Historical perspectives on violence, conflict and accommodation in Zimbabwe

Synopsis

This collection is a sobering and thought interrogation of the intractable challenges of conflict, violence and the ever-elusive question of national healing in Zimbabwe. The detailed and context-sensitive essays reveal that achieving consensus on how communities should heal and reconcile seems difficult to achieve. Like in any other communities transitioning from conflict to peace, Zimbabweans confront a complex mixture of divergent political ideals, divided memories, conflicting ethnic and political histories, contesting definitions of political harm and victimhood and legal loopholes such as statutes of limitations. An entanglement of these socio-political factors at times allows perpetrators of violence to go unpunished. The contributors this collection are part of Zimbabwe's emerging cohort of historians and their neatly compressed essays throw a floodlight on conflict and violence. However, Zimbabwe has potential for peace-building, reconciliation and healing in view of its experiences such as the Unity accord of 1987 and the Government of National Unity of 2009. This brings out a challenge to every Zimbabwean as espoused by the late Vice President John Landa Nkomo that, "The solution to our nation's peace and reconciliation lies with us". In the main, this book is essential reading for policy-makers, historians and students of peace and conflict.