

CHAPTER 3:

UBUNTU/HUNHU APPRAISES WHISTLEBLOWING: A COMPATABILITY REFLECTION

Having defined and explained the key concepts and terms surrounding the practice of whistleblowing and the philosophy of *ubuntu* and provided a background to the study in the preceding chapter, the next task is to build up a case for the practice in question among the Shona people of Zimbabwe. However, the study will place emphasis on the way the Shona people of Zimbabwe regard this notion of whistleblowing. The author picked the tribes of Zimbabwe because he is an insider to most of the cultural practices and the philosophy of *ubuntu* that the people in the discussion believe to have much bearing in their day-to-day life. In addition to that, the philosophy of *ubuntu* is historically accommodative and conservative as such it has interwoven with the modern life endeavours including the business ideology. This chapter explains the harmony that exists between ethical dictates of *ubuntu* and the practice of whistleblowing, therefore claiming that whistleblowing is not and has never been an imposed practice among the Shona people.

Since the practice of whistleblowing is to be discussed mostly in the realm of business ethics, it is therefore important to set the parameters and level the ground. One may wonder whether the Shona had the concept of business before the coming of the whites which may suggest that both business and whistleblowing are alien concepts. In effect, the Shona just like any other people had the concept of business since time immemorial. They used the term *kushava* to imply business. Chimhundu (2001:922) says '*Kana munhu achishava anenge achitsvaka zvinhu zvinomupa kurarama*' (when one is doing business, one is partaking in activities that give or support a livelihood). Embedded in this saying is the fact that the Shona people do have various endeavours in life which culminate in raising a profit /wealth meant to have a livelihood. This may include, agricultural productivity, blacksmithing, mining, hunting, or even barter trade in different products of the different industries, selling one's labour and personal talents like singing and dancing. Thus, the African business is also furnished with the notions of primary industry up to tertiary industry. In light of all this, *Hunhuism /ubuntu* permeates and controls all these activities since the preceding chapter alluded to it that *hunhu* guides human life among the Shona in all the

endeavours. So, the notions of business and whistleblowing are native practices among the Shona people.

It is important to briefly explain what ethics is in general since the combination of the business and the ethics makes up the domain in which whistleblowing and *ubuntu* are complementing each other as far as this research is set to achieve. Ethics are rules or standards governing the moral conduct of members of a society-whether they are employees in an institution, or members of an association, or a group, or any other societal cluster. Just like *ubuntu*, ethics deal with values relating to human behaviour, with respect to rightness or wrongness of particular actions and the motives and ends of each action. Drawing from the aforementioned exposition, business ethics therefore studies the application of ethical theorems to any human activity which seeks to generate a profit or wealth. In a bid to fully unravel the central argument of this thesis pertaining to the justification that whistleblowing is a non-alien but highly original and compatible with the Shona philosophy of *Hunhuism*, it is therefore important that the author gives more information about the people in question. Whistleblowing is in effect a new label generated by the increased awareness of ethical conflicts encountered at the work place especially in this context of modernity turning the world into a global village. In no complicated terms whistleblowing is an indigenous practice among the Shona best described by the Shona phrase '*kurova bembera*'. According to Chimhundu (2001:874), '*kana munhu achirova bembera anenge achitaura zvakaipa zvaakaitirwa paruzhinji kuti nyakuita azvinzwe, azive kuti zviito zvake zvinoziiikanwa*' (when someone is whistleblowing, one is informing the public about some immoral or bad practices done unto oneself so that the doer knows that his or her wrong doings are known to rectify his immoral dealings). In other words, it is when a person makes a public announcement about immoral activities done unto him or her with the intention that the doer knows that his or her doings are known. To this end, the wrong doers may cease such immoral practices or be advised by the community's moral dictates. In so far as this argument is concerned, it can be noted whistleblowing is deeply rooted in the *hunhuism* philosophy.

To further substantiate the above, the Shona time in, time out uses a proverb which says '*Mwana asingachemi anofira mumbereko*' (a baby which does not cry dies while being carried on the mother's back), suggesting that every member of the society has the African right (an African right is privilege embedded in the wellbeing of the whole community) to say one's concerns against any immoral behaviour believed to be harmful to the institution or community at large. Drawing the facts from the above proverb, like blowing the whistle to bring

attention to a thief, whistleblowing is an effort to make others aware of practices one considers illegal, unjust or harmful to the blower himself or the entire society. This trait of whistleblowing is therefore in tandem with philosophy of *ubuntu* which pays attention even to a child or a woman without any wave of discrimination on gender and age status as alluded to earlier on. This is an African value that everyone has a contribution towards the wellbeing of the community. Hence, togetherness and collectivism are what *ubuntu* values. The gist of this argument can be contained in a quotation from Mkhize (2008:43) who says 'the ethics of *ubuntu* are a call to action because an ethical being (*ubuntu/munhu*)-a being with moral sense cannot look on the suffering of another and remain unaffected'. To this end, the morality of whistleblowing is appraised by the *hunhuism* philosophy.

