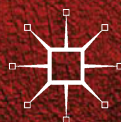


**CHRISTOPHER ROY ZEMBE**

**ZIMBABWEAN  
COMMUNITIES  
IN BRITAIN**

**Imperial and Post-Colonial  
Identities and Legacies**



# Zimbabwean Communities in Britain

Christopher Roy Zembe

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Imperial and Post-Colonial Identities and Legacies

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# ACRONYMS

BSAC	British South Africa Company
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
NDP	National Democratic Party
NUZS	National Union of Zimbabwean Students
ONS	Office of National Statistics
PF ZAPU	Patriotic Front Zimbabwe African People's Union
RPC	Rhodesian Pioneer Club
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADF	South African Defence Force
SDA	Seventh Day Adventist
SRANC	Southern Rhodesia African National Congress
UANC	United African National Council
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZIMFEST	Zimbabwe Music Festival
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army
ZPSF	Zimbabwe Pensioner Support Fund



## WORDS USED INTERCHANGEABLY

<i>Gukurahundi</i>	Matabeleland Civil Conflict, Matabeleland Insurgency
Ndebele	Ethnic group; language
Nyasaland	Malawi
Shona	Ethnic group; language
Zambia	Northern Rhodesia
Zimbabwe	Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia

# CHRONOLOGY OF ZIMBABWE'S KEY HISTORICAL EVENTS

<b>1838</b>	Ndebele Kingdom forms in the west of what is to become Zimbabwe
<b>1857</b>	Most major Shona chieftaincies are subject to the Ndebele
<b>1888</b>	Ndebele's King Lobengula signs the Rudd Concession
<b>1889 (October)</b>	The Cecil John Rhodes' British South Africa Company is granted a royal charter to annex and administer the territory of what is to become known as Zimbabwe
<b>1890 (September)</b>	The Pioneer Column arrives in Salisbury (Harare) and raises the Union Flag signalling the occupation of Mashonaland
<b>1893</b>	Anglo-Ndebele war results in the occupation of Matabeleland
<b>1895 (May)</b>	The name Southern Rhodesia is officially adopted by the British South Africa Company
<b>1896 (March)</b>	Ndebele Uprising begins in Matabeleland
<b>1896 (June)</b>	Shona Uprising (Chimurenga 1) begins
<b>1923</b>	Responsible government succeeds the British South Africa Company
<b>1932</b>	Land Apportionment Act comes into effect
<b>1945</b>	Post-war Influx of White settlers
<b>1953</b>	Creation of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland
<b>1957</b>	Formation of the first nationalist party, Southern Rhodesia African National Congress
<b>1958</b>	Southern Rhodesia African National Congress is banned
<b>1960</b>	Formation of the National Democratic Party

- 1961 National Democratic Party is banned to be replaced by Zimbabwe African People's Union
- 1962 Rhodesian Front wins election in Southern Rhodesia led by Winston Field—ZAPU is banned in September
- 1963 Dissolution of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland—Zimbabwe African National Union is formed on 8 August—both ZANU and ZAPU start sending recruits for military training in socialist countries
- 1964 Ian Smith becomes Rhodesia's Prime Minister
- 1965 Unilateral Declaration of Independence is declared by Ian Smith on 11 November—sanctions are imposed by Britain on selected Rhodesian products
- 1966 Full embargo on Rhodesian trade is imposed by the British government—United Nations imposes oil embargo
- 1968 United Nations imposes mandatory sanctions
- 1973 Zambia shuts its border with Rhodesia
- 1975 Mozambique becomes independent and becomes base of ZANU—liberation struggle intensifies
- 1979 Abel Muzorewa wins elections—the country is renamed Zimbabwe—Rhodesia—the Nationalist Movement does not recognise his win—the war intensifies
- 1979 Lancaster House Agreement paving the way for democratic elections
- 1980 Robert Mugabe's ZANU PF wins election—Mugabe becomes the Prime Minister of a coalition government
- 1982 Coalition collapses—PF ZAPU leadership is thrown out of government and others detained
- 1982 Start of the *Gukurahundi* (civil conflict)
- 1983 Fifth Brigade is sent to Matabeleland to crush the insurgency
- 1989 Unity Agreement between ZANU PF and PF ZAPU to form a new ZANU PF party with Mugabe as the leader and Joshua Nkomo as his deputy
- 1999 Formation of the Movement for Democratic Change political party marking the first credible challenge to Mugabe's rule
- 2000 Government defeated on draft constitution referendum—  
invasions of White farms in Zimbabwe—exodus of White farmers—MDC gains nearly 50% of parliamentary seats in violence-ridden elections
- 2002 Mugabe wins presidential elections amidst violence

<b>2002–2008</b>	Targeted sanctions by the West on Mugabe's government and ruling party officials—increased political violence on political opposition—mass emigration intensifies
<b>2008</b>	Inflation over 250,000,000%
<b>2008</b>	MDC wins parliamentary elections and Morgan Tsvangirai wins first round of presidential elections—Mugabe wins the second round after political violence
<b>2009</b>	Government of National Unity forms with Mugabe as President and Tsvangirai as Prime Minister
<b>2013</b>	Term of Government of National Unity ends—Zimbabwe approves a new constitution—Mugabe and his ZANU PF party win controversial presidential and parliamentary elections
<b>2017</b>	On 15 November the Zimbabwe Defence Force launches 'Operation Restore Legacy'—on 21 November Robert Mugabe resigns as president of Zimbabwe—on 24 November Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa is sworn in as President

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## CHAPTER 1

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# Introduction: Contextualising Debate

The trajectory of political and socio-economic events during the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial phases of Zimbabwe's history has made it profoundly misleading to present the Zimbabwean diaspora as monolithic. Instead, the book will establish how the historical influences through which ideas of belonging came to be defined created a diverse and multifaceted community demarcated by imaginary ethnic and racial boundaries. The arrival of the Ndebele and British colonisation in the nineteenth century marked the start of new forms of socialisation that facilitated the creation of an environment in which ethnic and racial prejudices and allegiances would thrive throughout the phases of Zimbabwe's history. The impact of ethno-racial tensions would not only be restricted within the confines of Zimbabwean borders but was to be exported to the diaspora.

This book's study of the Zimbabwean diasporic community in Britain is set within the historiographical paradigms, which not only trace the history of African immigration in Britain, but also the experiences of non-European immigrants as they interacted with British society. Focussing on Zimbabweans in Britain as a case study offers an alternative perspective on Black British migration history by moving away from the traditional areas of Black immigration study such as eighteenth-century slavery and post-1945 African Caribbean migration. With a lot of work on the African immigrant community focussed on West Africans, the book also offers a new concentration on African migration from Southern Africa.<sup>1</sup>



## EMERGENCE OF AFRICAN IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY

There is archaeological and literary evidence that traces the longevity of Africans resident in Britain to the ‘Romano-British period’ (Edward in Gundara and Duffield 1992; Killingray 1994; Fryer 1984). David Killingray affirms the early presence of Africans in the British Isles by identifying ‘trading, raiding and slaving sea routes’ as being responsible for bringing Africans especially from North Africa to Britain in the Middle Ages (Killingray 1994: 3). He pointed out how Africans would arrive in a variety of roles mainly as seaman, slaves or manual labourers. The expanding maritime and slave trade allowed the trend to continue until the early nineteenth century when slavery was made illegal.

The growth of the African immigrant population in Britain did not cease with the end of slave trade. The ‘Scramble for Africa’ in the late nineteenth century (in which the British were leading participants) started the process of new forms of socialisation between the colonisers and the colonised indigenous communities which would influence future migration patterns of Africans who were not directly linked with slave mercantile trading. These were individuals from the elite community of students or businessmen who had the linguistic and literary competency to interact with British socio-economic structures.

With pre-emigration exposure to Westernisation, it is therefore not surprising that publications by leading academics on Afro-British history, notably Anthony Kirk-Greene, Hakim Adi, John Hargreaves and Marika Sherwood unveil a confident and educated African community from the late nineteenth century by examining issues related to African student communities or individuals, pan-Africanism, diaspora political activism and political refugees. For example, Adi in his essay, ‘West African Students in Britain, 1900–1960: The Politics of Exile’ chronicles pan-Africanist political activism of West African students in Britain. Maintaining the theme of pan-Africanism, Adi further explores how refugee or asylum seeker migration statuses encouraged the development of pan-Africanism within the exiles from the later decades of the nineteenth century into the twentieth century (Adi in Manz and Panayi 2013).

