openly revealed his lifelong secret of discarding the liberation movement to establish dynastic rule by force, he was on a collision path with the citizens led by veterans of the anti-colonial war. The Zimbabwean situation still remains the scene of an anti-climax of Africa's post-colonial drama as I speculated in concluding 'War Veterans in Zimbabwe's Revolution'. The dynastic rule has caused a national introspection and consciousness whose momentum will be difficult to reverse. This is a test moment of the war veterans vanguard considering the might of the state built over four decades to fashion and defend dynastic rule ideals.