

Mulungushi: A toponymic exegesis

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Abstract

This paper examines the toponym Mulungushi, a name that is slowly becoming popular in Zambia's urban toponymic landscape. We begin by tracing the origin and/or importance of the name. Next, we identify the features that have been named Mulungushi in Zambia, and establish the informing ideology that underpins the choice of this name for the identified national features. The data for the study were collected mainly through documentary analysis, and also through semi-structured interviews of selected participants thought to be privy to the post-independence era, particularly the period from 1964 to 1970. The study found that the toponym Mulungushi is associated with nationalization and industrialization, in addition to serving as an enduring and unalloyed reminder of the urgent need for an economic manumission and (re)generation that characterized Zambia under Kenneth Kaunda's rule during the independence euphoria and zeitgeist. We used the Critical Toponymic theory to contend that the drive to inscribe this toponymy to the urban toponymic landscape is engineered by the desire to inform and remind of the nationalization and industrialization drive that characterized Zambia immediately following independence, the ultimate aim being to harness and foster the same mood in the present state in a bid to bring about the much-desired economic emancipation in the country.

Keywords: Critical Toponymic theory, Kenneth Kaunda, Mulungushi, toponymic landscape

Introduction

Zambia earned its political independence from British rule in 1964, and Kenneth Kaunda was entrusted by the Zambians with the mandate to lead the country. A critical glance at some of the policies of Kenneth Kaunda's government during the independence euphoria years seems to suggest that the much-hyped political independence was devoid of economic independence, and therefore, an economic independence was also inevitable. An example of such policies is the Mulungushi Economic Reforms of 1968. The meetings that gave birth to the economic reforms were held at the banks of a small river known as Mulungushi in the Central Province of Zambia. Thus, the economic reforms were named after the river. The interest in this study is in the toponym *Mulungushi*.

One of the cross-cutting arguments in toponymy is that place names, just like any other category of names, are not mundane; rather they radiate social phenomena, or have an onomastic content. Thus, place names are not neutral. In this study we examined the toponym *Mulungushi*, a name that is slowly becoming popular in Zambia's urban toponymic landscape. The choice to focus on this toponym is instigated by the fact that a

cursory glance at it seems to suggest that its onomastic content has been encrypted. As such, a vast majority of the Zambian population that were born around the 1980s henceforward, may find the name opaque in terms its onomastic output. The loss of the onomastic content of a name is popularly referred to as onomastic erasure (Pfukwa, 2012). Pfukwa identifies place renaming as the major cause of onomastic erasure while Chabata, Mumpande and Mashiri (2017) identify a mangling of place names as the major cause. In the case of *Mulungushi*, the cause of the onomastic erasure can be attributed to the decrepitude as a result of the passage of time. Thus, this study undertakes to decrypt the toponym *Mulungushi* so as to bring to the fore the hidden onomastic content of the toponym.

We begin by tracing the origin and/or importance of the name *Mulungushi*. Next, we identify the features/places that have been named *Mulungushi* in Zambia, and establish the informing ideology in designating this toponym to the identified national features. This is done within the matrix of knowledge that place names are not innocent designators (Berg & Vuolteenaho, 2009), but are so charged that they are useful to (re)negotiate and (re)align social phenomena in a fashion that brings it in sync with the aspirations of the namer (Alderman & Inwood, 2013). This is the reason why they are commonly viewed as historical chronicles (Hang'ombe, Chabata & Mamvura, 2019), despite some of them, such as *Mulungushi*, seemingly neutral, especially if not critically examined in a historical context. The capability of place names to serve as historical chronicles can be credited to the principle of persistence (Saparov, 2003; Donada & Reinoso, 2014) that is integral to them. This principle holds that place names are durable, meaning that they can survive for many generations, though over time, they tend to undergo an onomastic erasure or onomastic decrepitation.