However, despite the historiographical recognition of the presence of Africans in Britain since the Middle Ages, they only counted a few thousand in 1951; 11,000 according to David Killingray (1994). It was only after the end of World War Two when a new trend in Britain’s immigration started to emerge with the arrival and permanent settlement of

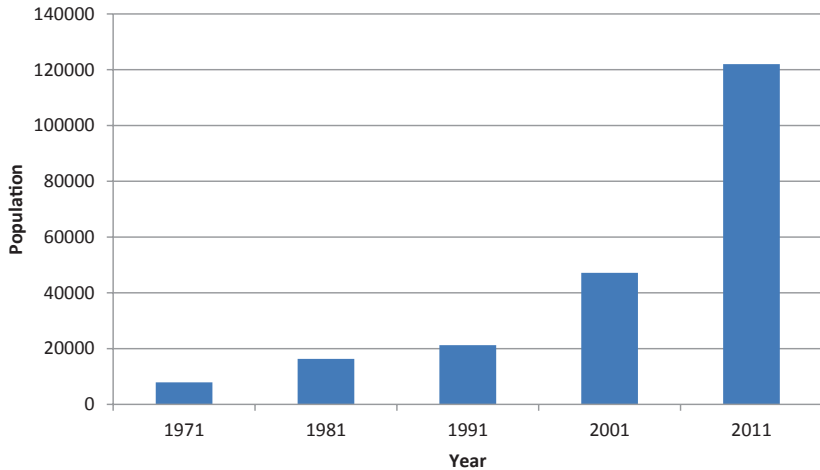
a significant number of African immigrants. There was an inextricable link between decolonisation and post-war increase of Africans in Britain. As the British Empire in Africa collapsed, Africans, as pointed out by Robert Davison, joined other Commonwealth immigrants from the West Indies and South Asia migrating to Britain (Davison 1966). The inevitable consequence was that the African population in Britain continued to grow throughout the post-war decades of the twentieth century with the arrival mainly of students and political refugees from both English and non-English speaking states (Killingray 1994). By the end of the twentieth century, Africans had established themselves as a noticeable community of non-European migrants when the 1991 census recorded over 207,000 residing in Britain (Killingray 1994). This was the census in which for the first time individuals were invited to record their ethnic origin.

This trend of African migration (of which Zimbabweans had been active participants) into Britain continued into the twenty-first century as part of what Kathy Burrell describes as ‘an increasingly globalised world’ (Burrell 2006: 2). The 2011 census affirmed the extent to which Africans had become a significant immigrant community within Britain’s twenty-first century demography by recording 989,000 residing in the country—that is, 1.7% of the population in England and Wales (Office of National Statistics 2011 Census). Zimbabwean immigrants were emerging to be an integral component of the post-war Afro-British community.

### ZIMBABWEANS IN BRITAIN

The noticeable rapid rise of the Zimbabwean population in Britain illustrated in Fig. 1.1 demonstrates how Zimbabweans had always embraced Britain as a migration destination in both the colonial and post-colonial era. Zimbabwe’s special relationship with its colonial master had always been cemented by what Robin Cohen identifies as ties of kinship, economic interdependence, preferential trade arrangements, sport, tourism, education and academic certification (Cohen 1994). Even at independence in 1980, Cohen states how White Zimbabweans of British descent continued to cling to their passports as a means of affirming their British identity and hedging their political bets should they be forced to migrate in the future (Cohen 1994).

For most Blacks with no ancestral links with Britain, the distance between the two countries did not deter them from migrating.



**Fig. 1.1** Zimbabwean population in Britain 1971–2011 (*Source* Office of National Statistics [2011](#) and International Organisation of Migration [2006](#))

As a former colonial master that had economically benefitted from Zimbabwe’s resources, there were perceptions within Black African communities that Britain ‘owed’ them and therefore they had the right to migrate as economic immigrants, political asylum seekers or political refugees (Pasura [2014](#)). Inevitably, Zimbabweans’ migration to Britain, triggered by a diverse range of circumstances, resulted in the immigrant community being classified as visitors, students, those with dual nationality or ancestral heritage, political asylum seekers and those on work permits.

Leading social scientists on Zimbabwean immigrants such as Alice Bloch, JoAnn McGregor, Dominic Pasura and Beacon Mbiba were the quickest in recognising the growth of the contemporary post-independence Zimbabwean community in Britain, whose notable expansion was from the 1990s. They were exploring interrelated themes which included reasons for migration, socio-economic integration, diaspora activism of home politics and transnationalism. Alice Bloch’s paper ‘Emigration from Zimbabwe: Migrant Perspectives’ provides a comparative analysis of Zimbabweans in Britain with those in South Africa by examining how the Zimbabwean community she describes as possessing

a ‘higher average level of qualifications’ than other immigrants in their countries of settlement faced deskilling as they struggled to find employment suitable to their qualifications (Bloch 2006).

JoAnn McGregor also gives an insight into the economic integration of the Zimbabwean diaspora community in Britain by unveiling how the care sector had been the largest recruiter of contemporary first-generation Zimbabweans determined to find employment so as to circumvent the trappings of immigrant poverty and meet their transnational obligations (McGregor 2007). Beacon Mbiba reinforces the economic integration of Zimbabwean immigrants in Britain by identifying how blocked mobility in Britain’s labour market persuaded some within the community to be entrepreneurial by opening businesses (Mbiba 2011). Dominic Pasura covers social aspects of the Zimbabwean diaspora community by exploring issues related to religious identities, changes in domestic gender roles, transnational engagements such as political activism in home politics and sending remittances back home (Pasura 2014).

This academic research into Britain’s Zimbabwean population has been significant, though not exhaustive. This is because, besides mainly focusing on post-colonial immigrants, the emerging academic discussions tend to focus on Black Zimbabwean immigrants with very little, if any, acknowledgement of Whites, Coloureds (Mixed Race) and Asians. Since each racial community migrating had a background of different historic experiences, the imported identities and prejudices of Zimbabwe’s minority communities should therefore not be trivialised when seeking to understand the construction of relations and their social and economic integration processes.

This limited academic attention on Zimbabwe’s minority communities in Britain also mirrors how they found themselves on the periphery of the historiography or academic research on colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe. Whilst there has been detailed historiographical focus on construction of the White community in the colonial era, Coloureds and Asians failed to attract the attention of historians. This is despite Floyd Dotson and Lillian Dotson’s book *The Indian Minority of Zambia, Rhodesia and Malawi* recognising the emergence of the Asian community at the turn of the twentieth century (Dotson and Dotson 1968).

As for Coloureds, their early presence in colonial Zimbabwe had been recognised by John Pape who pointed out that by 1930, 1138 Coloured children with White fathers had been enumerated by the colonial government (Pape 1990). James Muzondidya provides an insight into

how this growing Coloured community constructed its identity amidst marginalisation in both colonial and then in post-colonial Zimbabwe (Muzondidya 2005). Julie Seirlis' essay 'Undoing the United Front? Coloured Soldiers in Rhodesia 1939–1980' further explores the extent to which Coloureds' participation in Rhodesia's military operations against the nationalist-led liberation struggle was not only fully appreciated by the Rhodesian government, but it also carried the potential of undermining Coloureds' claim to citizenship in post-colonial Zimbabwe (Seirlis 2004).

### *Contextualising Ethno-Racial Conflicts*

Despite Shari Eppel's affirmation that contemporary Zimbabweans are still a product of prejudices, identities and unresolved conflicts of race and ethnicity rooted in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial events, much of the literature has also downplayed the presence of Zimbabwe's past when explaining ethnic or race relations between the Zimbabwean diaspora communities (Eppel 2004). Ethno-racial prejudices and traumas developed and nurtured during the phases of Zimbabwe's history facilitated the construction of memories and experiences that have been instrumental in defining how the diaspora communities of Zimbabweans interact with each other and with Britain's social and economic structures.

The colonisation of Zimbabwe spearheaded by the British South Africa Company (BSAC) in September 1890 marked the start of socialisation processes in which community or individual identity constructions were to be based on racial superiority. Although the BSAC's control of the territory was ended in 1923 when the British government granted self-governing colony status, historiography on Zimbabwe's colonial era illustrates the extent to which the granting of self-governing status motivated the White settlers to implement distinctive political policies based on racial prejudices. Despite the British government reserving the right to veto the implementation of policies affecting Black Africans, Jeffrey Herbst outlines how the British government never exercised its powers (Herbst 1990). Without willingness to intervene, the British were complicit in racial policies and actions by White supremacist ideology. The ultimate consequence was increased European immigration (Brownell 2011; Mlambo 1998).

The failure to restrain the self-governing colonial administration served to confirm that both the British and the settlers did not collectively care about the welfare of the indigenous Black population. This was demonstrated by the passing of legislation such as the Land Apportionment Act in 1930 that facilitated the removal of Africans from productive farming areas assigned to Whites; and the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1934 that excluded Black Africans from the definition of employee (Austin 1975; Bull 1967). It was the creation of this exploitative and colonial environment based on a racist discourse that was to provide the framework for future Black–White societal relations.

