

Open border issues, crime and xenophobia in south africa: some ethical insights

Fainos Mangena, PhD

Department of Religious Studies, Classics and Philosophy,
University of Zimbabwe

Abstract

The Zimbabwe socio-economic and political crisis which began at the dawn of the new millennium saw many Zimbabweans migrating to South Africa and beyond in search of better living conditions. While some of the migrants went to South Africa with the right motives others went there with wrong motives, having used illegal and unethical means. It is important to note that the category of people who used illegal and unethical means included criminal elements, and those without requisite skills to justify their entry. This development has not only exposed the corruption that is probably pervasive at the South African border to Zimbabwe, but has also put to test the effectiveness of *ubuntu* in harmonizing human relations. The presence of Zimbabweans in South Africa has, no doubt, put a strain on the country's resources resulting in the former venting their anger against the latter. I, however, argue that to deal with the problem of xenophobia, border control systems at the South African border must be tightened to flush out criminal elements, and prevent unskilled people from entering into South Africa. I also argue that there is need for South Africans to remove enemy images which tend to separate rather than unite people.

Introduction

This paper is an ethical rendition of issues around open border, crime and xenophobia in South Africa. The paper proceeds by reflecting on the possible factors which have led to the failure by South African authorities to effectively and efficiently enforce legal instruments that ensure that people who cross into South Africa follow proper legal protocols. The paper also looks at the possible link (or lack thereof) between migration and crime as well as the response of *ubuntu* to the issues of border control, and issues around the 2008 and 2015 xenophobic attacks in South Africa. The paper calls for the need to tighten border controls at the South Africa border to Zimbabwe through putting up surveillance cameras, and increasing the number of undercover police officers in order to monitor the alleged corrupt activities taking place between South African officials and Zimbabweans wanting to migrate to South Africa. The paper also advocates for a return to the cherished values of the past such as the values of *ubuntu*, in order to inspire South Africans to remove the enemy images² and live peacefully with fellow brothers and sisters from other parts of the continent. The paper begins with a look at the relationship between countries in the Southern African block in relation to migration and border control

South Africa, Zimbabwe and the Open Border Problems

Southern Africa is made up of about thirteen countries and these form what is called the Southern African Development Community (SADC) block and countries in this block include: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In the SADC block, South Africa is rated as the biggest economy, and for that reason, it is the biggest migration destination, with the biggest number of migrants coming from Zimbabwe, a country which lies to the north. Thus, the South African border to Zimbabwe is the busiest because of the large volumes of Zimbabweans who migrate to South Africa on a daily basis. A cordial relationship is said to exist between South Africa and Zimbabwe which dates back to South Africa's apartheid era when leaders of the African National Congress (ANC) would seek refuge in Zimbabwe as their lives were under threat from the apartheid regime. History also records that the Ndebele people of Zimbabwe share the same blood with the Zulu of South Africa as they together make up the Nguni tribe.

Thus, the Ndebele people are said to have migrated to Zimbabwe as a result of the Mfecane wars of the eighteenth century. It is against this background that questions have been asked such as: Isn't it a good idea to allow free movement of people between Zimbabwe and South

² I borrow the idea of "the removal of enemy images" from Solomon (cited in Ojedokun, 2015:168) who believes that the problem of xenophobia will only end if South Africans do not consider foreigners living in their country as enemies but as fellow brothers and sisters. A detailed discussion on this will be reserved for the last section of this paper.

Africa? Given that the Bantu people of Southern Africa have a lot in common in terms of language and culture, aren't borders artificial? In order to buttress the foregoing, it is important that I define the idea of "an open border," in this section. According to *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, "an open border is a border that enables free movement of people between different jurisdictions with limited or no restrictions on movement, that is to say, a border lacking substantive border control."

A border may be open due to the absence of legal controls or a border may be open due to lack of adequate enforcement or adequate supervision of the border (*Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*). In the case of the South African border, I think the influx of Zimbabweans into South Africa has more to do with lack of adequate enforcement or supervision. In my view, lack of adequate enforcement and supervision can be a result of a combination of factors such as corruption, invoking the spirit of brother/sisterhood, failure to cope with large numbers of Zimbabweans migrating to South Africa on a daily basis, as well as the need to maintain positive political relations between the two countries. Coming back to the issue of corruption, it is important to note that there have been untested or unproven allegations of corruption between some South African officials at the border and Zimbabweans wanting to migrate to South Africa.