To successfully decrypt the toponym *Mulungushi*, we first undertake a review of the Mulungushi Reforms of 1968. We identify the backdrop against which these reforms were passed, their objective and the aspirations of Zambia at that time. In addition to the review, we carried out semi-structured interviews with five senior citizens that have a rich understanding of the reforms and the gear that Zambia was at the time that the reforms were being passed. The five senior citizens were identified through snowball sampling. The researchers knew of one senior citizen with rich understanding the economic reforms because they participated in the meetings that lead to the reforms. With the assistance of this participant, the researchers were able to identify four other senior citizens that had a rich knowledge of the Mulungushi Economic Reforms.

We also conducted semi-structured interviews with five adult and five youth participants aged between twenty (20) and forty (40). These participants were purposefully sampled based on their knowledge of the Lusaka and Kabwe towns' toponymic landscape because it is in these towns where the toponym *Mulungushi* is mostly found in Zambia. We refer

to the participants in this age group as the younger generation. The aim of the interview with all the participants was to establish their understanding of the onomastic content of the toponym *Mulungushi*, as well as its historical significance. The collected data are couched in the Critical Toponymic theory.

The Mulungushi Economic Reform

The Mulungushi Economic Reform was passed in April 1968 at Mulungushi Rock of Authority about 10 km, north of Kabwe town in the Central Province of Zambia. At independence in 1964, the economy of Zambia was run by foreigners. It was a privately owned economy. The Zambian citizens who were treated as second class citizens during the colonial era were also deprived of running businesses in their own country.

It was the foretold economic lacunae that compelled the Zambian government under then President Kenneth Kaunda, on the 19th of April 1968 to announce that the state would intervene in the Zambian economy and nationalize all privately owned industries through what came to be known as the Mulungushi Reforms (Kaunda, 1968). It is important to point out that the Mulungushi reforms of 1968 were meant for the restructuring of Zambia's economy in industries only. This did not include mining and financial sectors. The nationalized industries included agricultural, railway, transport, electricity, brewing, wholesaling and retailing as well as the supply and manufacture of building materials (Kaunda, 1968).

The nationalization policy implemented through Zambia's 1968 Mulungushi Reforms constituted a deliberate strategy by the Kaunda government to assume 51% state control over key industries previously dominated by foreign capital, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, railways, transport, electricity, brewing, wholesale/retail trade, and building materials manufacturing (Kaunda, 1968, p 56; Sardanis, 2003, p. 112). This move was emblematic of the broader post-independence African zeitgeist that sought to dismantle colonial economic structures and assert sovereign control over strategic sectors, as articulated by Nkrumah (1965, p. 73) and characterized by scholars as a "commanding heights" approach to economic development (Shivji, 1976, p. 24). The reforms were theoretically grounded in three core principles: economic decolonization, aimed at reversing foreign corporate dominance that controlled 80% of Zambia's formal economy at independence (ILO, 1969, p. 15); resource mobilization, designed to capture and redirect copper revenues accounting for 45% of GDP toward national development through parastatals like INDECO (World Bank, 1970, p. 32; Sardanis, 2003, p. 118); and social equity, reflecting Kaunda's Zambian Humanism philosophy that promoted collective ownership to address colonial-era inequalities (Kaunda, 1967, p. 92). However, implementation revealed significant challenges across sectors: agricultural productivity declined by 20% following the state takeover of maize marketing boards (Agricultural

Marketing Committee Report, 1973, p. 17), the national transport company ZAMBUS struggled with maintenance due to technical constraints (*Daily Mail*, 15 June 1970), and Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation (ZESCO)'s electricity monopoly led to infrastructure underinvestment. These difficulties mirrored wider post-colonial African experiences where nationalization, while symbolically important for asserting economic sovereignty, frequently encountered operational shortcomings and global market vulnerabilities (Mkandawire, 2005, p. 16), ultimately necessitating the International Monetary Fund (IMF)-led structural adjustments by the 1980s that highlighted the inherent tensions between nationalist economic ideals and practical governance realities (Loxley, 1990, p. 144)