The people bound by *hunhu* are expected to identify with each other and to be solitary in the pursuit of their concern. Whoever sets out to publicly deconstruct and even debunk the available conceptual and spiritual repertoire, dissociates from this moral community, dents its fabric, and jeopardises its project. From this perspective, whistleblowing is certainly morally right; and we can understand how *kurova bembera* is able to save a situation of immoral activities among the Shona by explicitly denouncing the debunkers of moral community's philosophy.

Extreme and uncalled-for violence especially between kinsmen; and to the extreme transgression of codes of conduct which regulate the behaviour between genders and between age groups (blatant disrespect of elders, overburdening under-age children, committing incest and murder etc.) is a sign of not being a *munhu* (an ethical person) as far as the realm of *hunhu* is concerned. Such acts upset the ancestors to the extent that they cause problems upon the entire community and not the selected group of the moral debunkers who would have beached the *ubuntu* fabric. It is in the mirrors of such situations that *ubuntu* values the welfare of the whole society through a thorough observance of moral principles and standards ascribed by *hunhuism* thereby moralising the disclosure of immoral behaviour for the sake of rectification. Among the Shona people of Zimbabwe as alluded to above, whistleblowing is equated to '*kurova bembera*' which is an act of disclosing some evil activities a member of one's neighbourhood is doing that is threatening one's life; family; or the whole compound. All the efforts is directed to make the doer desist from such immoral acts for the good of humanity. Samkange and Samkange (1980:39), outline that as embedded in *hunhu* is 'the attention one human being gives to another: the kindness, courtesy, consideration and friendliness in the relationship between people, a code of behaviour, an attitude to other people and to life'. In this case

one can claim that whistleblowing is actually a gesture of kindness and appositive attitude towards life because the blower will aim at saving the life and wellbeing of the community at large.

In the proceeding chapters, the concepts of whistleblowing and *ubuntu* were discussed with their chief tenants being spelt out but a link has not yet been established between the Shona type of whistleblowing and the whistleblowing explored in general in chapter one. However, it is important to note that the establishment of such a link need to be pursued in full consideration of the interaction, counter reactions, and acculturation the *ubuntu* philosophy has underwent. As unravelled in the above exposition, the Shona whistleblowing was mainly anonymous and it would be done during the dawn and dusk hours of the day when there is maximum quietness conducive for everyone to clearly hear the concerns of the whistle blower. Because *ubuntu* had come in contact with other cultures, globalisation and technological advancements, it has been noted that the African native philosophy has given in to some new fibre of concepts and accommodated through for the good of the local people but without wearing away the prime essence of its way of living. Rather, globalisation seems to have complimented *ubuntu* for the good of the collectivism in a way that does not distort its main makeup. It is therefore ideal for this project to bring to the aforementioned that as much as *ubuntu* accommodated the IT and Western genre of business, it has also transferred the anonymous whistleblowing into all that it is in the world overview. That is, the Shona also have accustomed to the all the subtypes of whistleblowing and considered the same factors necessary before whistleblowing. This has not however; swept away the Shona's own way of going about the practice but it only enriched the concept with the societal motive of preserving the societal good and upholding the value which is enshrined in the togetherness of the Shona. Having established this positive transformation, it is therefore superb to continue with the task of parading the evidence that suggests the compatibility of whistleblowing and the philosophy of *ubuntu*. This is then expatiated on in the next chapter where a variety of cases of such types of whistleblowing is critically analysed. In effect to safeguard the perpetual succession of the Shona's collectivism, all the people are adorned with a prima facie obligation to blow the whistle on practices that are illegal, unjust, or harmful to the entire community.