Although these are untested or unproven allegations, the issue of corruption cannot be completely ruled out in a scenario where there are no strict border controls as is the case with South Africa. Another factor is that some South African officials, because of the cordial relations that are said to exist between South Africa and Zimbabwe, have felt compelled to help their brothers and sisters get out of poverty and alleged political insecurity in Zimbabwe by allowing them to enter South Africa even without proper documentation. In so doing, they have invoked the spirit of *hunhu/ubuntu*³ which says: "I cannot be happy when my brother or sister is sad." Lack of adequate enforcement and supervision has also perhaps been a result of the fact that because South African officials deal with large numbers of Zimbabwean migrants every day, it becomes difficult to do a perfect job. Last but not least, it has probably been difficult for South Africa to institute tight border controls because of political reasons. Thus, with regard to Zimbabweans migrating into South Africa, politicians in South Africa have probably decided that they will treat them with due care because they know that if they fail to do so, this may lead to political tensions between the two countries.

The result of the lack of adequate enforcement and supervision has resulted in the influx of Zimbabweans into South Africa in the last two decades which includes people who have not followed proper migration protocols resulting in some of these people living in South Africa illegally. As I noted earlier, those who have not followed proper migration protocols have done so through bribing South African officials, while others have had to skip the border, throwing into doubt the efficiency and effectiveness of the South African Security systems at the border. The arguments raised above point to one thing that although it has not been made official, South Africa's border to Zimbabwe is open and porous. This is so because a lot of

³ A nuanced discussion on *hunhu/ubuntu* will be reserved for the third section of this paper.

Zimbabweans, who have entered South Africa, have done so without proper travel documents, and these include criminal elements and those with no skills to offer in South Africa. Going by the definition of an open border given earlier, it is very clear that the South African border to Zimbabwe lacks substantive border control as a result of the factors outlined above. In the next section, I look at the connection (or lack thereof) between migration and crime as this has a bearing on relations between South Africa and Zimbabwe especially with regard to issues of *hunu/ubuntu* and regional integration.

Migration and Crime

There is no doubt that the history of migrations, the world over, is to some extent associated with criminal behavior. Some of this criminal behavior includes: rape, murder, theft, impersonation and fraud. From around 2000 when Zimbabwe's economy plummeted, South Africa has played host to many Zimbabweans who have entered the country both legally and illegally in search of jobs, education and better living conditions. There is no doubt that this influx of Zimbabweans into South Africa, coupled with the good relations between the two countries, forced South Africa to cancel the visa requirements around the year 2000 and this development opened floodgates for more Zimbabweans to migrate to South Africa. Now, because South Africa could not cope with the large numbers of Zimbabweans crossing its borders every day, criminals fleeing from Zimbabwe also took advantage as they also crossed into South Africa carrying with them their baggage of criminality.

Although I am yet to come across philosophical literature in Zimbabwe or South Africa⁴ which has really reflected on the link between open borders, immigration and criminal behaviour, research in Italy and America seems to show that there is no significant correlation between immigration and crime. For instance, a study by Bianchi, Buonanno and Pinotti (2008) examines the crime/immigration link across Italian provinces over the period 1990-2003. Bianchi, Buonanno and Pinotti (2008) use fixed-effect estimates which show that a 1% increase in the total number of migrants is associated with a 0.1% increase in total crime. When the authors disaggregate across crime categories, they find the effect is strongest for property crimes, and in particular, for robberies and thefts. On the other hand, Butcher and Piehl (1998b) present evidence on the crime-immigration link across 43 cities in the United States over the period 1981-1990. Again, they estimate using a fixed-effect panel and various demographic and socio-economic controls. Whether they focus on overall crime rates or violent crime rates, the authors find no significant correlation between immigrant stocks in a city and crime.

