

= Rise , O Voices of Rhodesia =

" Rise , O Voices of Rhodesia " ( or " Voices of Rhodesia " ) was the national anthem of the unrecognised state of Rhodesia ( renamed Zimbabwe in 1980 ) between 1974 and 1979 . The tune was that of " Ode to Joy " , the Fourth Movement from Ludwig van Beethoven 's Ninth Symphony , which had been adopted as the official European Anthem by the Council of Europe in 1972 ( it remains Europe 's anthem today ) . The music used in Rhodesia was an original sixteen @-@ bar arrangement by Captain Ken MacDonald , the bandmaster of the Rhodesian African Rifles . A national competition was organised by the government to find an appropriate set of lyrics to match the chosen tune , and won by Mary Bloom of Gwelo .

In the fallout from Rhodesia 's Unilateral Declaration of Independence from Britain on 11 November 1965 , the country still claimed loyalty to Queen Elizabeth II as its professed head of state , and so retained " God Save the Queen " as its national anthem . With Rhodesia 's reconstitution in 1970 as a republic , however , the royal anthem was dropped along with many other references to the monarchy . The Republic of Rhodesia lacked a national anthem until it adopted " Rise , O Voices of Rhodesia " in 1974 . The national anthem lost its legal status in December 1979 , when the UK took interim control of the country pending its internationally recognised independence as Zimbabwe five months later . Rhodesia 's use of the well @-@ known Beethoven tune has since caused the playing of " Ode to Joy " to be controversial in modern @-@ day Zimbabwe .

= = History = =

= = = Background = = =

A dispute over the terms for the granting of full statehood to the self @-@ governing colony of Rhodesia led its predominantly white minority government , headed by Prime Minister Ian Smith , to unilaterally declare independence from Britain on 11 November 1965 . As Whitehall had been insisting on majority rule as a condition for independence , this declaration went unrecognised and caused Britain and the United Nations to impose economic sanctions on Rhodesia . Queen Elizabeth II continued to be the Rhodesian head of state in the eyes of Smith 's administration , which regarded itself as " Her Majesty 's Rhodesian Government " despite its international non @-@ acknowledgement ; " God Save the Queen " therefore remained the Rhodesian national anthem . Though this was intended to demonstrate Rhodesia 's enduring loyalty to the Queen , the retention of a song so associated with Britain in the midst of the Anglo @-@ Rhodesian constitutional struggle soon gave Rhodesian state occasions " a faintly ironic tone " , in the words of the London Times .

= = = Adoption = = =

The Rhodesian government initiated a search for a new anthem around the time of its adoption of a new green @-@ and @-@ white flag in November 1968 , but continued to use " God Save the Queen " until June 1969 , when the mostly white electorate voted in favour of a republican form of government . The royal anthem officially remained in place until the formal declaration of a republic in March 1970 , when it was abandoned along with numerous other overt references to the Crown . Republican Rhodesia was without an anthem for over four years before the chosen music was announced on 28 August 1974 : the Fourth Movement , commonly called " Ode to Joy " , from Ludwig van Beethoven 's Ninth Symphony . The fact that the Council of Europe had adopted this tune as the " Anthem of Europe " in January 1972 apparently did not perturb the Rhodesian government ; John Sutherland and Stephen Fender comment that Rhodesia 's choice proved deeply embarrassing for the British Labour administration , whose leaders now had to respect a melody associated with Rhodesia when attending official European functions . With a tune now in place , the Rhodesian government organised a nationwide competition to write matching lyrics , the winner of which would receive a cash prize of R \$ 500 ( equal to about US \$ 1 @,@ 000 ) .

The Council of Europe , though less than pleased with Rhodesia 's selection , did not object to it , reasoning that so long as Rhodesia was using " Ode to Joy " in its original form , it could not be subject to reproach as the music was long out of copyright and in the public domain . It did announce , however , that should Rhodesia use the same arrangement as the Council of Europe , then the author of that score , Herbert von Karajan , would have grounds for a plagiarism lawsuit . Such an incident was averted when Rhodesia adopted an original sixteen @-@ bar arrangement by Captain Ken MacDonald , the Rhodesian African Rifles ' bandmaster . The anthem 's inaugural instrumental performance in Salisbury provoked mixed reactions : some were enthusiastic ? including a coloured sergeant musician who proudly told the Rhodesia Herald that " it 's just like ' God Save Our Gracious Queen ' " ? but many others were disappointed that the government had not commissioned an original tune . Rhys Lewis , music critic for the Herald , wrote that he was " stupefied " by the government 's choice , which he said was not only unoriginal , but also so associated with supranational brotherhood that it risked making internationally isolated Rhodesia the subject of ridicule . Phinias Sithole , who headed the African Trade Union Congress ( a black Rhodesian trade union federation ) , commented that he did not believe most of the country 's blacks would identify with a song chosen while people of their ethnicity remained largely absent from the government 's top levels .

The winning lyricist was confirmed on 24 September 1974 to be Mary Bloom , a company director , music critic and poet from Gwelo , who had moved to Rhodesia from South Africa in 1947 . Bloom titled her work " Voices of Rhodesia " , but the full first line , " Rise , O Voices of Rhodesia " , ultimately entered common parlance as the song 's title .

= = Lyrics = =

The lyrics officially adopted were as follows :

= = Fall from use and legacy = =

" Rise , O Voices of Rhodesia " remained in official usage for the rest of Rhodesia 's history , as well as between June and December 1979 , when Rhodesia was reconstituted as Zimbabwe Rhodesia , a black @-@ ruled version of the same country , which also failed to achieve legitimacy in the eyes of Britain and the UN . Though the anthem remained in place during these six months , a new flag was adopted and Rhodesia 's national holidays , largely based around colonial figures and milestones , were replaced by alternatives intended to be more inclusive : President 's Day , Unity Day and Ancestors Day . The national anthem remained unchanged on 12 December 1979 , when Zimbabwe Rhodesia came under British control for an interim period before internationally recognised independence came in April 1980 , with the country now called Zimbabwe . " Ishe Komborera Africa " , a Shona translation of Enoch Sontonga 's Xhosa hymn " Nkosi Sikelel ' iAfrika " ( " God Bless Africa " in English ) was made Zimbabwe 's first national anthem , and remained in place until 1994 , when it was replaced by the present anthem , " Simudzai Mureza wedu WeZimbabwe " ( " Blessed be the Land of Zimbabwe " ) .

Because of its use by " Rise , O Voices of Rhodesia " , the " Ode to Joy " melody is controversial in Zimbabwe , where its annual playing at foreign embassies on Europe Day initially caused shock to Zimbabwean government officials who , according to historian Josephine Fisher , had not previously been aware of the song 's use by the Council of Europe . During the 1980s , Derek Hudson , the long @-@ time conductor of the Bulawayo Philharmonic Orchestra , had considerable difficulty securing official permission to give the first Zimbabwean performance of Beethoven 's Ninth Symphony . He was eventually able to do so , but only after prolonged negotiations with the authorities . When " Ode to Joy " was included in a fundraising organ recital held by a Harare church at Christmas 1994 , it provoked angry protests from some who attended .