Farmer (2002:206) says whistleblowing can be defined in various ways but it is basically an attempt by someone on the inside, or formerly on the inside, to bring a wrongful practice to the attention of those who have power to publicize or remedy the situation. Central to exposition is the fact that there is information

sharing, be it good or bad, but just for the good of the society. As spelt out before in the preceding chapter, Africans share totems and praising names, to mention a few and to this effect, this idea of sharing subsequently sanctifies the practice of whistleblowing as corrective measure to the moral decadence of the business community. This is totally in line with the philosophy of *ubuntu* in that Africans, especially the Shona where they do not have private things along gender or age basis since the male sibling is the mother of the female sibling's children. That is, *sekuru ndiamai uye vatete ndibaba* (your mother's brother is your mother and your father's sister is your father). Thus, to pronounce it all that it is very important among a people of the philosophy of *ubuntu* who do not have gender, age, tribe, or even a special group which needs special treatment so whistleblowing is a mere act of proving the 'bad news' within a system meant to put back the moral orderliness in the community for a continued existence as one people.

In the Shona culture, there is the concept of *dare* (meeting place/court) where elderly people and other members of the family or community congregate to discuss issues concerning the wellbeing of the entire community. During such sessions any moral transgression which would have been aired out is brought forward to the attention of the people and solutions be proffered. The idea of airing the immoral behaviour can be in form of whistleblowing. Of course, the immoral activities would have come to the people's attention through the ministering of *n'anga* and the *kurova bembera* act. The issues discussed here at include political, social, religious and even business-related problems. The *dare* then proffers solutions to the problems through a consensus. This suggests that the African consensus democracy is really an integral aspect of *ubuntu*. To this end, such procedural deliberations by the congress of *dare* clearly indicate that the practice of whistleblowing in and around business operations in Zimbabwe is non-alien. In this case the elderly people may represent the managerial top brace or regulatory agency which is bound to rectify such mishaps in the business arena. It is also important to note that, *ubuntu* conceptualises ethical reasoning dynamically in terms of *hunhu* action, disequilibrium and the restoration of harmony in all life circles among the Bantu (Mkhize 2008:43). From this postulation, it can be argued that everyone is both a business person and a consumer at any given point. As such immoral practices in business negatively affect both the stockholders and stakeholders. So, everyone in Zimbabwe is in one way or the other affected by unethical practices such as the selling of expired food stuffs, boarding defective commuter omnibuses just to mention a few. In such scenarios *ubuntu* comes in and mandates everyone to be kind, considerate and humane enough to other, a task which can be fulfilled through blowing the

whistle so that the 'bad game' might be ceased in the interest of the public. One can safely claim that the practice of whistleblowing is indeed a humanitarian gesture compatible with *ubuntu* among the Shona-Ndebele people of Zimbabwe meant to curb and eradicate the moral illnesses of the community and not for retributive measures.

Of course, *ubuntu* is a closed system in that does not share information with the outsider but since it is embracing other new cultural proliferations and globalisation, the Shona are now using information technology (internet) as a media through which the whistle can be blown. This new type of internet-based whistleblowing is very important in that, issues of concerns in the political realm such as genocide which may need the international community to assist in the restoration of the rule of the people according to the dictates of *ubuntu* oriented consensus democracy might be publicized now. However, it should be clear that whistleblowing has never been an issue of moral contention and in this case only the media it is done through is changing since most societies of the Bantu people are undergoing technological revolution. This can be substantiated by an incident in a Shona novel called *Feso* when King Pfumojena's subjects secretly went away and blew the whistle to the adversaries of Pfumojena through *Hunhuism* who in turn intervened and restored the rule of consensus democracy. Over and above, this was a genuine gesture of *hunhu* by both the whistle blowers and those who intervened because an ethical being among the Shona feels for others and sacrifice to bring happiness across the community.

Still in the domain of traditional literature among the Shona, Mashiri (1978:12) portrays a character by the name Tinarwo blowing the whistle against Nyanguru who wanted to usurp the power from Tigere. The Shona social values, norms and rules do not condone political power usurpers because leaders are believed to be installed by the ancestors through the divination of the gods. Tigere and the community's elders sat and reprimanded Nyanguru. Had the plotted coup materialised, a lot of blood would have been shed thereby violating the sacredness of life among the Shona. In view of this situation, it can be therefore argued that whistleblowing is an integral part of *ubuntu* way of living together since it protects the wellbeing of the entire community.