The above scenario seems to show that migration does not raise crime rates in the two countries above. But this scenario when compared to the scenario in Africa could be radically different

⁴ The only piece of literature that I have come across deals with migration management and migration agency issues. It is not philosophical and does not address issues to do with migration, open borders and crime. It is literature in the form of a Masters dissertation in the area of Global Refugee Studies written by Niels Dreesen & Mikkel Otto Hansen (2016).

for the following reasons: Firstly, it can be argued that in countries like Italy and America, there are probably stricter legal controls, adequate enforcement and supervision just as there are stricter laws against corruption and fraud. This probably means that people who migrate to these countries are screened or vetted, implying that criminals and those without proper travel documents are flushed out so that they do not cross the border. This obviously minimizes crime rate at the border as well as in the receiving country. Conversely, in populous African countries like South Africa, Democratic Republic of Congo and Nigeria, there are always challenges associated with legal controls, adequate enforcement and supervision at border posts because these border posts are always dealing with large volumes of people (and yet officials manning these borders are less capacitated compared to officials manning borders in advanced countries like Italy and America), and so the chances of criminal elements gaining entry into these countries are increased.

For instance, media reports show that many Zimbabwean criminals including some retired soldiers gained entry into South Africa at the beginning of the new millennium. *The Zimbabwean* of 21 April 2008, reports that:

Zimbabwe's notorious armed robber only identified as Simba was gunned down at Jourbert Park last week on Thursday when his luck ran out after robbing some plain clothes police officers. However, Simba's accomplice, Roy Machoko, who escaped from Zimbabwe's maximum Prison in 2004, is believed to be in hiding in Mpumalanga, and police have promised that the net will be soon closing in on him. The deceased Simba is known for terrorising places such as Hillbrow, Berea, Yeoville, Braamfontein and the Johannesburg Central Business (CBD) with his shoot to kill attitude.

In a separate incident, *The Daily News* of 26 July 2017 quotes former South African Police Minister, Fikile Mbalula accusing Zimbabweans residing in South Africa of wreaking havoc and perpetrating crime in that country. Mbalula remarks thus, “*they kill, they do everything, we get into those buildings, they are stinking, they are dirty, and they are hijacked...*” Mbalula said at one time, he was accused of being xenophobic when he claimed that five of the people who had robbed OR Tambo were from Zimbabwe, and that they were trained soldiers. The nagging question is: How did these criminals end up in South Africa? The answer is twofold: Either, they skipped the border and got into South Africa quietly without notice or they just found their way through the border and because South African officials were (and continue to) dealing with large numbers of people crossing the border from Zimbabwe and did not do thorough checks resulting in the former illegally entering South Africa.

Secondly, strict legal controls, adequate enforcement and supervision could be hampered by a lack of commitment on the part of those mandated to do so either because they are corrupted by the immigrants or they feel compelled to help their brothers and sisters running away from poverty and harassment in their home countries. This view will take me to the next section where I critically look at issues which have to do with the obligations of both the home and host countries with regard to migration and crime. I discuss these ideas under the banner of *hunhu/ubuntu* and open border issues.

Hunhu/Ubuntu and Open Border Issues

In this section, I look at *hunhu/ubuntu* and open border issues with a view to ascertain the duties or obligations of home and host countries with regard to the free movement of people from Zimbabwe to South Africa. They are two sets of questions that can be asked in the process of ascertaining these duties or obligations. In the case of people migrating to Western countries from Africa, the questions can be framed as: What are the obligations of developed nations towards people who migrate from less developed countries? Does the international political community have an obligation to look after people who migrate from less developed nations to developed nations?

In the case of people migrating from one African country to the other as is the case with Zimbabweans migrating to South Africa, questions can be framed as: Should the spirit of *ubuntu* influence decisions regarding the migration of Zimbabweans to South Africa? To what extent are strict border controls a threat to regional integration? In an attempt to respond to some of the questions above, it may be important to briefly define and characterize concepts like *hunhu/ubuntu* and regional integration with a view to showing how these concepts bring out ethical issues regarding the justification (or lack thereof) of open borders and migration in Southern Africa.

