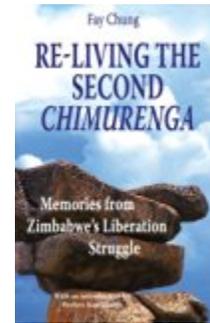


Fay Chung. *Re-Living the Second Chimurenga: Memories from the Liberation Struggle in Zimbabwe*. Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 2006. 358 pp. \$35.00 (paper), ISBN 978-91-7106-551-3.

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## Zimbabwe's ZANU: A Critical View from the Inside

At a time when Zimbabwe is much in the news, and analyses are often oversimplified and ahistorical, Fay Chung's memoir provides welcome insight into the history of Zimbabwe's primary liberation movement and ruling party. Born into a Chinese family in Rhodesia in the 1940s, Chung was an early activist in the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), which was instrumental in bringing about Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, and has governed the country ever since. As a socialist, feminist, and intellectual, she was a member of ZANU's left wing, which was repeatedly purged prior to independence. As an educator dedicated to the democratization of education, she led the "education with production" movement in pre-independence Mozambican refugee camps and in post-independence Zimbabwe. Eventually, she became Minister of Education and Culture in the ZANU government. Disenchanted with the government's decision to embrace the structural adjustment program prescribed by international financial institutions, Chung left Zimbabwe in the early 1990s.

Chung's book intersperses memories of growing up as a member of a non-white minority group in Rhodesia, with a personal and political account of the liberation movement in the 1960s and 1970s. Most intriguing is her assessment of the internal struggles in ZANU during the 1970s, which does much to explain the political divisions today. She describes conflicts between guerrillas of peasant background with little formal education, who joined the movement in the 1960s and early 1970s, and the better-educated, left-wing youth who flocked to ZANU in the mid-1970s. She analyzes the rivalry be-

tween the military leaders and the better-educated political leaders who feared their power. She describes the brutal purges of ZANU's left wing in the mid-1970s, as the movement's leaders negotiated unsuccessfully for a neo-colonial solution to the liberation struggle. Finally, she shows how, as ZANU moved to the right, racism and tribalism were wielded as weapons against political enemies.

Chung's assessment of Robert Mugabe is particularly enlightening. In the mid-1970s, radicals within ZANU opposed Mugabe's leadership, fearing that he would become a fascist dictator at the head of a neo-colonial regime. According to Chung, Mugabe survived and consolidated his power because he threw his support to the militarists, who in turn provided him with a powerful base. Other political leaders, distrusted by the military high command, were undermined. It was to the veterans of this military base, woefully neglected in the 1980s and early 1990s that Mugabe turned in 1997, when his own power was waning.

Given Chung's analysis, the book's introduction, written by Preben Kaarsholm, is unfair. A member of the Nordic Africa Institute's editorial board, Kaarsholm uses the space both to justify the book's publication and to critique the book published by the institute. He unjustly characterizes Chung as defensive of Mugabe and his policies, as overly critical of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), and unconcerned about the government's dictatorial actions and human rights abuses. My own reading is that Chung makes clear her

continued support for the centerpieces of the liberation struggle: redistribution of land and the democratization of educational opportunity. She claims that rationally planned land redistribution is a prerequisite for economic justice, without which Zimbabwe cannot survive. However, this does not mean that she supported the brutal and corrupt methods of land reclamation promoted by the government in the early 2000s, and she clearly states that she did not. Moreover, she did not close her eyes to the political opportunism behind the land takeovers, nor the corrupt redistribution practices that followed, as

Kaarsholm implies. Finally, recent developments within the MDC, including the use of ethnic politics and violence as well as the final schism, seem to justify Chung's early skepticism about the party.

In sum, Chung's book is a valuable contribution to our understanding of historical and contemporary Zimbabwe. It is a critical, nuanced, and multi-layered account by an insider. This highly unusual combination has resulted in a book that will be of interest to students and scholars, and which should be included in all college and university libraries.

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