One of the renowned musicians Leonard Zhakata once sang '*pane hutsi pane moto*' (smoke resembles fire). In regard to this statement, whenever one decides to blow the whistle or *kurova bembera*, one would have sensed some immoral practices which might be of danger to the very organisation or the public's interest. It implies that, something of essence about *hunhu* is pushing them to

behave in that manner, protecting the image and essence of humaneness within the community or organisation. The act of publicising the bad message is meant to trigger the process of moral rectification for the sake of the wellbeing of the community. Accordingly, Samkange and Samkange (1980:40), argue that it is a peculiarity of the concept of *hunhuism* that it is more discernible when described in terms of what it is '*hausi hunhu ihwohwo*' (That is not *hunhuism*). These words are often used usually as a reprimand. The position site '*hwu ndihwo hunhu chaihwo*' (This is real *Hunhuism*), is rarely pointed out. This indicates that, whatever behaviour a member of an *ubuntu* society does contrary their philosophy is bound to be criticised or reprimanded. Therefore, whistleblowing is a practice intertwined with the Shona way of living as it breaches neither rule nor right of the community. Rather, it exists as a means of checking and balancing of morality equilibrium in the society for peace's sake.

Just like in any given society, it has been observed that there is a tendency to blame the messengers who bring bad news, but it seems clear that there are deeper roots of the persecution of whistle blowers or the negative labelling the practice has. Whistleblowing is often described by employers and fellow employees as a betrayal of trust-a lack of loyalty where loyalty is owed (Larmer, 2002:207). This viewpoint can only hold water in the western culture they value individualism and individual rights. In Africa and let alone among the Shona loyalty is a virtue of *munhu* (ethical person) whose capability is to answer to the calls of societal good. In no complicated words, *ubuntu* stipulates that loyalty should be given to the whole community in form of good behaviour which brings about harmony between the individual members for the perpetual existence of the former and not the latter. To this point, it can be claimed that whistleblowing brings sanity into a moral society of *vanhu* (ethical people). This argument can be supported by Samkange Samkange (1980:39) who write, "the attention one human being gives to another, the courtesy, consideration and friendliness in the relationship between people; a code of behaviour, an attitude to other people and to life, is embodied in *hunhu* or *ubuntu*."

It has been spelt out that, the whistle blowers in general face a lot of economic, social, and sometimes political persecution and rejection among other catastrophes simply because they are labelled traitors. However, the idea that *vanhu* (ethical people) are empathic, do not ignore the suffering of any member of community. That is, the worries or concerns of one member is or are worries of the whole community since the *ubuntu* driven morality entails a strict observance of structural functionalism as a mode of operation that support the system of a Shona society. Accordingly, Tutu (1999) has a substantial say in this

viewpoint as he expresses the fact that ethical people feel threatened when others are on the verge of destruction. Central in this saying is the fact that *ubuntu* does not spare victimization of the whistle blowers as a moral right thereby pronouncing it that whistleblowing and *ubuntu* share the same goal and endeavour in perpetual existence.

In fact, whistleblowing is as old as business while business is as old as life and humanness is essence among the Shona. This view is premised on the common understanding that *ubuntu* is a sort of an estate entrusted onto the living by the departed forefathers of the Africans. Samkange Samkange (1980:39) argue;

Since there are as many as 300 linguistic groups with ntu or a variation in the word for person, all believed to have originated from a single source, it is reasonable to suppose that these groups – the Bantu people- by and large, share a common concept of Hunhuism which varies only to the extent that individual groups have undergone changes not experienced by others. For instance, the role of behaviour, the attitude to other people and to life of a ruler, an induna, in a highly centralised military Nguni kingdom is different from that of an Ishe in a less centralised and less martial Shona state.

Drawn from this argument are the untraceable sources of the people's origin and the differences in the lived history of the Bantu people varying from the Nguni to the Shona people. Nevertheless, the *ntu/nhu* remain common to mark the classic *ubuntu/hunhu* which is spring boarded on the notion of togetherness. The philosophy of *ubuntu* therefore permeates all the spheres of human life among the Shona which entail business and both its good and bad activities. Hence, whistleblowing tries to moralise everything in the business spectrum since time immemorial.