For starters, *hunhu/ubuntu* as a philosophy represents an African conception of humanity whereby *vanhu/abantu* commune with each other based on the understanding that no one can exist without the other. This understanding is based on what I have (in my previous writings) called the Common Moral Position (CMP)⁶ whereby as social and ethical beings, *vanhu/abantu* have a set of moral standards that are developed by elders and are passed unadulterated from generation to generation. . This set of moral standards help them to relate well with each other implying that a violation of such standards by any member of the group will destabilize the group.

As Desmond Tutu (2004: 25) summarily put it:

A person is a person through other persons. None of us comes into the world fully formed. We would not know how to think, or walk, or speak, or behave as human beings unless we learned it from other human beings. We need other human beings in order to be human.

Just like Mangena (2012, 2016) and Tutu (2004), Shaazia Ebrahim (2018) considers *ubuntu* to be a Southern African ethical concept which holds that humanity is interdependent. Rooted in a sense of community, *ubuntu* means that we are people through other people. This means that no one can be complete without others. Thus, based on the ideas above, it can be argued that no one can have a fulfilling life without others. This means that even if someone were to

⁵ The word *vanhu* is a Shona word which refers to a human being, while the word *abantu* is its Ndebele equivalent.

⁶ The seeds of the CMP were first sowed in an article which I authored in 2012 entitled: *Towards a Hunhu/Ubuntu Dialogical Moral Theory*, and was published by *Phronimon*, a South African journal of Philosophy. Subsequent publications also had the same idea and these include, an entry in the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy entitled: *Hunhu/Ubuntu in the Traditional Thought of Southern Africa* published in 2016.

become rich or wealthy or educated, all these possessions would only make sense if they were shared with others. Thus, from a *hunhu/ubuntu* perspective, we exist because we share the benefits and burdens of society, meaning to say that during times of happiness, we commune together, just as we also commune together during times of trouble. This view makes a lot more sense when applied to the issue of open borders and migration. Sometimes, it does not make sense for African countries like South Africa to have strict border controls when they are endowed with abundant resources and when they know that their fellow brothers and sisters from other parts of the region are not privileged or lucky to have such resources because of historical circumstances or bad governance.

As corroborated by Ojedokun (2015: 176), “to have full personhood is to have managed to live out and demonstrated positive qualities which are beneficial to good neighbourliness, to have matured in positive human relations.” This mentality sacrifices selfinterest and prioritizes on others (2015: 176). The concept of *hunhu/ubuntu* and open borders can also be explained in the context of the idea of regional integration.⁷ Thus, one of the ways to overcome barriers that divide African countries is to have open borders as well as to manage and share resources. It is not always the case that open borders will promote unethical behavior as mechanisms can be put in place to ensure that while borders are open, the free movement of people is monitored. Even if it were the case that open borders would always promote unethical behavior by migrants, the advantages of managing and sharing resources between, and among neighbouring countries under the banner of regional integration will always outweigh issues of ethics. As Christopher Heath Wellman (2015) aptly puts it in apparent reference to Cosmopolitan egalitarian states:

The cosmopolitan egalitarian case for open borders combines the core moral insight that all human beings, whether they are compatriots or foreigners, are equally deserving of moral consideration with the central empirical observation that one's country of birth often has a profound impact upon one's life prospects. The staggering levels of international inequality would not be so objectionable if the typical Swede had done something to deserve a better life than the typical Chadian, for instance, but the truth, of course, is that Swedes were merely lucky to have been born in Sweden rather than Chad. And given this, what justification could the Swedes have for putting guns at their borders to deter Chadians from trying to move north and take advantage of the preferable social, political and economic environment?

The above scenario, although it applies to Western nations, also has a bearing on the issues of regional integration in Africa where some African countries are endowed with resources while others are not. Since the current state of affairs seems to show that the idea of regional integration borrows a lot from the West as amplified by Gnaka (2013) who put it that, “like major policies suggested to Africa, the phenomenon of regional integration is deeply rooted in

⁷The International Cooperation and Development (2018) defines regional integration as the process of overcoming barriers that divide neighbouring countries, by common accord, and of jointly managing shared resources and assets. Essentially, it is a process by which groups of countries liberalize trade, creating a common market for goods, people, capital and services.