The Mulungushi economic reforms led to the taking over of 25 relatively large companies under the 51% state and 49% private share equity (Chanda, 2007, Sardanis, 2003, p. 78). This strategic partial nationalization targeted critical sectors such as mining, manufacturing, and commerce, with the government acquiring majority stakes in subsidiaries of key corporations like Anglo-American and the Rhodesia Selection Trust (RST) while preserving private sector involvement (*Times of Zambia*, 30 April 1968). The rationale for this equity structure was threefold: first, it sought to assert economic sovereignty by reducing foreign dominance, particularly in the copper industry, which accounted for over 90% of Zambia's export earnings (Government of the Republic of Zambia, 1968, p. 12), a sentiment echoed by President Kenneth Kaunda's declaration that "Zambians must control their own economic destiny" (Kaunda, 1968, p. 34). Second, the retention of 49% private ownership ensured technical continuity, allowing Zambia to maintain access to foreign expertise and capital, crucial given the nation's limited managerial capacity at independence (Sardanis, 2003, p. 82). Third, the model facilitated a gradual transition toward economic indigenization, avoiding the abrupt disruptions seen in more radical nationalizations elsewhere in post-colonial Africa (Tordoff, 1974, p. 215)

These reforms saw the creation of state companies to invest and run business with the aim of modernizing the economy. The state set up the Industrial Development Corporation (INDECO) to buy shares in private firms to start investment in new areas (Chanda, 2007). The Industrial Development Corporation was established in 1965 as Zambia's primary vehicle for industrial growth, initially operating under government directives rather than parliamentary legislation (Sardanis, 2003, p. 112). Following the Mulungushi Reforms of 1968, INDECO became the central holding company for Zambia's newly nationalized industries, managing key sectors such as mining, manufacturing, and finance (Kaunda, 1968, p. 45). During its peak in the late 1960s and early 1970s, INDECO played a pivotal role in Zambia's industrialization, establishing factories and subsidiaries like Zambia Breweries and Nitrogen Chemicals of Zambia (*Times of Zambia*, 1971). However, its success was short-lived. The 1973 oil crisis and the subsequent collapse of copper prices in 1975 severely undermined its financial stability (World Bank, 1976, p. 23), while

mismanagement and inefficiencies further eroded its performance (Larmer, 2005, p. 78). By the 1980s, under pressure from IMF-imposed structural adjustment programs, INDECO began to decline, ultimately leading to its dismantling during the privatization wave of the 1990s (Craig, 2000, p. 56).

Today, INDECO no longer exists in its original form. The privatization policies of the 1990s saw most of its assets sold off or liquidated, marking the end of its role as Zambia's industrial powerhouse (GRZ, 1992, p. 34). In 2014, the Zambian government launched a new entity, the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) of Zambia, as a modernized state-owned investment vehicle (*Post Newspaper*, 2014). However, this new IDC operates under a fundamentally different model, focusing on strategic investments rather than direct industrial control (IDC Zambia, 2020).

Mulungushi Rock of Authority was selected for these economic reforms due to its nationalistic symbol as the birthplace of Zambia's independence. The place was first discovered and recommended by Mr. Grey Zulu in the early 1950s for political gatherings and speeches. The place was first used in 1958 for a rally of the Zambia African National Congress and then in 1960 for the conference of the newly-formed United National Independence Party. Since 1964, it has been regularly used by successive political parties for their annual conventions and meetings.

With the enactment of the Mulungushi Reforms of 1968, the place also became the birthplace of Zambia's economic reforms.