In the *hunhu* domain, sharing and protection are incorporated and guaranteed to everyone. All visitors and strangers are well provided for and protected in every home they pass through without bothering who they are. In view of this, everyone with *unhu* among the Shona is caring, generous and protective such that these attributes also pervades into their business life. On this basis, they are bending to provide standard and nontoxic services and goods to fellow members because if they do it the other way around, the community's wellbeing is diminished. Their business operations may also come to a halt since the individual's capabilities are enabled by that of the entire society. The implication of this position is that if any immoral activity is identified in any endeavour of the Shona people, that particular person who would have seen the act should be ready to inform those capable of making the bad habit end. That is, if it is within a business entity, the managerial team ought to be informed and that would be internal whistleblowing. When it happens within a government department, the

type of whistleblowing is governmental whistleblowing since the information about the unjust practice is channelled to the regulatory board or to the media. The involvement of the media then makes it external whistleblowing. An intense consideration of these issues validates the vitality of whistleblowing in the maintenance of moral equilibrium and harmony in the Shona life setting. Whistleblowing is therefore a tool used by the Shona to initiate and marshal the corrective moves that are meant to provide and ensure the existence of a conducive environment for reconciliation between the two parties that would have wronged each other. It is in this manner because only the truth sets anyone free and the same grain of truth is the kernel of all good gestures of *ubuntu*. It is worth to be reiterated that the philosophy of *ubuntu* should be upheld in any given Bantu multiracial society because it is through which all good and bad acts are vetted and judged. Drawing a conclusion from this exposition, one can safely claim that the *ubuntu* initiated whistleblowing is a non-alien practice among the Shona because it strives to guarantee the perpetual existence of peaceful and non-harmful interactions between *vanhu* (ethical people) within the realm of *hunhuism* philosophy.

Within the spectrum of *ubuntu*, almost all the people, especially the elderly people are called by their surnames or totems as assign of respect for the whole family from which the person comes from. Most importantly, it banishes the ideology of individualism and replaces it by the representative role in which the individual person effectively stands for the people among which he or she comes from all the times. When one is a representative of the family or clan or community it implies that the person is functioning as a watchdog of *hunhu*. Hence, the individual has the mandate to blow the whistle whenever he or she sees an immoral practice with potential harm to the public by a fellow employee or the organisation's policies. The same concept of representation also explains how the wrongdoings of one person affects the whole family, clan if not the entire village. In this case, it is everybody's obligation to carry out the task of blowing the whistle whenever an unjust or potentially harmful practice to the business entity itself or to the public interest is performed within the one's vicinity. Being on guard against any criminal offences, may avoid the catastrophes associated with *ngozi* (an avenging spirit) of a dead person, say; a murdered person seeking appeasement from those who wronged the person before death because through the same notion of representation, it follows anyone a trace of its murderer including his relatives with direct, indirect, or who have no contribution in the murder. Bourdillon (1987:233) explains the same idea as he says, 'the angry spirit attacks an individual through his family causing a succession of death, or death followed by serious illness in other members of the family'. It is

therefore mandatory among the Shona to blow the whistle, always, as a strategy of curbing the occurrences of such cases resulting in dreadful consequences causing the ailing of the entire family.

Still pursuing the notion of representation, it ought to be noted that this ideology makes any one member of the society to a policing agent on guard so that the dictates of *hunhu* are observed to shun *ngozi*. Suggested by this view is the fact that, if one notes an immoral act meant to negatively affect any one individual, and let it go without blowing the whistle, would have wronged the whole community. Whistleblowing is a way of calling for a quick cessation of that immoral behaviour. The general awareness that anyone can blow the whistle against dangerous dealings in the business fraternity ensures the precipitation of high demand on the individual to behave in the highest standards and to portray the highest possible virtues that society strives for. To this end, whistleblowing and *ubuntu* complement each other to guarantee the everlasting harmony between prosperity and morality in the Shona communities.

Closely related to the philosophy of *hunhuism*, is the fact that it entails the notion of social role. For instance, *kupfugama/kutonona* (kneeling down) or *kuchonjomara/kutonona* (squatting) when greeting parents-in-law and serving food reflects good behaviour or culture from where one is born and bred. The person who is squatting and kneeling down acts as an ambassador of the people they represent. The observation of etiquette entails the ideology of love and respect for others. Likewise, this ambassadorial function should be reflected even in the business fraternity. A business *munhu* (ethical person) should also be exemplary in his or her ethical operations. Any failure to resemble the fibre of *ubuntu* will result in that business institution being a victim of whistleblowing. The triggered whistleblowing is aiming at restoring *hunhuism* for the sake of prosperity in the community.