On arrival in Zimbabwe the British imperial machinery was confronted with an already multiethnic society of the Shona-speaking and Ndebele-speaking communities divided by language dialects and loosely defined territories (Beach 1984). Jeffrey Herbst points out how the British aggravated the ethnic split by reinforcing the consciousness of ethnic differences through implementation of a divide-and-rule agenda, and the creation of regional and administrative boundaries along ethnic lines (Herbst 1990). Creation of ethnically named regions officially endorsed ethnic separation between the Shona and the Ndebele thus creating a perfect environment for the development of communal tensions which were to determine future relations.

Parallel to these internal initiatives of using administrative geographical locations to reinforce awareness of ethnic divisions among the Africans, the colonial administration also elevated racial prejudices by officially categorising Zimbabwe's community into natives (Black Africans), Whites, Coloureds (mixed race), and Asians (of Indian origin) (Muzondidya in Raftopoulos and Savage 2004). The colonial administration's classification of the population was based on a hierarchical structure in which Whites were elevated to be masters, Coloureds and Asians occupying the second strand and Black Africans placed at the bottom of the social hierarchy. The racial hierarchical classification had therefore started a process of consolidating identities based on race; allowing the implementation of policies in which race would be the main denominator in determining access to the country's wealth; and continuously reminding Black Africans that they were 'subjugated people' dependent on Whites.

The colonisation of Zimbabwe had therefore irrevocably set in motion the construction of racial prejudices which White Zimbabweans needed to be desensitised from in the post-independence nation-building project.

However, the book will demonstrate how the first decade of independence became a decade of missed opportunities in crafting policies essential for the development of a more inclusive Zimbabwe (Auret 1990). It was during this era that Zimbabwe was governed under the Lancaster House Agreement's Constitution signed in 1979, paving the way for a ceasefire and ultimately democratic elections in 1980. The Constitution incorporated a series of economic and political compromises with the minority White community. This led to the reinventing and reinforcing of racial prejudices within some members of the White community, whose impact resonated in interactions within multiracial Zimbabweans residing in Britain.

Whilst colonisation placed Zimbabweans in an environment in which the ideologies of racism would be germinated, nurtured and inevitably blossom, the book recognises how the Black Nationalist Movement led a struggle for independence embroiled in a series of ethnic conflicts between the Shona and the Ndebele. The ethnic tensions only succeeded in entrenching nostalgic thinking devoid of nation building in post-colonial Zimbabwe (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2003). The book's interrogation of internal ethnic conflicts within the Nationalist Movement unravels how independent Zimbabwe was also born with visible communal tension birthmarks that needed to be addressed in building a post-colonial national identity that did form the basis of diaspora relations within the Black community.

A holistic understanding of the debate on interpersonal and community interactions between the post-independence Zimbabwean communities in Britain and the country's economic structures could not have been fully appreciated without the study's analysis of the impact of farm invasions on the White community at the turn of the new millennium. The experience of not being able to protect their businesses or properties did not only highlight White Zimbabweans' vulnerability to Zimbabwe's nationalist violent attempts to resolve colonial injustices, but it also endorsed the stripping of their citizenship rights that would have guaranteed protection of their properties by politicians or the police.

The book's discussion will also incorporate Black Zimbabwean's attitudes towards those James Muzondidya refers to as 'invisible subject minorities' consisting of immigrants from the neighbouring countries of Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique and their descendants (Muzondidya 2007). Most of these had arrived as migrant labourers in the 1950s when Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) was experiencing labour shortages



especially in agriculture. The Rhodesian colonial machinery developed policies with differential rights and privileges between the Black Zimbabweans and the immigrants which engendered feelings of exclusion and marginalisation within minority African communities. The indigenous locals in both the colonial and post-colonial eras perceived the African immigrants and their descendants as aliens who should be placed below them in the hierarchical classification of the population. A significant number within the older generation Black Zimbabwean community therefore migrated with that attitude of perceiving other Africans as inferior.

### 1970s' ZIMBABWEAN IMMIGRANTS

The book's study of the diasporic Zimbabwean community in Britain will not be restricted to post-colonial contemporary immigrants. There will also be an examination of pre-emigration historical influences on the construction of Zimbabwean immigrants' identities and relations in the 1970s. Just like the discussion on post-independence contemporary immigrants, there will be a comparative analysis between Blacks, Whites, Coloureds and Asians. This will be in recognition of the racist discourse of the colonial era that allowed multiracial Zimbabweans to arrive in Britain with experiences unique to each community. The book is also distinctive in that its comparative focus on colonial and post-independence immigrants makes it a pioneering study within academic research that has tended to focus on contemporary Zimbabwean immigrants of the post-1990s' era. This is because the 1970s' multiracial Rhodesian immigrant community in Britain has attracted very little academic attention.

A notable exception has been JoAnn McGregor's 'Locating exile: decolonization, anti-imperial spaces and Zimbabwean students in Britain, 1965–1980' (McGregor 2017). Her essay explores the lives of Black students in Britain most of whom went on to become influential contributors to Zimbabwe's post-colonial public life mostly as political leaders. The book will therefore complement McGregor's work by using the narratives of ordinary Zimbabweans who shied away from diaspora political leadership or taking public roles in post-independence Zimbabwean society. Their narrative has been largely silent in Zimbabwe's Nationalist Movement's historiography. These were Zimbabweans who at the time of migration to Britain in the 1970s were not affiliated to any political party or actively involved in the Nationalist Movement by holding positions. After independence they remained ordinary citizens by choosing

to be part of the corporate world instead of joining the political establishment. By mainly focussing on these ordinary respondents, the book will therefore be offering a perspective on historical influences through the lenses of ordinary Zimbabweans who found themselves in exile.

## BOOK OUTLINE

In developing the argument that explores the impact of historically developed identities and prejudices on the diaspora communities' relations and social and economic integration processes, the book consists of seven thematic chapters which are chronologically structured. The chronological structure of the thematic chapters traces the progression of the development of ethno-racial identities and prejudices in the three phases of Zimbabwe's history: pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial.

Divided in two sections, the first thematic chapter (Chapter 2) forms the basis of historical debates exploring the influence of the historical socio-economic and political systems on the processes of creating a Zimbabwean national identity. The first section examines the pre-colonial origins of Shona–Ndebele tensions which formed the basis of ethnic allegiances in subsequent generations and the implementation of a divide-and-rule agenda by the colonial administration. The chapter's second section exposes how race and ethnicity as identities promoted by the colonial administration and within the Nationalist Movement served to create boundaries and dichotomies that were to demarcate mental spaces of Zimbabweans as they negotiate forging interactions.

As the euphoria of the independence of 1980 and hope of prosperity subsided, it is undeniable that the Shona-dominated new government of Robert Mugabe faced insurmountable challenges in its attempts to build a united nation ravaged by racial injustices and communal tensions. Chapter 3 therefore examines how the roots of ethnic and racial relations that were to characterise the post-colonial Zimbabwean communities both in Zimbabwe and in the diaspora could not be divorced from how the new government communicated its nation-building policies to its citizens.

By exclusively focussing on post-independence Black Zimbabwean immigrants in Britain, Chapter 4 explores historical influences on the intercommunal tensions within the Black Zimbabwean immigrant community in Britain. It will unravel a Black community fragmented along ethnic lines as memories of unresolved historic conflicts were resurrected in the construction of diaspora relations and identities.

Chapter 5 examines the impact of historical racial prejudices on the construction of interactions within Zimbabwe's minorities in Britain. By focussing exclusively on Whites, Coloureds (mixed race) and Asians, it will demonstrate that the Zimbabwean immigrant community in Britain is not a monolithic group of Blacks, but a racially diverse community. Analysing the interactions of diaspora communities considered more privileged than Blacks during the colonial era provides a perspective on the complexities of eradicating historically constructed racial prejudices.

Focussing on education and employment (both formal and self-employment) as economic integration indicators, Chapter 6 establishes how the economic activities of the post-colonial Zimbabwean diaspora communities were influenced by racist discourse of the colonial era, post-colonial mismanagement of the economy and attempts to redress colonial injustices. In recognition of the racial and ethnic diversity of the Zimbabwean immigrant community, the chapter adopts a comparative analysis between the Shona, Ndebele, White, Coloured and Asian communities. Since these communities did not have shared or similar historic experiences, analysing each community separately allows the chapter not only to identify the reasons why economic integration processes differ between the communities, but also evaluates the impact of economic integration processes on each community.

The historical influence on English proficiency that incorporated way of life, religion and intermarriage on social interactions of contemporary Zimbabweans is examined in Chapter 7. Examination of these social integration indicators not only unravels the impact of historical socialisation on preserving community or individual identity markers in the diaspora, but it also assesses the receptiveness of Britain to the influx of twenty-first-century immigrants with different cultural backgrounds to what the British had been accustomed to.