Critical Toponymic Theory

Critical Toponymic theory views place names as an arena of a relatively new philosophy used in the study of place names. Some of the advocates of this theory are Perko, Jordan and Komac (2017), Wideman and Masuda (2017), Rose-Redwood, Alderman and Azaryahu (2010), Vuolteenaho and Berg (2009) and Yeoh (2009). The underlying argument of this theory is that place names are loaded with political nuances and are emblems of power. As such, this theory advances the thesis that place names should be studied in relation to political situations and power struggles over landscape/place and place naming (Perko, Jordan & Komac, 2017; Wideman & Masuda, 2017, p. 3; Vuolteenaho & Berg, 2009, p. 1; Yeoh, 2009, p. 71). Commenting on the power struggles reflected in place names, Perko et.al (2017) note that people are not in equal positions to name places, and that place names usually may be important for establishing and (re)producing social identities, even if they are also loaded with alternative interpretations and contested histories. This tells that place names are not innocent designators. From this observation, it can be concluded that the name *Mulungushi* is arguably loaded with some history and other possible social aspects.

Medway, Warnaby, Gillooly and Millington (2021) note that Critical Toponymic Theory is concerned with the political aspects that underpin urban toponymic landscape. These political dimensions are also perceived “as a means of power, identity and national-building by government institutions in postcolonial ... contexts” (2018, p. 1). It may be argued that Medway et al. (2021) have in mind the urban toponymic landscape because governments tend to have more interest in the urban toponymic landscape than the rural countryside.

Wanjiru and Matsubara (2017) observe that Critical Toponymic theory addresses issues surrounding how society aims to manage and contest the naming process while engaging in wider social, economic and political struggles. Thus, one may conclude that society has an insatiable appetite for place naming and this name designation act is a social practice that everyone seeks to perform. Once given an opportunity to name, probably people tend to select place names which promote their social, economic, or political aspirations. On the other hand, missing the opportunity to assign names implies missing the opportunity to leverage one’s agenda through the names. This paints a rather clear picture of the web of power struggles that names and naming processes and practices are entangled in, inviting their thorough interrogation while rejecting their fetishization, no matter how mundane they may appear.

Political semiotics may be identified as a sub-theme in scalar toponymy. According to Medway, Warnaby, Gillooly, & Millington (2021, p. 155) the focus of political semiotics is on the use of place names for commemorative purposes. In Critical Toponymic Theory, the meanings and functions of names given to places in commemoration of people have a political inclination. Such names are predominantly meant to imbue certain political aspirations which are in sync with the person the place is named after. This means that such place names serve two functions: to celebrate the eponym and somehow, to inscribe the political agenda of the eponym into the public space.

In this study, the lenses of Critical Toponymic theory are used to examine and discuss the historical connotations of the name Mulungushi in the context of the economic reforms in Zambia immediately following Zambia’s independence. Next, the theory is used to expose the motive behind the Zambian government’s avidness to assign this name to important national features and facilities such as universities and conference centres, among others.

Features named Mulungushi

Many features are named Mulungushi in Zambia’s urban landscape. The next table provides an inventory of the features named Mulungushi as well as their location.

Table 1: Features bearing the name *Mulungushi* in Zambia

S/N	Feature	Location	Year /period built/launched	Usage
1.	Mulungushi International Conference Centre	Lusaka	1970	It is used for hosting national and international conferences, exhibitions, and other high-profile events.
2.	Mulungushi University	Kabwe	2008	It is one of the top-ranking public universities in Zambia.
3.	Mulungushi House	Lusaka	Post-independence	It is a massive building that houses the headquarters for the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture.
4.	Mulungushi Village	Lusaka	Post-independence	It is a top-notch facility that offers accommodation in an excellent area surrounded by upmarket shopping malls. It is a few kilometers from the Lusaka Central Business Area and the Kenneth Kaunda International Airport.
5.	Zambia-China Mulungushi Textiles	Kabwe	2024	Formerly Mulungushi Textiles that ceased operations in 2007. The company mainly manufactures cloth.
6.	Mulungushi Road	Lusaka	Post-independence	It is found in Roma, a low density and highly prestigious residential area.