the neoclassical economics; it is imperative that we reflect on the concept of regional integration from an *ubuntu* perspective in order to advance the cause of Southern Africa. Under such a scenario, the *ubuntu* spirit will require that those with resources share with those without in the spirit of neighbourliness. This means that in the context of issues to do with regional integration and *ubuntu*, trade within the SADC block must be liberalized in the truest sense of the word, jobs and goods must be shared, and there must not be restrictions or bottle necks when it comes to according citizenship status or permanent residency status to those who have skills to offer in any of the countries in the region. Thus, borders should be considered as artificial and all efforts must be made to ensure that people are not divided along the lines of nationality. Instead, all African people (irrespective of which Southern African country they come from) must be accorded citizenship status on the basis of what they can contribute to the host country and subsequently to the region. Below, I reflect on the relationship between xenophobia and *ubuntu*.

Hunhu/Ubuntu and Xenophobia

In order to buttress the foregoing, I begin this section by defining the term *xenophobia*. I begin by quoting Hussein Solomon and Hitomi Kosaka (2013), who define *xenophobia* as “the fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers; it is embodied in discriminatory attitudes and behaviour, and often culminates in violence, abuses of all types, and exhibitions of hatred.” I also quote Solomon (cited in Ojedokun 2015: 168) who adds a new dimension to the definition of xenophobia when he argues that in order to deal with the problem of xenophobia, the best and only solution is to remove enemy images. For him, the removal of enemy images ought to be pursued with much conscientiousness. Ojedokun (2015) adds that xenophobia is something of a global phenomenon, closely associated with the process of globalization. While Ojedokun considers Xenophobia to be a global phenomenon, Alex Munyonga (2018: 202) thinks that “the disposition to be violent seems to be ingrained in the minds of all black South Africans.” Munyonga provides premises to justify his claim, one of which is from Simpson (1993) who argues “that apartheid bequeathed to South Africa, a culture of violence that is difficult to shake off except through a thorough commitment to education in tolerance and integration.” Ojedokun corroborates this view when he argues that:

The issue of xenophobia can be traced back to pre-1994, when immigrants from elsewhere faced discrimination and even violence in South Africa, even though much of that risk stemmed from and was attributed to the institutionalized racism of the time due to apartheid (2015: 168).

What is rather clear from the submissions of both Munyonga (2018) and Ojedokun (2015) is that they both consider xenophobia to be a brain child of apartheid, which means to them that xenophobia is a legacy of European colonization, which legacy South Africa failed to deal with

after attaining their independence in 1994.⁸ Munyonga argues that the failure by South Africans to deal with the ghost of apartheid has resulted in them turning their anger towards innocent fellow Africans (2018: 202). While Munyonga claims that the tendency to be violent is ingrained in the DNA of South Africans as a result of apartheid, I believe that xenophobia in South Africa was triggered more by the enormous socio-economic pressures exerted on South African resources by Zimbabwean immigrants at the height of Zimbabwe's socio-economic and political crisis in 2008 and 2015.

It is critical that I justify my claim as well as justify the years 2008 and 2015. For starters, the year 2008 was the worst in Zimbabwe's socio-political and economic history as it witnessed a total collapse of the economy as a result of the political impasse between ZANU PF and the MDC-T following the disputed June 2008 run-off election in which ousted former Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe claimed to be the winner having lost the first round of elections. The election was best described by the international community as a sham election. As most Zimbabweans could not see hope with Mugabe as president again, they migrated to neighbouring South Africa and other countries in the region and beyond. As I intimated earlier, among those who migrated to the rainbow nation were criminals who were on the wanted list in Zimbabwe and those who had entered using fraudulent documents.

This obviously had serious ethical implications especially as some of these immigrants allegedly resorted to bribing officials at the South African border post prior to their entry into South Africa, and others resorted to skipping the South African border often risking losing their lives as they had to pass through forests with wild animals and crocodile infested rivers. While some of the Zimbabweans who entered South Africa using improper or fraudulent documents or had skipped the border were genuinely looking for jobs and better conditions of living, those of a criminal disposition continued with their criminal behaviour when they reached South Africa posing a danger to the former and the rest of the South African citizenry. These criminals would cause havoc to fellow Zimbabweans seeking refuge in South Africa. This view is aptly captured by Alex Duval Smith (2008) who notes that: these criminals known by the moniker 'guma-guma' would "prey on the newly arrived - scour the length of the border fence to rob them of their meagre belongings and rape the women." It is also important to note that these criminals also targeted South Africans, and this, no doubt, triggered hostility between South Africans and Zimbabweans, especially as South Africans felt that their rights to be protected from criminal behavior and their rights to get better jobs were being violated. Ojedokun (2015: 171) aptly captures this view when he remarks thus:

South Africans appear to believe that other SADC citizens take jobs from locals, commit crime, send their earnings out of the country, use the country's welfare services and bring diseases.