Chapter 8 recognises that the construction of Zimbabwean immigrant communities in Britain should not be solely analysed as a post-colonial contemporary phenomenon by exclusively focussing on the 1970s. Britain's efforts to assist Black African students denied the opportunity to progress with further education as well as the political instability attributed to the armed struggle of the liberation were contributory factors which also led to the rise of a multiracial Zimbabwean immigrant community that peaked in the 1970s. The chapter explores the extent to which homeland influences of racial discrimination and the activities of the National Movement were significant factors in the construction of community relations.

After having explored the complex process of the construction of a Zimbabwean community in Britain, Chapter 9 provides a detailed comparative analysis showing the inextricable link between the construction of a Zimbabwean diaspora community and historical, social, political and economic systems. By assessing the impact of ethnicity and race on community relations, the book's conclusion will provide a critical perspective showing how imported historical memories of racial superiority, jealousy, mistrust and suspicion have undermined the construction of a national identity in Britain. It is this fragmentation of the Zimbabwean community identified in the chapter that begs the question: 'Does a Zimbabwean diaspora community exist in Britain?'

### *Methodology*

To facilitate a detailed analysis of the impact historical experiences had on Zimbabwean minority immigrant communities, the bulk of the book's findings were extracted from sixty-four research participants differentiated by race, gender, age and educational or professional qualifications. The diversity of research participants provided an adequate cross-section of views on the relationship between colonial and post-colonial legacies on the construction of interactions between Zimbabwean immigrant communities and their socio-economic integration processes. The interview process was conducted across Britain to reflect the uneven dispersal of the Zimbabwean population. This was essential in constructing a comparative discourse on how Zimbabweans in different British locations are constructing economic or social interactions with their host society and between themselves.

To ensure a broader and more credible assessment of colonial or post-colonial events that have been influencing the construction of a Zimbabwean community in Britain, interviews were also conducted in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwean research participants were drawn from individuals who were above the age of fifty at the time of the interview in 2013. This was a diverse group of men and women with life stories that articulated how colonial racial authoritarian policies and the Black-led nationalist struggle for independence set a precedent that shaped political and socio-economic trajectories in post-independence Zimbabwe.

Before the interview processes had commenced (both in Britain and in Zimbabwe) it was imperative to explicitly recognise any of my potential prejudices or presuppositions that would have compromised the

book's partiality. A conscious effort to set presuppositions aside had to be made so as to allow being 'surprised by findings' (King 1994). This was because, like most research, the research topic was constructed from what Bruce Berg identifies as the researcher-oriented position influenced by knowledge of historical events or the researcher's past experiences (Berg 2004). My personal tragedy of having a parent killed by the Rhodesian security forces in 1978 and exposure to post-colonial media propaganda had the potential of blurring objectivity when conducting the research. It was therefore imperative that the interview process would ensure that my past experiences would not distort the interview process by viewing research participants as human subjects to be manipulated to justify historically constructed presuppositions or prejudices (Mathews and Ross 2010). Special attention had to be given to minimise the risk of prematurely ending interviews by avoiding the use of prejudicial language or questions which research participants could interpret as insensitive, personal or hypothetical.

To maintain a façade of neutrality or objectivity that undermines my prejudices and suppositions, care was taken in regularising the interview process through four approaches: the sampling of research participants, research design, the choice and construction of interview questions and addressing the ethical issues. This approach not only minimised the influence of presuppositions when interpreting data sourced from oral accounts, but also facilitated devising an interview structure that allowed both the interviewer and the research participants the opportunity to interchange views in an informal way whilst not deviating from the core aims of the research. My historical experiences and knowledge of the internal dynamics of relations between Zimbabwean communities assisted in the development of interactive, flexible and informal interview sessions especially when interviewing Ndebele, Whites, Coloureds and Asian minority communities.

It would have been naive for the interview process to ignore the potential challenges posed by the diverse nature of historical experiences between Zimbabwe's ethnic communities. The diaspora community, reflecting Zimbabwe, was still fractured along ethnic or racial lines with restricted interactions of the communities. The 1980s' civil conflict had caused a significant number of the Ndebele to migrate who wanted to get away from the Shona, whilst a majority of White Zimbabwean immigrants still harboured a sense of racial superiority developed and consolidated during the colonial era. However, regardless of these potential

challenges, it was essential to identify ways of accessing potential research participants reflecting the ethnic and racial diversity of the Zimbabwean diaspora community.

The interview process had to acknowledge historic Shona–Ndebele tensions that had been compounded by attempts to stop the Ndebele language from being spoken during the 1980s’ civil conflict when the Ndebele people were forced to speak Shona. As I am a Shona who does not speak Ndebele, a concerted effort was made to create an environment that would not resuscitate post-colonial language sentiments. Greetings were always in the Ndebele language before asking the individual whether they would like to be interviewed in either English or Shona, even when it was known that the participant was fluent in Shona. Whether the participant opted to speak in either Shona or English, there was also deliberate and sporadic use familiar Ndebele phrases by me. The effort to speak in Ndebele was instrumental in creating relaxed interview sessions, thus minimising language tensions as it would have consolidated mutual relationship. As a result, most oral accounts of those from the Ndebele community were provided in an interchangeable mixture of both Shona and English, punctuated by using Ndebele words or phrases to emphasise certain issues which the research participants would immediately translate to either Shona or English.

With suppressed pre-emigration and historic interracial interactions and tensions, identifying (willing) Whites, Coloureds and Asians to interview was a challenge. Cumbria-based White Zimbabwean Elizabeth, who migrated in 2004, articulated reasons for Whites’ reluctance to participate. Her assistance in identifying White research participants was invaluable. She introduced six of the eight White research participants. These were her Facebook contacts she assumed would not harbour historical prejudices or bitterness to decline the invitation to be interviewed by a Black Zimbabwean. However, the six who responded were less than half of the fifteen potential research participants she had contacted in anticipation of positive responses. It was the high rate of decline that made her identify colonial racist discourse and the circumstances surrounding Whites’ emigration as the main reasons they would not want to participate in a research process conducted by a Black Zimbabwean (Elizabeth interview, November 2013).

Elizabeth’s explanation of why so many Whites were refusing to participate was a plausible one considering that those who left in the early 1980s had failed to adjust to changes in the political environment that

had ushered in a Black-led government. The second wave of white migration at the turn of the new millennium consisted of those who migrated as a direct consequence of violently losing their farms. It was therefore inevitable for the White diasporic community not only to be bitter towards Blacks, but also to mistrust them, especially if asked to provide oral accounts of their life's experiences. Refusing to be interviewed was therefore one way of channelling that bitterness and mistrust.

As with the Whites, identifying and accessing potential Coloured and Asian research participants was also a challenge. For Coloured Zimbabweans the issues of identity and perceptions of marginalisation in both the colonial and post-colonial eras had resulted in a significant number of those in Britain adopting a separatist attitude from other ethnic or racial Zimbabwean communities. Asians, on the other hand, imported their Zimbabwean attitudes of separation from other Zimbabwean races by assimilating themselves into Asian communities in cities like Leicester and Slough where there were large Asian populations.

To circumvent potential challenges, likely research participants were initially drawn among those with whom I had an established rapport. These were acquaintances I had consulted during my MA research on the Zimbabwean and Somali communities in Leicester and those from everyday life interactions drawn mainly from family members, my local church, and former work colleagues. It was from this initial pool of acquaintances that a network of potential research participants was established which had a snowball effect as more research participants were identified. Being introduced to potential research participants by already known contacts not only established a rapport prior to interview, but it also allowed individualisation of interviewing techniques with the hope of encouraging research participants to confidently narrate their life experiences, especially on issues related to race or ethnicity.

A questionnaire entitled 'What Makes You Zimbabwean?' was deliberately constructed to assess the impact of imperial and post-colonial identities and legacies on the Zimbabwean diaspora community. The questions were semi-structured around the themes of colonial and post-colonial era, migration and settlement, diaspora interactions and transnational links. Semi-structured themed questions facilitated an informative exchange of views on sensitive issues such as historic ethnic or racial tensions. This allowed systematic and consistent critical evaluation on how the interview sessions were progressing in relation to the research's aims and objectives.



Awareness of the inevitability of discussing sensitive colonial and post-colonial ethnic and racial conflicts made it imperative to manage and maintain a balance between the demands of pursuing the truth and research participants' values and rights to personal safety. Discussing politically sensitive legacies of colonial rule or political events after independence had the potential of compromising the safety of the research participants if the information became public. As a result, it was critical for the research process to safeguard the confidentiality and anonymity of all research participants. Whilst interviews conducted in the confines of private spaces such as research participants' homes guaranteed some privacy, anonymity was safeguarded by ensuring that research participants remained nameless by using pseudonyms.