Still in the quest of justifying the practice of whistleblowing and explaining its compatibility with *ubuntu*, it is important to note that the latter uphold the people driven leadership and governance while the former stands in to denounce any immoral activities by the rulers meant to disadvantage the populace and then seek rectification. Chitongo (1998:9) writes:

*'Umambo vanhu, hunogadzwa navanhu
Ugotonga vanhu, vanhu vachikukudza'*

(Chieftain is the popular vote; authority is given by the masses,

With that authority you rule the people, the people obey your political authority)

The main argument in this quotation is that proper governance among the Shona be installed by the ancestors because the living are kept under the wings of their departed forefathers for warmth protection. It implies that, the ancestors are the living. So, the Shona leadership is the rule by the demos. As such, the rule by the demos does not therefore perpetrate criminal crimes like genocide as a way of attaining and retaining the power. In *hunhuism* crimes have far reaching implications to the people from which the perpetrators come. In so doing, there is a moral obligation upon all the people of that kingdom blow the whistle in a strict attempt to curb the criminal activities which may bring a curse onto the land. Apart from curtailing the catastrophes associated with the avenging spirit, the blowing of the whistle also assures peace and tranquillity ideal for developmental projects to be undertaken.

The *unhu* jurisprudence tends to support remedies and punishment that tend to bring people together. A leader with *unhu* listens to the concerns of his subjects. Such leaders are selfless and consult widely before making a decision. Likewise, an individual who opts to be a whistle blower in case of immoral practice threatening the wellbeing of the people. Such people are greatly appreciated in the Shona political-economic circles because they disclose the bad news in the name of protecting the public interest. The Zimbabwean late musician and Reverend Aaron Rusukira once sang:

...munhu hunhu, pasina hunhu tinoti ibenzi. Hunhu chii? Hunhu kukudza vanhu, hunhu kuda vanhu, hunhu kufarira vanhu, hunhu kukoshesa vanhu zvisinei nezera, kwavanobva, upfumi, dzidzo, kana mutauro....' (A person is humanity; without humanity we say it is a fool. What is humanity? Humanity is respect, love, being open and welcoming, valuing other people regardless of their age, origin, wealth, education or language).

The whistle blower who would have brought the wrongful practices to the attention of those have the power to publicize or remedy the situation for the sake of the wellbeing is said to be well adorned with *hunhu*. In this case, *vanhu* (the demos) are the people in whom the power to remedy the situation is vested because there is always the reign of consensus democracy. To this end, whistleblowing would have brought about amoral rectification in the society for the general good.

Lapin (1993) as cited by Mafunisa in Nicolson (2008:115), argues that there is a need to develop a work ethic that is congruent with and indigenous to the various values, systems and traditions operating in the South African workplace despite the divergent culture because all share common universal values-for example that stealing and infidelity are wrong. Premising on the author's argument on this view, whistleblowing is in compatibility with *ubuntu* in that, the latter does not condone

acts of infidelity which might be inform of *makuna-makuna* (incest). For instance, father having sex with his own daughter or son having sex with his own mother as a traditional business ritual or *muti/mushonga webhizinisi* (traditional medicine for business prosperity). Some unethical businesspeople sometimes practice what the Shona call *kuchekeresa* (ritual murder). Others keep *zvikwambo* (goblins) which are believed to bring business fortune while on the other side causing some problems for the family. The goblin's negative implications include successive deaths or continuous sickness of the extended family. In one of his songs, Alick Macheso sang '*Baba naamai kana paine ane chikwambo ngaabude pachena chidzorwerwe kumwene wacho*' (Father and mother if any one of you has a goblin should come to the open and return it where it belongs). This is unacceptable among the *ubuntu* society. So, from this perspective, the ancestors and elders of the clan who are the daily guardians or police of human morality do advise or give a directive that such acts should immediately come to an end. The members of any society, business corporation or political organisation who happen to gather information about such acts are therefore encouraged by the norms and values of *ubuntu* to blow the whistle so that the custodians of morality would act in a bid to bring the 'game' to an end. In this regard whistleblowing is congruent with *ubuntu* which have regulations such as always tell the truth, be faithful in marriage, keep justice, only to mention a few.

In most cases whistleblowing comes to publicise information about corruption, stealing, policies of institutional resource by individuals which is an act of being self-centred, a feeling unwelcome within the parameters of *ubuntu*. It is a sign of being selfish in that the resources of that any organisation are in one way or another meant to benefit the stockholders and the stakeholders, implying the whole community where the business operates. In agreement with this postulation, Mafunisa in Nicolson (2008:114) says that "in traditional African community, life revolves around collective body... In these settings, formal and informal rules and customs are developed to advance the primacy of the collective." Premising on this viewpoint, it can be proffered that whistleblowing is morally good among the Shona if it targets immoral activities meant to compromise the general wellbeing. In effect, the wellbeing of the community should be guarded jealously because the freedoms of the individuals lay in the privileges; immunities and honesty are obtained from the communal life. Tshikwatamba (2004) cited by Mafunisa in Nicolson (2008) reiterates that since business institutions should promote the welfare of the community, public employees should therefore always be fair and reasonable in their interactions with each citizen. The fair and reasonable called for herein can be inferred even

to the extent of sanctioning of whistleblowing because it only aims at the promotion of the communal welfare.