The foregoing table shows that six features bear the name *Mulungushi*. However, these are not the only ones. The features presented in the table are the prominent ones named Mulungushi, and there are many more non-prominent features bearing this name across Zambia. These include streets in residential areas and many businesses. From Table 1, it can be noted that the features named *Mulungushi* are located in Lusaka the capital city of Zambia, while others are in Kabwe town but are names of highly prestigious places and/or ventures in Zambia. By virtue of being located in Lusaka, the places with the name Mulungushi in Table 1 can be said to wield a very high social and economic status in Zambia.

Second, it can be noted from the table that the places named *Mulungushi* were constructed after 1964. The name *Mulungushi* gained importance and traction following the *Mulungushi* Reforms of 1968. As observed earlier, the *Mulungushi* reforms were targeted at awakening the spirit of nationalization. The objective at that time was to establish the economic machinery in the stewardship of the Zambian government. This leads us to the third observation about the features named *Mulungushi* in Table 1: the features are mainly government owned or controlled. This accords the features in the table an express national status that in turn, probably inscribes national symbols of whatever motivated the bestowers to select the name for the features from a vast pool of names in the

The recurrent thesis in toponomastics is that name selection is not an apolitical human undertaking. Literature on the subject states that they are wittingly selected and, always aimed to marshal and perpetuate ideologies that resonate with the views, aspirations and needs of the bestowers (Chilala & Hang'ombe, 2021; Hang'ombe, Chabata & Mamvura, 2018; Matsubara, 2016; Ndletyana, 2012). But the case for the toponym *Mulungushi* seems to be somewhat different: most of the people interviewed are not aware of the agenda behind the name, implying that the name has suffered an onomastic erasure. Onomastic erasure is an onomastic situation whereby the meaning of a name has been exterminated or when the original meaning of the name has been lost (Clark, 2017). However, in a strict sense, onomastic erasure occurs when a place is renamed. Thus, the case for *Mulungushi* may not be regarded as one of onomastic erasure. Rather it may be best viewed as a case of onomastic semantic content encryption. This is because the onomastic semantic content has not been erased, but is hidden to the younger generations, and only visible to most of the older generation that were there and old enough to understand the nationalization zeitgeist that characterized Zambia's economic horizon at the time of her independence. In this case, it can be argued that when the older generation have all gone, the toponym undergoes an erasure. The next section attempts to decrypt the onomastic semantic content of the toponym *Mulungushi*.

Decrypting *Mulungushi*

To successfully decrypt the toponym *Mulungushi*, we started off by considering the 1968 *Mulungushi* Reforms. The meetings that birthed the reforms were held on the banks of a small river, *Mulungushi* River about 10kms north of Kabwe town in central Zambia in 1968. Thus, ordinarily, all the features and infrastructure bearing the name *Mulungushi* in Zambia, including those in Table 1, are named after this river. The particular point where the meetings were held became known as the *Mulungushi* Rock of Authority. The agenda during the meetings revolved around the urgent need to nationalize the economy of Zambia, and all the deliberations were aimed at coming up with innovative ideas on how the then infant Zambia's economy would be strengthened. At that time, the president of

Zambia was Kenneth Kaunda. By virtue of being the head of Zambia's government during that time, Kaunda can be said to be the central brain behind the thirsty to strengthen the economy of Zambia that led the delegates to the *Mulungushi* River to caucus on the best way the dream of a flourishing Zambia would be realised (Sardanis, 2003, p. 78).

