

## **Muchaparara (Mucha, in short!) Musemwa**

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### **Statement for Election to the European Society for Environmental History (ESEH) Board, 2019**

I have agreed to stand as a candidate to be elected on the European Society for Environmental History (ESEH) Board as a representative of one of ESEH's regions, South(ern) Africa for a couple of reasons. First and foremost, over the years, I have watched the growing influence of ESEH as it seeks to advance the ideals of the discipline of environmental history from the terraces. I think that my time has come to move to the centre and assist in the organizational activities of ESEH in ways that will assure that South(ern) African environmental history continues to occupy an equal and recognizable place in ESEH just like other regions that constitute the disciplinary make-up of this august society. Fortunately, I will not be starting from scratch because my would-be predecessor, Sandra Swart, if I am elected, and before her, Jane Carruthers, has already laid a firm basis for me not only to build on but also to extend the sterling work they have done in this regard. It is an acknowledged fact that there is much that historically connects southern Africa as well as its scholars with Europe and the world by way of long-standing traditions of scholarly partnerships and academic exchanges and shared themes of scholarly analysis. Environmental history has been one such sphere in which these networks have been recognized and developed. While efforts towards the establishment of these links have predominantly fallen on an established but small cohort of veteran environmental historians from South Africa, there is now a budding cadre of young historians at a number of South(ern) African universities working on topics that have begun to push the frontiers of environmental history in this region in new and refreshing directions. Nurturing their abiding interest in environmental history and their growth by, among other things, mobilizing them into a disciplinary organizational structure and exposing them to the scholarly networks of ESEH is going to be one of my top priorities. In addition, I will be seeking ways to work with the ESEH Board to raise funds to enable young scholars to attend ESEH conferences in Europe in an era when visa, flight and accommodation costs have become perennially prohibitive for them. An idea I would like to explore would be to host one of the ESEH conferences in South(ern) Africa to ensure that ESEH does not continue to be seen as a euro-centred disciplinary organization but one that seeks a true global outlook by travelling outside Europe to those regions it has fostered integral linkages. Like, Carruthers and Swart – both past presidents of the Southern African Historical Society (SAHS), I am also the immediate past president of SAHS and an outgoing Director of the Board of ICEHO. I am convinced that I will bring to the ESEH Board the requisite experience to advance the vision and mission of ESEH.

## **BRIEF CURRICULUM VITAE**

**Muchaparara Musemwa**

### **PERSONAL DETAILS**

**Name:** Muchaparara (Mucha in short!) Musemwa  
**Current title:** Associate Professor of History, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa  
**Academic qualifications:** PhD in History (University of Minnesota-Twin Cities)  
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**Most Recent Fellowship(s):** 2014 University of Michigan African Presidential Fellow, African Studies Center, Ann Arbor, USA.  
**2017-2022:** Head of the School of Social Sciences, Wits University

### **Membership of Organizations/Boards:**

President of the South African Historical Society (2015-2017); Member of the *International Water History Association*; Member of the *European Society of Environmental History* and Member of the *American Society for Environmental History*; Member of the Board of Directors (representing Southern Africa) of the International Consortium of Environmental History Organizations (ICEHO), 2016-2019; Former Editor: *South African Historical Journal*; Editorial Board Member: *Water History Journal*

### **Recent Publications:**

‘Climate and Societal Interaction in Southwestern Matabeleland, Colonial Zimbabwe: The Drought of 1964-66 and its Antecedents’. Special Issue: Hydro-Social Intersections in *Human Geography: A New Radical Journal*, vol. 12, (1) 2019.

‘Zimbabwe’s drift towards authoritarianism and its environmental consequences, 2000-2017’, in Stephen Brain and Viktor Pál (eds.) *Environmentalism under Authoritarian Regimes: Myth, Propaganda and Reality*, Routledge Environmental Humanities Series (Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group, 2019), pp. 191-213.

Lucy Rodina, **Muchaparara Musemwa**, Lawrence Baker, *et. al.*, ‘Water, equity and resilience in Southern Africa: future directions for research and practice’, *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* 2017, 26: 143-151.

M. Musemwa, ‘Narratives of Scarcity: Colonial State Responses to Water Scarcity in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1972’, Cristina Joanez de Melo, Estelita Vaz and Lúgio Pinto (eds.) *Environmental History in the Making*, Volume II (Springer, 2017).

M. Musemwa, ‘*Sic utere tu out alienam non laedas*: From Wanton Destruction of Timber Forests to Environmentalism: The rise of colonial environmental practices in Southern Rhodesia, 1938-1961’. *Environment and History*, Number 4. Nov. 2016, pp. 521-559. (NB: Impact factor of journal in 2015 – 0.811 and now ranked 5<sup>th</sup> out of 87 history journals).

**Monograph:** M. Musemwa, *Water, History, and Politics in Zimbabwe: Bulawayo’s Struggles with the Environment, 1894-2008* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2014): ISBN: 978-1-59221-973-5 (paperback).