As Munyonga (2018:202-203) summarily put it, the South Africans seem to feel relatively deprived of something they feel entitled to, in this case skills, education and jobs which are

⁸ I challenge this view in the foregoing essay. Personally, I believe that these guys have not succeeded in showing us how apartheid is linked to xenophobia. I, therefore, present premises that show that xenophobia in South Africa is a result of other factors, rather than apartheid.

taken by foreigners who are better qualified than them. On the other hand, foreigners, particularly Zimbabweans, feel that they are victims of crimes they did not commit, considering that they decided to go to South Africa to genuinely look for better living conditions, having run away from Mugabe's tyrannical rule. Thus, the 2008 xenophobic attacks can also be understood from this perspective. In terms of statistics, in May 2008, a series of riots left sixty two people dead, although twenty one of those killed were South African citizens (Odejokun, 2015: 169). In essence, forty one foreigners were killed. The year 2015 is significant in that after ZANU PF had won the 2013 harmonized elections somewhat controversially, the party started purging some of its members who were being accused of factionalism, and the then Vice-President Joyce Mujuru was the first victim of this purge.

There was despondency within the party and outside of it as people could not understand why the revolutionary party was victimizing some of its longtime members, and this coupled with job dismissals and salary delays took a toll on the general citizenry and a significant number of Zimbabweans, who had seen some hope during the period of the Government of National Unity (GNU) from 2009 to 2013, began again to migrate to South Africa and beyond. This, probably, triggered another spate of xenophobic attacks as the number of Zimbabweans in South Africa began to surge again putting a strain on South Africa's resources. According to Los Angeles Times (2015), "in 2015, another nationwide spike in xenophobic attacks against immigrants in general prompted a number of foreign governments to begin repatriating their citizens."

But can xenophobia really be justified? Doesn't the presence of xenophobia contradict the *hunhu/ubuntu* spirit that seems to permeate South African thought? In order to successfully answer these two questions, it is imperative to consider how pre-colonial Southern Africa viewed foreigners or strangers, and the moral aptitudes that guided these views. To begin with, it is critical to note that:

The attitudes of Africans towards foreigners or strangers in the past were those of tolerance and benevolence. Strangers were made to feel welcome and to move with ease within the community. Strangers were referred to as visitors, guests (iindwendwe) or aliens, sojourners (abahambi). These words have positive connotations (Ojedokun, 2015: 177).

In Shona culture, for example; there are proverbs that point to the perceived generosity of the Shona people or *vanhu* towards visitors or strangers. Some of these proverbs include: "*Muenzi haapedzi dura* (a visitor does not finish food); *chipavhurire uchakodzwa* (The one who gives too much will get much) (Mangena, 2016)." In a Xhosa household, a visitor was a respected person, who was treated cordially; given water to wash, food to eat and a place to sleep...The presence of strangers was seen as more of a blessing than a burden, and this further brought joy to children since they knew that best meals would be served each time there were visitors (Saule, 1996: 86). Ojedokun (2015: 177) also put it that "*limbacu* (refugees) "were treated with respect and were shown hospitality. Thus, *limbacu* (refugees), as people who are homeless, alienated from their land and families were treated with compassion and kindness."