Other notable people that attended the meetings at the Mulungushi Rock of Authority in April 1968 included Vice President Simon Kapwepwe, whose advocacy for radical economic decolonization proved instrumental (Tordoff, 1974, p. 112), and Mainza Chona, then Minister of Home Affairs, who played a crucial role in drafting the legal frameworks for nationalization (*Zambia Hansard*, 1968). The conference's resolutions, strongly influenced by UNIP Secretary-General Alexander Grey Zulu's strategic vision (Macola, 2010, p. 145), were implemented through the coordinated efforts of key cabinet members. Finance Minister Dingiswayo Banda operationalized the 51% state ownership mandate (Larmer, 2005, p. 67), Agriculture Minister Elijah Mudenda restructured the farming sector (GRZ Agricultural Policy, 1969, 23), and Commerce Minister Justin Chimba oversaw the takeover of foreign commercial enterprises (*Times of Zambia*, April 19, 1968). The resulting *Mulungushi* Reforms, formally articulated in the *Mulungushi* Declaration (GRZ, 1968), marked a decisive shift toward economic sovereignty, targeting Zambia's copper mines and foreign-owned businesses as part of a broader strategy to decolonize the economy and redistribute national wealth (Kaunda, 1968, p. 34). This collective action by Zambia's leadership represented both a rejection of neocolonial economic structures and an ambitious assertion of post-independence self-determination, though its long-term consequences would prove complex and multifaceted (Sardanis, 2014, p. 156-160).

The key resolution that was passed by the attendees of the meetings at the Mulungushi Rock of Authority was that Zambia's economy needed to be nationalised. It is for this reason that the name *Mulungushi* is synonymous with nationalization, as noted from one of the older generation participants who observed that:

The name Mulungushi is a name of the river in Kabwe, but to me, it reminds me more about Kaunda. Kaunda fought very hard to make the economy of Zambia strong through good projects like INDECO [Industrial Development Corporation].

(Participant A, 2024).

All the older generation participants shared similar views with participant A. They either linked the name *Mulungushi* to Zambia's first Republican President Kenneth Kaunda or to the Industrial Development Corporation. As such, the onomastics semantic field of the toponym *Mulungushi* includes Kenneth Kaunda and nationalization. The *Mulungushi* Economic Reforms (1968) brought about the nationalisation of the agriculture, railway, transport, electricity, brewing, wholesaling and retailing as well as the supply and

manufacture of building materials. To date, some of these sectors of Zambia economy are parastatal or run by government, while others were privatized in the early 1990s.

The Mulungushi Economic Reforms were aimed at improving Zambia's economy. The need to improve the economy of Zambia was instigated by an aspiration for an economically free Zambia. As a visionary leader, it can be claimed that Kaunda's vision over-arched beyond a political emancipation to include economic freedom. Against this backdrop, it can be opined that the semantic field of the name *Mulungushi* includes economic freedom. A society that has an economic freedom is a happy one. Such a society, in turn, finds their voice in their everyday affairs, including governance in contrast to marginalized ones whose freedoms are stifled and downtrodden (Muwati, 2015).

Arguably, the other semantic field that the name *Mulungushi* has attained over the years is prestige. Thus, the name *Mulungushi* is associated with prestige. As can be noted from Table 1, the name is given to national features/places that are prominent and highly prestigious. This allows the name more (inter)national visibility relative to most of other place names in the country. This argument is collaborated by the observations of most of the younger generations that were asked about the meaning of the name. One of them, a student at Mulungushi University, responded, "Okay, the name Mulungushi is a name for my university. I am not sure of what it means." After being probed further, the participant stated that:

The name is also given to an international conference centre in Lusaka. [While smiling] It is a big name for big institutions. My institution is big. I am happy to be in this institution.

The participant's observation that 'my institution is big' can be interpreted to mean that the establishment is prestigious. This interpretation is supported by the observation by the student that 'I am happy to in this institution', an observation that signifies that the participant associates themselves with the institution. In toponymic literature, two types of place names can be identified: names with positive connotation, and those with a negative one (Donada & Reinoso, 2014). Leveraging on Donada and Reinoso's categorisation of place names, one can opine that the name-identity-pendulum of human beings is such that they tend to identify, associate and love the names that have a positive identity, while disassociating, denigrating and shying away from those with a negative implication. In light of this thesis, it can be concluded that the toponym *Mulungushi* has a positive connotation on the basis that it is given to features that have a high status in the country. Therefore, the name can be said to be synonymous with prestige.