Like any other human practice, whistleblowing is characterised by both advantages and disadvantages. However, the flaws are to a less extent and cannot wash down all the good of whistleblowing since it always seeks to protect the wellbeing of the whole community. The researcher therefore sees it proper to briefly highlight some of these demerits in this section of the chapter. It is well known that no land has any social deviants. As such, some people in the *ubuntu* bound society might be selfish to the extent of blowing the whistle unnecessarily just to meet personal gratifications. The whistle can be blown in seeking retaliation of prior social misunderstandings; for example, an employee of a business entity can be dismissed on charges of theft and later embarks on alumni whistleblowing. This is done based on fabricated immoral charge meant to blackmail the business corporation. Such fabricated lies might include the practice of *kuchekeresa* (use of traditional business medicine made from human parts-murder). All this boils down to immoral intentions by the fake whistle blower against the ubuntu social regulations-for instance do not backbite and do not tell lies.

Another phenomenon that flaws whistleblowing is the nature of the religious set up of the Bantu people which sometimes sanctions the killing of human beings believed to be traitors. In view of this ideology, the social rule which say killing a person except at war comes into play unjustified because the whistle blower in any circumstance will label a traitor, thereby warring the entire community. Out of this conviction, many people are or have been killed during liberation struggles or economic reforms such as the land redistribution programmes under the cover label that they are villains. That is the people against which the whistle is blown use their political muscles to end the life of the blowers and this can be executed through hanging or stoning if it were in the ancient societies of the Shona. These retributive measures against the whistle blowers are normally done when the intended goals whistleblowing did not manage to materialise. This shows that though the practice of whistleblowing its of positive intentions towards the promotion of societal welfare, it may turn into a tragedy to the whistle blowers and the close family members as they are banished from the community or exterminated on the pretext of a treason charge.

In Nda culture they say *akuna mukaka usina chibi* (there is no milk without a spot of dirt), meaning that the Shona way of life be it political, business, religious is of course marred with legitimised immoral activities which may need to be

resolved without spilling the dirt all over. Basing on this belief, whistleblowing is detrimental to the special hierarchy and the respect owed because the Shona also have a social regulation which says do not despise those of high status, but always respect them. It therefore entails that if whistleblowing is done against the mother, father, chief, or any other revered personalities of the community, they would have lost grip on the subordinates. This may result in chaos or moral deviance since there will no one to restrict some of these acts in the respective groupings be they business or political. Such consequences are normally associated with accusation whistleblowing. At this juncture in time, it can be therefore claimed that whistleblowing also has some moral flaws associated with it.

Whistleblowing tends to disclose political wrongs of a system which may lead to military intervention by the international community. More than in most cases, military intervention has much negative results than positive ones; these range from infrastructural dissolution, industrial production coming to a halt, installation of puppet leaders for easy siphoning of local resources and most dreadful, the eradication of local culture for the complete proliferation of new and non-*ubuntu* oriented culture through neo-colonialism. Going back to that example drawn from *Feso*, it was better that the identity of that people was spared because it was the fellow Shona who intervened with the prime goal of putting back the *ubuntu* based leadership which would honour the demos. But, if it were the Western forces intervening in that manner, no African legacy would be left for the next generation because they would be instilling Western consciousness in the locals. They would even leave these troubled states worse than they were before. This view can be substantiated by the Iraq and the Ivory Coast incidents where there was much damage than moral rectification in the way the former two governments used to manage the affairs of the people. To this effect, in 2009, as quoted Robert Mugabe in a newspaper article entitled *Zimbabwe Celebrates Peace Days* quoted by Gade (2011:311), appealed to *ubuntu* in his indirect and diplomatic contention against whistleblowing led international intervention, it reads;

Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe has last week proclaimed Friday, Saturday and Sunday as peace days-during which Zimbabweans from different political persuasions are expected to encourage and promote national healing and reconciliation. Mugabe said the three days set aside for national healing offered Zimbabweans a choice to either consolidate their identity or expose themselves as a disintegrated nation, "We should realize that the desire for peace, harmony, and stability is a desire for progress, national identity, prosperity and hunhu, ubuntu,"

The gist of the extract is to encourage the Zimbabweans not to disclose their internal problems to the outsiders who in turn mastermind division among and

lose of national or communitarian identity which may go down to the legacy of *ubuntu*. It is therefore evident that despite the aims whistleblowing has, it also has jarring effect on the community in cases of external forces' penetration.