Safeguarding reliability and validity was an anticipated challenge when conducting interviews within a Zimbabwean community that had grappled with memories of historic ethnic or racial mistrust and suspicions. To ensure the credibility of research participants' historical accounts, it was therefore essential to continuously validate information acquired during interviews against a range of other oral accounts, as well as primary or secondary historical sources.

To further minimise the book's conclusions based on subjective personal opinions, observations were also conducted to assess the reliability of oral accounts describing how Zimbabweans of different ethnic, racial or social class backgrounds interact with each other. Over a period of six consecutive fortnightly meetings, observations were carried out on a Leicester-based Asylum Seekers and Refugee Support Group. These observations were complemented by observing interethnic interactions between Zimbabwean members of a Leicester-based church.

The rise of internet diasporic media, recognised by Winston Mano and Wendy Willems to have been set up by former Zimbabwean journalists to cater for the increasing Zimbabwean population in the diaspora, provided a more critical perspective on how Zimbabwean communities were constructing their identities in Britain (Mano and Willems in McGregor and Primorac 2010). Websites such as <http://www.NewZimbabwe.com> and <http://www.NewsдзеZimbabwe.co.uk> were invaluable in covering a wide range of issues relating to the everyday life of Zimbabwean immigrants. The issues covered included domestic or family problems, issues to do with immigration such as asylum applications, criminal activities, celebration of individual achievements and diaspora political activism. Discussions or comments on stories covered by

the websites have also been invaluable in exposing the ethnic divisions within the Black community.

The testimonies of research participants, complemented by secondary and primary sources, unravelled how the impact of ethno-racial prejudices and traumas developed and nurtured during the colonial and post-colonial phases of Zimbabwe's history facilitated the construction of memories whose influences were not to be restricted to Zimbabwe but were to extend into the diaspora. With post-war migration and settlement of immigrants continuing to attract academic historians, the overarching aim of the book will be to provide original arguments on imported ethno-racial prejudices and identities to academic debates seeking to understand the impact of historic memories or experiences on the dynamics of community relations and integration processes.

Zimbabweans, as a relatively contemporary non-European immigrant community, fall in the category of immigrants with a lower academic profile than those from the Caribbean or South Asia. Focussing on the relatively small, but fast-increasing Zimbabwean immigrant community is therefore a recognition of Britain's migrant communities becoming increasingly diverse. Seeking to understand the construction of the Zimbabwean diaspora community will be illustrated by three distinct but overlapping themes. These are pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial development of ethnic and racial consciousness; the influence of imported historical identities on relations between Zimbabwean diaspora communities; the historical significance of the dynamics of Zimbabwean economic and social integration; and comparison between 1970s' and post-independence contemporary immigrants.

## NOTE

1. See, for example, Mark Christian (Ed.), *Black Identity in the Twentieth Century* (London: Hansib, 2002); June Ellis, *West African Families in Britain: A Meeting of Two Cultures* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978).

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## CHAPTER 2

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# Emergence of Ethno-Racial Prejudices and Identities, 1800s–1970s

### INTRODUCTION

The late veteran leader of Zimbabwe's nationalist politics, Joshua Nkomo, in his autobiography thanked the colonial state for permanently constructing what he described as our national borders in which the people's relations had been defined by 'raids and counter raids in search of cattle, food or women' (Nkomo 1984: 7). Driven by an attitude of nationalist mobilisation he went on to say, 'now there was no reason why all of us should not unite and develop an unquestioned identity' (Nkomo 1984: 7). However, despite Nkomo's sentiments, Zimbabweans' journey towards that 'unquestioned national identity' became what Brian Raftopoulos and Alois Mlambo describe as a 'fantasy' (Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009). This was because the pre-colonial and colonial phases of Zimbabwe's history set in motion salient discourses that became instrumental in constructing prejudices and identities which would determine interactions between Zimbabwe's multiethnic/racial communities. In two thematic structured sections, pre-colonial era and colonial era, this chapter will therefore provide an historic context of the transient nature of Zimbabwe's society that would form the basis of Zimbabweans' construction of their diaspora's social and economic identities.

The identities of the Black Zimbabwean diaspora could not conceal the imported historic divisive and dangerous fault lines of ethnicity whose origins can be traced back to the pre-colonial era. The British colonial administration capitalised on ethnic tensions by adopting a

divide-and-rule agenda to control the African community. This naturally consolidated ethnic consciousness which triggered ethnic tensions within the African community that would also extend into the Nationalist Movement. Whilst the arrival of the Ndebele in Zimbabwe during the first half of the nineteenth century would have marked the start of a fragmented African community riddled by ethnic tensions, the racist discourse of the colonial era set the agenda on how the Zimbabwean community, which was becoming multiracial, would interact. Racial categorisation into three hierarchical categories consisting of Europeans (Whites), Coloureds and Asians of Indian descent and Natives also became the basis upon which the colonial government was to introduce discriminatory legislation to determine who had access to the country's economic resources and to political participation demarcated by racially exclusionary barriers which were naturally going to have an impact on future community relations.

### THE PRE-COLONIAL ERA

Drawing on the work of historians like David Beach, David Maxwell and Terence Ranger, pre-colonial Zimbabwe at the turn of the nineteenth century was inhabited by communities of coexisting Shona-speaking chieftaincies with a simple ethnic history (Beach 1984; Maxwell 1999; Ranger 1985). 'Shona' is a collective noun conflating the linguistic, cultural and political attributes of a community of people who did not identify themselves with that term until the late nineteenth century (Mazarire in Raftopolous and Mlambo 2009). Gerald Chikozho Mazarire's essay, 'Reflections on pre-colonial Zimbabwe 850–1880s', presents the major linguistic groups, who became collectively known as the Shona, as the *Zezuru* and *Korekore* (in what is now known as Mashonaland), the *Manyika* and *Ndau* (in present-day Manicaland), and the *Karanga* (in Masvingo) (Mazarire 2009).

Although the Shona were orientated in different directions by military and trading links, David Maxwell points out how they 'shared a common political and religious repertoire' (Maxwell 1999: 11). As a result, the pre-colonial Shona chiefdoms had escaped political instability or hostilities associated with competing religious systems or centralised political and military structures (Beach 1984). Speaking the same language differentiated by regional dialects preserved a loose cultural identity which facilitated socio-economic interactions and political co-operation between the different Shona communities.

Under the religious guidance of ancestral spirits, pre-colonial relations between the Shona-speaking chiefdoms were often dynamic, characterised by complex relations between conflict and co-operation facilitated through marriages, political alliances and population movement (Muzondidya and Ndlovu-Gatshen 2007). Occasional clashes were not brought about by external non-Shona foreign forces, nor were they driven by ethnic or regional superiority. Instead, Gerald Chikozho Mazarire argues that they were usually internally constructed conflicts responding to socio-economic and political forces (Mazarire 2009). With pastoralism and agriculture forming the basis of the economy as highlighted by Mazarire, it was inevitable that as human and livestock population increased, violent skirmishes would occur over control and ownership of pastoral, farming and hunting land (Mazarire 2009).

Maxwell also introduces a political argument that reinforces the argument that Shona conflicts were usually internally instigated skirmishes. He notes how political succession was a critical time that often prompted internal instability (Maxwell 1999). In polygamous societies, succession by means of collateral inheritance in which chieftaincy would be passed from brother to brother inevitably created conflicts (Maxwell 1999). Although chieftaincy was expected to rotate between houses, peaceful transitions would end if one house forcefully retained title. As a result, tensions led to family feuds with religious leaders playing a leading role in maintaining peaceful coexistence.

### *Arrival of the Ndebele*

The arrival of the Ndebele in the nineteenth century ushered in a transformational phase in Zimbabwe's social, economic and political structures by setting in motion the gradual development of antagonistic relations between the Shona and the Ndebele. The Ndebele had originated as a small clan in South Africa under the leadership of Mzilikazi, a trusted general under Zulu nation leader Shaka. Mzilikazi and his small Khumalo clan (later to be known as the Ndebele) were forced to emigrate after Mzilikazi refused to hand over to Shaka spoils captured after a successful battle in June 1822 (Wills 1973). After years of migration, looking for a safe place to settle permanently, the small Khumalo clan managed to expand and 'broadcast' its power over people of different ethnicity through 'raiding, conquest, assimilation and incorporation' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008). By the time they settled and occupied



the southwestern part of the Zimbabwean plateau in 1839, as pointed out by Ndlovu-Gatsheni, the Ndebele had not only used their language Isindebele (Ndebele) as a uniting factor, but they had also imposed Ndebele values over different assimilated and incorporated communities (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008).