If the scenario in pre-colonial African society was such that visitors, strangers or foreigners were respected, then how does one explain the emergency of xenophobia in an African country like South Africa in 2008 and 2015? The first response could be that South Africa's encounter with colonialism could have changed the ethical outlook of black South Africans as they ended up assimilating white people's values that promoted individualism at the expense of black people's values which promoted oneness. The second response could be that the issue of pre-colonial African society being perceived as promoting hospitality could be a bit exaggerated as people in pre-colonial African societies, did not always give priority to strangers as compared to relatives. This point is best explained by the Shona proverb: *Chawawana idya nehama, mutorwa unokanganwa* (Share what you get with your relatives because strangers will always forget that you gave them something). Another Shona proverb which shows that pre-colonial Shona society was not always hospitable is: *Weropa ndewe ropa haakusiyi* (The one you share blood with will not abandon you). These two proverbs implicitly contradict the view that pre-colonial Shona society always treated strangers or visitors with utmost respect.

Thus, to say that it was all rosy in pre-colonial African society would be too much of an exaggeration. What this means is that blaming colonialism or apartheid for the xenophobic mentality exhibited by black South Africans today would be abdicating responsibility. It could just be that black South Africans are failing to harness *ubuntu* to live peacefully with their brothers and sisters from neighbouring countries because xenophobia opposes *ubuntu*. As Edwin Etieyibo (cited in Ebrahim, 2018) aptly puts it:

A simple, straightforward answer would be to say...xenophobia is the opposite of welcoming to others. One that is not welcoming to others doesn't have ubuntu, right? People who practice xenophobia don't have ubuntu.

So, if it is true that people who practice xenophobia do not have *ubuntu* as postulated by Etieyibo above, then it follows that *ubuntu* is a moral quality which some people have while others do not have it. This view also finds support from Christian B.N Gade (2012: 489) who argues, thus:

My collection of written sources and oral testimonies shows that according to a number of SAADs⁹, ubuntu is the moral quality of a person...This moral quality is so positive that the very possession of it is praiseworthy.

This view sounds persuasive at face value but its problem is that, it tends to destroy the whole essence of community which is premised on the idea that what affects an individual also affects the group and vice versa. Thus, instead of giving due praise to the community when an individual has acted in a praiseworthy manner, this view tends to give credit to the individual. Applied to the issue of xenophobia in South Africa, it means that those who have involved themselves in xenophobic acts are bad South Africans and those who have not are good ones, and yet we know that it is difficult to say because some South Africans, did not participate in these xenophobic acts, and so they are good given that these remained silent with regard to their position.

⁹ Gade (2012: 484) defines SAADs as South Africans of African Descent.

Way Forward

The solution to the problem of crime and xenophobia in South Africa can be conceivable as follows: Firstly, the South African government should make an effort to tighten border control systems through increasing manpower that will ensure that the movement of people from Zimbabwe to South Africa is adequately monitored and managed. This tightening of border control systems should involve flushing out all perceived criminal elements wanting to cross the border to South Africa as well as those who have nothing to offer to South Africa in terms of skills. Secondly, there is need to prosecute all South African officials at the border who take bribes from Zimbabwean foreigners who want to cross to South Africa without proper travel documents, including the criminal elements mentioned above. Thus, a raft of measures including punitive measures should be instituted to ensure that all those who are found on the wrong side of the law are duly punished.

To ensure proper monitoring of these officials and to deal with the incidence of corruption and bribes, Chinese Central Televisions (CCTVs) must be mounted at the South African border to Zimbabwe (if they are not already there). If they are already there, the evidence they produce should be used to punish those involved in corruption and fraud at the South African border to Zimbabwe. There should also be undercover police officers patrolling the border deployed to monitor any unethical practices taking place at the border involving South African officials and Zimbabwean migrants. At the moment, it doesn't seem like there are such measures given the free movement of people from Zimbabwe to South Africa, and yet these measures, in my view, can help mitigate the problem of crime resulting from people migrating from Zimbabwe to South Africa as well as deal decisively with the problem of xenophobia.

With regard to the problem of xenophobia, my position is very clear. Firstly, I argue that once the problem of crime is addressed and people without skills are blocked from entering South Africa, the incidences of xenophobia will be reduced by more than half. What I am trying to say here is that before people make a noise about the problem of xenophobia in South Africa, concerted efforts must be made to prevent it in the first place and the best way to prevent it is to decongest South Africa by allowing only skilled personnel from Zimbabwe to work and stay in South Africa. My second submission is that, with regard to South Africans and their relationship with Zimbabweans residing in their country, it is important that they accept them as their fellow brothers and sisters as this is what *ubuntu* says. In order to do so, they should first "remove enemy images" which will help them to appreciate the value of peaceful co-existence.