The same way it happens in today in the modernised business fraternity, the whistle blowers in the old Shona society had the fears of being banished from the grouping, dismissal from the workplace or to be exterminated. Whistle blowers almost always experience the retaliation perpetrated by fellow employees, employers or political leaders depending on an immoral act. If it concerns issues surrounding state secrets one may face death penalty. Larmer (2002:207) concurs with this point as he argues that whistleblowing is often described by fellow employees and employers as a betrayal of trust- a lack of loyalty where loyalty is owed. In ancient Shona societies, the disrespect or accusation of political leaders or powerful and influential businesspeople would result in hired thugs or warriors sent to physically punish whistle blowers or be ex-communicated. Being aware of all these possible fatal results, the potential whistle blowers would take much serious consideration before embarking on the practice despite how dangerous the immoral behaviour witnessed would be to fellow employees, the organisation itself or the welfare of the public.

Despite the constant reminders about the social regulations at the *dare* or in the folktales, the marriage ethics debunkers were always there. Some were adulterous or were involved in incest activities, that is, having sex with own children, parents or blood sisters. To this extent, eyewitnesses of these repugnant activities could see it very difficult to blow the whistle because it would be detrimental to the entire family since the transgression carries a heavy punishment from the ancestors. The situation would be worse when a child sees their own mother being intimate with a neighbour because blowing the whistle against one's mother would carry terribly burden of *kutanda botso* (a strenuous and painful process appeasing the avenging spirit of the dead mother) since the mother could commit suicide or be divorced. The full knowledge of the resultant hardships, the potential whistle blower is confused, thereby having a moral dilemma. No wonder cases of whistleblowing were limited in the ancient Shona communities. However, this does not mean the non-existence or non-compatibility of whistleblowing and *ubuntu*.

Since it has been brought about in the afore discussion that the life and morality among the Shona revolve around the ancestry mystery and the lived history, if one decides to ignore a case of immorality which warrants whistleblowing for the better of the entire society, say a person's murder by your mother for a business

ritual, the spirit of that dead person will still torment the family seeking appeasement. In such scenarios the issue at stake is two pronged in that whistleblowing against own mother is tantamount to insulting her- a case which warrants *kutanda botso* (her avenging spirit after her death). Assuming that the would-be whistle blower in question decides to avoid the possible hash consequences by ignoring the incident, the victim of murder will arise in the form of an avenging spirit against the perpetrator of the crime and the one who saw it happening and ignored. These circumstances would leave the potential whistle blower deeply undecided hence, a mental torture which is in effect a moral dilemma.

Almost related to the above, the whistle blower might be bewitched by the one who has been the victim of whistleblowing. For instance, if one caught a *n'anga* (a traditional healer) burying a fellow member of the society alive as part of a ritual meant to boost his divination capabilities or doing it for their own employer then one decides to go for whistleblowing against them. Traditionally, the *n'anga* could rest on his powers to concoct *juju* against the whistle blower either to kill or cause an everlasting misfortune in their life. Apart from that, the traditional healer could make the potential whistle blower mad before embarking on the practice as a way of silencing them. Having the awareness of these whistleblowing related problems, one would remain tongue tied despite the intensity of the harm likely to emanate from an immoral practice which would have been committed. But deep down the *n'anga's* mind, a moral guilt is felt thereby resulting in amoral dilemma.

It is clear from this exposition that the Shona had the concept of business which ranges from primary industries such as farming, hunting to selling own labour as a worker. In this piece of philosophical argumentation, it has been shown as well that whistleblowing is equivalent to *kurova bembera*. Both, whistleblowing, and business have been presented as integral parts or components of the Shona since they promote the best welfare for the entire community within the parameters of *ubuntu*. Despite the evidence or postulations supporting or proving the compatibility of the philosophy of *ubuntu* and whistleblowing proffered in this chapter, it has also shown that the harmony between them is characterised by moral dilemmas bewildering the Shona whistle blowers from time immemorial. However, the chapter also unravelled the fact that some extent, the practice poses some threats if not dangers that sometimes result in the killing of innocent people who would have opted to blow the whistle against immoral activities that diminishes a continued existence of the collective community.