Upon settling in southwestern Zimbabwe the Ndebele made good use of the advantage they had of having a centralised political and military structure under the leadership of King Mzilikazi to consolidate their political presence by what Ndlovu-Gatsheni describes as ‘plunder, pillage and violent raids upon their Shona neighbours’ (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008). In the absence of a centralised political or military Shona system the Ndebele were able to exert their influence on the majority Shona communities. The fragmented Shona communities or chieftaincies could not organise themselves into a unified force to resist Ndebele invasions. As a result, defeated Shona communities who resisted Ndebele excursions were either captured to work as slaves or herdsmen, or were forced to pay tribute (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008).

As the Ndebele violently consolidated their settlement the Shona started to view the Ndebele not only as foreigners, but also as an offshoot of the ‘militaristic and brutal kingdom of Shaka’ (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008). However, the most significant consequence of the skirmishes was they served to stimulate the ethnic realisation within the Shona communities that they were culturally different from the new arrivals. With this realisation, the term Shona gradually evolved from being a linguistic identifier to a major ethnic identifier (Mazarire 2009). Ndebele military excursions against the Shona would prove to be a crucial determinant in the development of prejudicial perceptions the British would use in constructing strategies on how to colonise Zimbabwe. Taking advantage of a tension-riddled African community with linguistic, cultural and historical differences, the British colonisation process was to be based on implementation of a divide-and-rule agenda influenced by how they perceived the two communities.

### *Colonisation Process: Annexation of Mashonaland*

The British developed a colonisation process based on a mythical conviction that the Shona were a defenceless community routinely brutalised by raids from the Ndebele and would therefore accept political

control by the Whites for stopping the brutality. It was this fictitious conviction, perceiving the Ndebele as authoritative sole representatives of Zimbabweans, which led to adoption of a divide-and-rule agenda and stick-and-carrot diplomacy to systematically annex Zimbabwe whilst keeping Ndebele suspicions of their imperial intentions to the minimum (Ndlovu-Gatsheni in Cawthra and Abrahams 2003). To the British the Ndebele posed a greater military threat and therefore needed to be appeased through stick-and-carrot diplomacy and adopting a divide-and-rule agenda.

The divisive stick-and-carrot diplomacy of the British in the colonisation process manifested itself in the fraudulent Rudd Concession Treaty of 1888 signed by Mzilikazi's successor Lobengula, a treaty which was to pave the way for the colonisation of Zimbabwe. The treaty gave Cecil John Rhodes' British South Africa Company (BSAC) permission to hunt, mine and trade in Ndebele territory (Wills 1973). In return, Lobengula was lured into a false sense of security when, in addition to being offered rifles, ammunitions and a steamboat, he was assured the BSAC's Pioneer Column would not enter Zimbabwe through Ndebele-controlled land. The Pioneer Column, consisting of approximately 1000 White soldiers and settlers recruited by the BSAC from British inhabitants in neighbouring South Africa, was tasked with bringing about colonisation (Arnold and Wiennar 2008). Getting the necessary recruits was amply described by Alfred Wills, who relates how each member of the column had been promised 'to mark out a three-thousand-acre farm and peg up to fifteen gold claims' on arrival in Mashonaland (Wills 1973: 140).

Moving north from South Africa the Pioneer Column started the colonisation process by annexing territories occupied by Shona communities on the eastern side of Matabeleland (Arnold and Wiennar 2008). With little resistance from the Shona the Pioneer Column arrived in Salisbury (Harare) and raised the Union Flag on 12 September 1890 to signal the annexation of Mashonaland (Wills 1973). By entering through what was perceived as militarily weaker Shona territories the Pioneer Column not only avoided confrontation with the Ndebele, but they also gave themselves enough time to consolidate their economic and political presence in Mashonaland whilst waiting for the perfect opportunity to attack the Ndebele.

### *Annexation of Matabeleland*

It was not long before the antagonistic relations between the Shona and the Ndebele provided Rhodes with the opportunity to invade Matabeleland in 1893. The sequence of events which triggered the invasion, as outlined by Stanlake Samkange, started when the BSAC confiscated a herd of cattle in retaliation for Shona tribesmen stealing telegraph wire in the Fort Victoria area (present-day Masvingo) (Samkange 1968). Although the cattle were returned after Lobengula protested that they belonged to the Ndebele (since the Shona were looking after the herd as proof of submission), Ndebele warriors on 9 July massacred the insubordinate Shona subjects as punishment for cattle rustling (Wills 1973). The attack and massacre of the Shona by the Ndebele gave Cecil Rhodes that long-awaited legal mandate to attack the Ndebele on the pretext of protecting their economic interests since the Shona formed the bulk of the labour force on White-owned farms and in the mines. Despite encountering determined and better organised Ndebele warriors, the Ndebele succumbed to British invasion when Lobengula fled north following the capture of his capital, Bulawayo, on 4 November. Within a few months of the departure and subsequent death of Mzilikazi in early 1894, Matabeleland came under British control and ceased to exist as an independent kingdom.

### *Impact of Annexation Process on Ethnic Particularism*

Differences that arose in the period of annexation resulted in the development of a divisive military discourse between the Shona and the Ndebele. Encouraged by their military resistance, the Ndebele developed an awareness that, unlike the Shona, their military prowess was the reason why Mashonaland was occupied first whilst Matabeleland was conquered last (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008). This awareness of Ndebele military superiority over the Shona would be further reinforced during the unsuccessful 1896–1897 African uprisings (Chimurenga 1) started by the Ndebele in March 1896 with the Shona following suit in June. Despite starting the uprising the Ndebele were faced by inevitable defeat, but managed to negotiate a surrender settlement that preserved their identity when the centralised Ndebele Kingdom ceased to exist (Ranger 1970). The terms of the settlement allowed Ndebele leaders to assume positions as salaried chiefs in charge of local areas whilst paving the way

for displaced Ndebele to return to their homes as tenants of the BSAC. In contrast, as part of Britain's divide-and-rule agenda, the Shona were not afforded the opportunity to negotiate a settlement following their defeat. Instead, Shona authority and ethnic pride was undermined when the leaders of the revolt surrendered unconditionally and by 1898 most had been put on trial and hanged (Ranger 1970).

The process involved in the colonisation of Zimbabwe, which culminated in the first uprising of 1896, created a new frontier in Shona–Ndebele relations. Whilst the Ndebele gloated over what they perceived as military superiority over the Shona, Lobengula's signing of the Rudd Concession Treaty had also made them vulnerable to Shona accusations that they were foreigners who sold the country to the British. The divide-and-rule agenda adopted during the annexation process had therefore created a favourable environment for mistrust, prejudice and ethnic particularism all of which would influence the nature of Shona–Ndebele relations throughout Zimbabwe's history and the impact of which would be felt by subsequent colonial and post-independence diaspora communities in Britain.

## THE COLONIAL ERA

After the successful annexation of Mashonaland and Matabeleland, the colonial administration officially stimulated and consolidated ethnic particularism to effectively divide and rule the African community by creating ethnically named provincial administration regions. This formalisation of ethnic differences created an environment in which communal particularism was to evolve into an emotive and potent ideology in which individuals would feel safe when surrounded by those of the same ethnicity. The creation of ethnically or sublinguistically named regional and administration boundaries, such as Mashonaland and Matabeleland, became a significant factor in defining relations within the confines of the colonial capitalist system that had forced Africans of different ethnicity to migrate into towns in search of employment.

The urban-based African community used ethnically named regions to broadcast ethnic particularism. For example, Ndlovu-Gatsheni describes how associations such as the National Home Movement and Matabeleland Home Society, which had been formed by the 1930s, were instrumental in defining Ndebele particularism by regularly attacking the Shona working in Bulawayo claiming it was an Ndebele city

(Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008). Ndlovu-Gatsheni identifies the main advocates for a separate Ndebele homeland as Lobengula's sons, Nyamande Khumalo and Rhodes Lobengula Khumalo. Nyamande Khumalo played an instrumental role in the formation of the National Home Movement which was succeeded by the Matabele Home Society after his death (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008: 183–184).

Rhodes Lobengula Khumalo was an active member of the Matabele Home Society. He introduced football and boxing to the Ndebele community while continuing to fight to protect community interests and identity through lobbying and agitating for name changes of Bulawayo's residential areas (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008; Roberts 2005: 38). For example, through his efforts the society successfully campaigned for the residential area in Bulawayo which was called Rufaro Township (Rufaro is a Shona word meaning happiness) to be renamed Njube Township (Njube was one of the sons of Lobengula). The renaming of residential suburbs served to consolidate Ndebele's determination for Ndebele ethnic particularism to prevail by excluding Shona references in the city (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008). Not to be outdone, the Shona community in the city responded by forming their own ethnically based societies, such as the Sons of Mashonaland Cultural Society (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008). The African working class in urban areas, which was undergoing rapid expansion, had therefore marked a new phase in social struggles to reinvent ethnic particularism between the Shona and Ndebele.