So far, we have laboured to espouse the meaning and/or identify what is associated with the name *Mulungushi*. However, the question of why this name is bestowed on important

national features has not yet been addressed. The remaining part of the discussion in this paper concerns itself with this question.

From the standpoint of the Critical Toponymic theory, a choice of this name on important national features is tucked under certain motives and agenda. This means that the name is given with a view to infuse certain national narratives and aspirations within the national onomastic landscape. As such, apolitical as the toponym *Mulungushi* may present itself to the younger generations in Zambia, it resoundingly articulates, (re)echoes, remembers, and (re)enforces the zeitgeist, vision, and aspirations of Zambia's post-independence. This confirms the key argument in Critical Toponymy that place names are not neutral. Another example of a toponym in Zambia that seems neutral is *Victoria Falls*, a name for the water fall along the Zambezi River near Livingstone town in Zambia and the Victoria Falls town in Zimbabwe. According to Hang'ombe, et al. (2018) the name Victoria Falls seems neutral at face value. However, a critical view of it reveals that the name commodifies the water fall, and it serves as a marketing strategy for the water fall as a tourist attraction. In addition, when David Livingstone named the water fall after the queen, he was asserting the power of the British monarch as well as claiming ownership of the falls. This is because of the name is associated with one of the previous queens of the British Empire, Victoria. Thus, by naming the water fall Victoria, David Livingstone honoured the Queen Victoria, and by implication inscribed the high status and power of the queen on the water fall. Therefore, by insisting on using it as an official name for the water fall ahead of others such Syungu Namutitima, Chinotimba, and Mosi-Oa-Tunya, the governments of Zambia and Zimbabwe leverage on the high status and fame of name, which attributes Hang'ombe et al, to argue that it has more potential to attract tourists to the water fall than would the said local names.

We have already argued that *Mulungushi* is synonymous with nationalization and industrialization and that these were aimed to jump-start and boost the economy of Zambia. From a Critical Toponymic theory, therefore, bestowing this name on national places, has the potential to promote and remind the Zambian populace of the need and importance of national economic emancipation that nationalization and industrialization is capable of bringing. Put more resolutely, the name is a subtle call to Zambians to be industrious (hardworking) so that they can attain economic liberation that would make the political liberation attained in 1964 more meaningful and complete.

On the basis of the fact that the toponym *Mulungushi* is a name of a place in which political meetings were held during the struggle for independence, the name is synonymous with the struggle for Zambia's political freedom. Thus, the name is an independence insignia, especially that it strides political and economic freedom. Bestowing the name on important national features, therefore, can be regarded as a stark reminder of the sapping and stultifying affray for political freedom that led to the loss of lives for the many

independence visionaries, and the subsequent attainment of the independence in Zambia in the 1960s.

Concisely stated, the toponymy *Mulungushi* invokes and serves to remind the Zambian people of the struggle for political freedom, as well as an aspiration for a national economic freedom that Zambia has been pursuing from the time the Mulungushi Economic Reforms were passed in 1968 to date.

Conclusion

This study has examined the toponymy *Mulungushi*, one whose onomastic content seems to have been encrypted over the years. To successfully decrypt the toponym, an effort is made at identifying the major national features the name has been bestowed on, their location and usage. Next, an effort has been made to discuss the onomastic semantic field that the names accumulated over the years. In relation to the onomastic semantic field of the name, the opinion made in the paper is that the toponym *Mulungushi* is synonymous with the struggle for political independence, the aspiration and need for economic independence that would be operationalized through nationalization and industrialization, economic undertakings that we perceive to be a subtle call to the Zambians to hard work and creativity aimed at growing the economy of the country. The central thesis in this paper, steeped in the Critical Toponymic theory, is that bestowing the toponym *Mulungushi* on national features is meant to inscribe onto the toponymic landscape of Zambia and, remind the citizens of the struggle for political freedom and the inescapable reality of the fight for economic freedom that preoccupies every Zambian, consciously or unconsciously.

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