Conclusion

This paper discussed the challenges associated with the open border system with particular reference to the South African border and Zimbabweans migrating to South Africa since the crisis years which were prompted by the socio-economic and political challenges caused by the disaffection between the ruling ZNAU PF, Zimbabwean opposition players and the West. The paper looked at the possible factors leading to the lack of adequate enforcement and supervision at the South African border, the relationship between migration and crime as well as the response of *ubuntu* to the problem of the 2008 and 2015 xenophobic attacks in South Africa. The paper then provided a way forward centred on a revisit of the cherished values of the past which should inspire South Africans to remove the enemy images and leave peacefully with fellow brothers and sisters from the continent.

Literature Cited

Bianchi, M., Buonanno, P., and Pinotti, P. (2008) "Do immigrants cause crime?" Paris School of Economics Working Paper No 2008-05.

Butcher, K. F., and Piehl, A. M. (1998b) "Cross-City Evidence on the relationship between Immigration and Crime." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 17(3), 457-93

Dreseen, N and Hansen, M.O. (2016). "Unmanageable "Illegals" - The Persistency of Zimbabwean Migration to South Africa." Unpublished Masters Thesis in Global Refugee Studies. Denmark: Aalborg University

Ebrahim, S. (2018). "Xenophobia." *The Daily Vox*, Available at <https://www.thedailyvox.co.za/xenophobia-in-south-africa-shows-disconnect-with-ubuntu-shaazia-ebrahim> Accessed 24 April 2018

Gade, C.B.N. (2012). "What is Ubuntu? Different Interpretations among South Africans of African Descent." *South African Journal of Philosophy*, 31(3), 484-503

Gnaka Lagoke, Gervais. (2013). "Discourse on Regional Economic Integration: Towards a Theory of Pan-african Authentic Development." Paper presented at ASA 2013 Annual Meeting. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2237352> Accessed 24 April 2018

Mananavire, B. (2017). "Zimbabweans Promoting Criminality in South Africa: Mbalula." *The Daily News* (26 July 2017). Available at <https://www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2017/07/26/zimbabweans-promoting-criminality-in-sa-mbalula> Accessed 7 May 2018

Mangena, F. (2016). "Hunhu/Ubuntu in the Traditional Thought of Southern Africa." *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Available at <http://www.iep.utm.edu/hunhu/> Accessed 22 April 2018

Munyonga, A. (2018). "The Death Penalty in the Context of Xenophobia in South Africa, 2008 and 2015." In: F Mangena and J.O.M Chimakonam (eds.). *The Death Penalty from an African Perspective: Views from Zimbabwean and Nigerian Philosophers*. Delaware: Vernon Press

Ojedokun, O. (2015). "An Ethical Approach to the Xenophobia against Foreigners in South Africa." *OGIRISI: A New Journal of African Studies*. 11(1): 169-191.

Saule, N. (1996). "Images in some of the Literary Works of S.E.K. Mqhayi." Unpublished D. Litt et Phil Thesis. Pretoria: University of South Africa.

Solomon, H and Kosaka, H. (2013). "Xenophobia in South Africa: Reflections, Narratives and Recommendations." *Southern Africa Peace and Security Studies*, 2 (2), pp. 5-30

Smith, A.D. (2008). "Refugees defile Crocodiles to cross Border." *The Guardian*, July 2008. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/jul/06/zimbabwe.southafrica> Accessed 01 May 2018.

The International Cooperation and Development. (2017). "Regional Integration." Available at https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/node/680_bg Accessed 12 April 2018

The Zimbabwean. (2008). "Zimbabwe's Notorious Armed Robber Gunned Down in South Africa." *The Zimbabwean* (21 April 2008). Available at <http://www.thezimbabwean.co/2008/04/zims-notorious-armed-robber-gunned-down-in-sa/>

Wellman, C.H. (2015). "Immigration." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Available at <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/immigration/#ArgForOpeBor> Accessed 12 April 2018