Even sport was not immune from ethnic identities. Instead of being used as an agent for unifying ethnically polarised Africans to challenge the Rhodesian regime's racial policies, it turned out to be a platform for expressing ethnic rivalry. In Bulawayo, Highlanders FC, founded in 1926, was renamed Matabele Highlanders in 1937 and was thus associated with the Ndebele; whereas, Mashonaland United FC, founded in 1936, was renamed Zimbabwe Saints in 1975 and was thus identified with the Shona. However, the greatest ethnic rivalry based 'on real and perceived historical and contemporary ethnic and regional enmities', as pointed out by Lyton Ncube, was between Harare-based Dynamos FC and Highlanders FC (Ncube 2014). Dynamos FC was formed in 1963 and was seen as a Shona club to challenge Bulawayo-based Highlanders. Ncube spells out how ethnic rivalry would manifest at various supporter stands in different stadia in Zimbabwe during football matches. For example, Ncube identified how Highlanders fans in the Soweto Stand in Bulawayo's Barbourfields Stadium (named after South Africa's Soweto)

would make it clear that non-Ndebele speakers were not welcome in the stand by singing *Hakula Shonalihlalee Soweto* ('Shona are not welcome in Soweto Stand') or *Sowakewalibonai Shonalihlalee Soweto* ('Have you ever seen a Shona sit in Soweto Stand?') during soccer matches. These chants showed the extent to which ethnic particularist ideology had become an integral component that would define Shona–Ndebele relations in Zimbabwe society which itself was also becoming racially divided.

### *Racial Categorisation*

Parallel with official stimulation of ethnic particularism was the colonial administration's response to the racial transformation of Zimbabwe's demographics following dramatic increases in White immigration. Such an increase during the early years of colonial rule could not be divorced from what Alois Mlambo describes as conceited efforts by the BSAC 'to entice white farmers into the country' to engage in commercial farming (Mlambo in Crush and Tevera 2010). Commercial agriculture was seen as a viable economic option after the realisation that gold deposits in Zimbabwe did not meet the expectations envisaged. As the White population increased, Zimbabwe's population ceased to be homogenously classified as being Black. The colonial administration had to recognise the racial transformation of the population by implementing policies to ensure that racial boundaries were clearly defined. To facilitate this the population was hierarchically classified into three categories based on presumptions of racial purity: Whites, Coloureds and Asians, and Blacks.

The hierarchical classification of the colonial population was an effective catalyst in the creation of imagined racial boundaries which were not to be transgressed in social interactions or when competing for the country's resources. Whites were placed at the top of the hierarchical ladder with Africans condemned to the lowest rung. Coloureds and Asians, as occupants of the second rung, became part of a small but significant intermediate category. Access to the colonial state's economic resources or political participation was determined by the rung occupied in the racially graded hierarchical structure of the population. Blacks would have limited access to basic social services such as education, health and other social amenities while the best services were accorded to the White settler communities (Mazingi and Kamidza 2011). As occupiers of the second rung in the hierarchical structure, Asian and Coloured communities had access to medium-range services (Mazingi and Kamidza 2011).

Whilst the racial categorisation of the population created racial boundaries, it regrettably failed to recognise the complexities of pre-colonial relations between the Shona and the Ndebele. Classifying the Shona and Ndebele as natives negated the historical fact that the Shona perceived the Ndebele as foreigners, an immigrant ethnic community which settled in Zimbabwe during the early part of the nineteenth century. The unilateral classification of both the Shona and the Ndebele as natives was therefore not only redefining the indigenous population, it was also creating an African community with historical communal differences that needed to be addressed in any future nation-building project.

The pervasive nature of racism embedded in the hierarchical categorisation of the population also meant that Africans would experience the greatest racial discrimination in the economic, social and political structures of the colonial society. This meant the classification of the Zimbabwean colonial population had therefore not only condemned Africans to restricted upward social mobility but had also created and officialised a racist discourse that would determine future relations between racially segregated communities. Coloureds and Asians despite occupying the second rung were also not immune from the impact of racial categorisation of the population. Communities were forced to construct identities and particularism that would influence their social interactions and economic activities.

### *Coloured Consciousness*

Although Coloureds had emerged as a visible community within the population structures of the colonial state with clearly defined privileges over Africans, the use of the name Coloured was ‘problematic’ as it implied people with no colour or too much colour could be identified with either Blacks, Whites or Asians (Seirlis 2004). The rapid rise in the Coloured population after 1901 was a consequence of what Mushonga describes as ‘rampant sex between white men and black women’ a trend that continued into the 1940s (Mushonga 2013). These sexual relations with Black women were inevitable in an environment in which White men far exceeded the number of White women. For example, in Bulawayo in 1895 there were 1329 White men and 208 White women, whereas in Salisbury (Harare) there were 505 White man and 134 White women (Mushonga 2013). However, sexual relations between Black men and White women were greatly curtailed by the passing of

legislation such as the Immorality and Indecency Suppression Ordinance of 1903. The Act, which criminalised sexual encounters between White women and Black men, was aimed at protecting White females from what was perceived as the ‘uncontrollable sexual drive of the non-white races and their limitless fertility’ (Mushonga 2013). Such laws facilitated the development of racist stereotypes or prejudices designed to hinder intermarriage between Blacks and Whites.

Since most Coloureds were the offspring of relations between White men and African women, the colonial administration working together with Christian missionaries found it necessary to create a Coloured consciousness guided by the philosophy that Coloureds were innately superior and more civilised than Africans. James Muzondidya states that Coloured children were removed from the rural African environment and placed in exclusive residential foster homes under the foster care of White missionaries (Muzondidya 2005). Among the foster homes built by Christian Missionaries, identified by Muzondidya, were Embakwe built in Plumtree in 1921 and St Johns established in 1924. With privileged access to health and education, the fostered Coloured children were conditioned to erase or undermine any potentialities of reclaiming their African identity by adopting English names and being forced to speak nothing but English.

Pamela, a product of these residential homes from the age of eight in 1958, pointed out that there was a deliberate policy to create perceptions among Coloured girls that Black men were dangerous (Pamela interview, October 2013). She recalled how they were made to believe that for their own safety they were to ‘flee from a Black man towards a White man if they were to meet both men in a secluded area’. It was therefore inevitable that, like most Coloured children, Pamela found her experience in residential foster homes ‘psychologically traumatic’. She struggled to construct an identity that disassociated her from her African family, the only family she had known from birth, which was now being identified as a threat to her well-being.

Pamela identified the deliberate instillation of a fear factor towards Africans as one of the major reasons why most Coloured children faced an ‘identity crisis’ as the families they knew as ‘loving and caring’ were now being demonised as evil. The colonial state’s deliberate policy of separating Coloured children from their African families had evolved into a divide-and-rule tactic by the colonial state. Coloured children had been indoctrinated to appreciate the constructions of identities and



interactions with Black Africans based on a racial superiority attitude of them and us. With a superiority mentality over Africans, it was therefore not surprising that most Coloured children placed a premium on wanting to have white skin and straight hair (Chung 2006). Commenting on wanting to be White, Esther a Leicester-based Coloured immigrant in her sixties explained how fairer skinned Coloured children were envied as they were seen to be indistinguishable from Whites. In contrast, those who were darker skinned with curly hair were usually despised as they were perceived to be indistinguishable from Blacks (Esther interview, June 2013). The ultimate consequence according to Fay Chung was that some Coloured teenage girls spent ‘an inordinate amount of time trying to make their skins lighter and their hair straightened’ (Chung 2006: 36). This conscious decision to be White by using artificial means not only helped create an identity dilemma, but also naturally alienated the Coloured community from Blacks.

As occupiers of the second rung in the population hierarchy, Muzondidya argues that from an early age Coloureds had the potential of escaping socio-economic disfranchisement experienced by most Black Africans such as access to better educational and health facilities and having better chances to enrol for apprenticeship courses (Muzondidya 2005). It was a combination of these socio-economic privileges and the creation of Coloured identity and consciousness through residential foster homes which made them vulnerable to African accusations that they could not be trusted as they had been modelled to be a buffer zone between the Black community and Whites. Some Africans developed perceptions that most Coloureds would rather collaborate with the colonial system than support any Black-led political movement whose victory might lead to a potential loss of their privileges. The creation of a colonial Coloured community had therefore made it imperative that any future nation-building project would have to deal with the dubious loyalty tag attached to the community by some within the Black community.

However, despite being recipients of socio-economic privileges not accessible to Blacks, Kelly Nims describes how most Coloureds placed education at the periphery of their lives (Nims 2013). Awareness of the sustained marginalisation by Whites, who were on the top rung of the hierarchical population structure, created and consolidated the desire in most Coloureds to preserve Coloured consciousness and to have control over their own destiny by making choices that naturally trivialised self-development through attainment of better academic qualifications

(Nims 2013). There was general contentedness by a significant number of Coloured males to acquire technical skills that would allow them to be self-employed tradesmen. Patrick, a fifty-year old ex-Zimbabwean Coloured businessman living in Northampton, pointed out that in most cases their skills would have been acquired through on-the-job training with no formal qualifications to prove their competence (Patrick interview, January 2013).

The ultimate result of placing education at the periphery of Coloureds' lives was the construction of a consciousness within some that 'education is simply not important for Coloureds' (Nims 2013: 186). Nurturing that consciousness continued to be reinforced throughout Zimbabwe's colonial and post-colonial era. The ultimate consequence of failing to dismantle the consciousness of trivialising education emerged to be a significant factor that would influence economic integration of older members of the community in Britain. However, despite most Coloureds trivialising education it would be wrong to conclude there were no notable academics within the community. Pamela, a Coloured academic living in Britain, identified Ibbo Mandaza and Brian Raftopoulos as examples of Zimbabwean Coloureds who might not have migrated to Britain but who emerged from the community to become leading academics with global reputations (Pamela interview, October 2013).

To reinforce Coloured consciousness, young Coloureds were also able to use their verbal agility to reinforce their identity by developing a secret language known as Kabid (Seirlis 2004). Developing the language was evidence of the growth of a young politicised Coloured community that was determined to preserve their identity even if it meant going against the values of their parents or wider society. Development of the secret language would naturally result in mistrust of the Coloured community, especially when conversations would be conducted entirely in Kabid in the presence of other ethnic communities. Using language to distance themselves from other Zimbabweans had therefore created a wedge between other ethnic communities which needed to be dismantled if a national identity was to be constructed in future generations of the post-independence era.

### *Asian Consciousness*

Most Asians, co-occupants of the intermediate rung with the Coloured community, were descendants of Indian immigrants who started

settling in Zimbabwe in the nineteenth century (Dotson and Dotson 1968). Bella, a Zimbabwean-based Asian in her late fifties, spoke of how her grandfather was one of the early Indian immigrants to permanently settle in Zimbabwe as labourers seeking economic opportunities (Bella interview, August 2013). Floyd Dotson and Lillian Dotson point out how most of these early Indian immigrants to settle in Zimbabwe at the beginning of the nineteenth century would have been motivated or assisted by kinsmen already established in neighbouring Mozambique and South Africa where they had settled to work on sugar cane plantations as labourers (Dotson and Dotson 1968). Upon settling in Zimbabwe, it was not long before they used their entrepreneurship skills to quickly establish themselves as a close-knit community of successful traders and shop owners competing with White entrepreneurs for African customers and labour supply (Dotson and Dotson 1968).

This need for Africans to support their business activities either as employers or employees gradually emerged to be a significant determinant in influencing the nature of relations with not only the Black indigenous population, but also with the European business community. To protect Whites' economic interests, legislation had to be enacted early in the twentieth century to suppress Indian immigration. Notable initiatives to discourage Indian immigration included passing the Immigration Law of 1903, which was to be followed by legal restrictions in 1924 (Mlambo in Crush and Tevera 2010). Alois Mlambo identifies these restrictions as major reasons why the Asian population in Zimbabwe never exceeded more than 2% of the total population of the country (Mlambo in Crush and Tevera 2010). However, despite these immigration restrictions, Indians were still able to create a business community competing with European businesses for a niche within the developing economy as market gardeners, traders and shop owners (Dotson and Dotson 1968).

The emergence of a business environment in which both Whites and Asians were competing for African support resulted in Africans inadvertently starting to construct perceptions that Indians were no different from the White settlers regarding the exploitative treatment of Blacks. Asians' use of unfair tactics, when buying or selling to the Black population, resulted in the development of a master-servant relationship in which Africans were either seen as a customer across the counter or as a shop assistant employee vulnerable to exploitation. Describing the

African–Asian master–servant relationship, Gutu a Black Zimbabwean in his sixties spoke of how the phrase *buya tingapangane* (come let us negotiate) became synonymous with Asian trickery in wanting to exploit African customers or employees (Gutu interview, July 2013). Exploitation would either be in the form of underpayment of wages or being sold overpriced poor-quality products. This master–servant relationship marked the development of relations between the two communities based to a large extent on suspicion and mistrust, with no intent of establishing interactions outside the business environment.

### *Asian–Coloured Relations*

Despite their shared category as occupiers of the second rung in the racial categorisation of the population, Dotson and Dotson describe the relations between Coloureds and Asians as not always intimate. Asians' negativity towards Coloureds was usually triggered by perceptions that Coloureds (because of their mixed heritage) were a representation of a cultural abyss which could be seen as too Europeanised (Dotson and Dotson 1968). Asians saw themselves as puritanical in principle and practice, and therefore any limited interaction with Coloureds would safeguard them from moral or cultural contamination (Dotson and Dotson 1968). Asian attitudes towards Coloureds and the nature of their socio-economic relationship with Blacks made them vulnerable to greater scrutiny on whether they would be honest participants in future nation-building initiatives both in Zimbabwe and in the diaspora.

Although Coloureds and Asians were accorded better privileges and rights than Africans they were usually on the periphery in any socio-economic propaganda by the colonial state. Rhodesian propaganda seemed to promote images of White and Black soldiers serving in the army as happy comrades whilst Coloureds and Asians were completely left out (Seirlis 2004). This was because they were perceived as untrustworthy and therefore usually relegated to non-combative and menial duties such as guarding roads, railways, bridges and installations (Seirlis 2004). Such a representation of Coloureds and Asians in the military denied them the opportunity to build political, social or military credibility necessary to develop a strong national or patriotic identity to manage political transition from colonial Zimbabwe to independent Zimbabwe.

### *The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland 1953–1963*

Creation of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1953, which united the British Protectorates of Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Nyasaland (Malawi) with Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), facilitated a massive transformation in Zimbabwe's demography in response to the influx of immigrants from within and outside Africa's borders. The gross economic disparity between the three countries of the Federation triggered a rapid rise in the population which had an impact on ethno-racial relations. Zimbabwe's diverse economy, consolidated by its strong agricultural base, resulted in the country experiencing the fastest and strongest growing manufacturing industry compared with its Federation partners, Malawi and Zambia (Mlambo in Raftopolous and Mlambo 2009).

To support the rapid expansion of Zimbabwe's manufacturing and agricultural sectors there was an influx of African immigrants from Zimbabwe's Federation partners, and from the neighbouring Portuguese colony of Mozambique (Muzondidya 2007). The influx of African worker immigrants, as James Muzondidya highlights, resulted in the colonial administration no longer regarding the Black African population as a homogenous unit but instead categorising it into indigenous and non-indigenous groups (Muzondidya 2007). The Shona and the Ndebele were classified as indigenous communities and the non-indigenous group as immigrant labourers mainly from neighbouring Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia.

Classification of the African population in such a way set in motion prejudicial attitudes in Black Zimbabweans that would lead to an exclusive relationship of difference from African immigrant workers. Encouraged by appalling working conditions, which were complemented by meagre remuneration, the indigenous African community started to adopt compensatory mechanisms by constructing their own social hierarchy. They placed the non-indigenous population whom they referred to as aliens to a position below them in the colonial state race hierarchy. Indigenous Africans' superiority attitude over non-indigenous Blacks was reinforced with derogatory words or phrases. The most popular ones were *Mubhurandaya* (derogatory slur about Blantyre, Malawi's administrative capital), *Mubwidi wemutaundi* (foolish people without rural homes) and *mamosikeni* or *makarusi* (derogatory name for Mozambicans). Muzondidya also described how they continued to be the subject of insulting jokes, portraying them as idiots in popular songs, on national television dramas and in other public forums (Muzondidya 2007).

Legislation such as the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 (renamed Land Tenure Act in 1969) also consolidated the *Mubwidi wemutaundi* derogatory slur that promoted Black Zimbabweans' superiority since it did not permit African immigrants to purchase land in Native Purchase Areas, as the reserved land was specifically set aside for the indigenous Shona and Ndebele communities (Muzondidya 2007). The few African immigrants who managed to purchase the land did it illegally usually after dealing with corrupt African chiefs who had been given authority to allocate and manage land in areas reserved for indigenous Africans (Muzondidya 2007). The immigrants would therefore be seen by locals as socially or culturally inferior aliens as they had no claims to the land, and those who would have illegally acquired land could be evicted at any given time.

The superiority complex of indigenous Zimbabweans over African immigrants failed to stop following the official dissolution of the Federation on 31 December 1963, after which (in 1964) Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Nyasaland (Malawi) became independent. Mozambique, although not part of the Federation, gained its independence in 1975. The continuation of such arrogance regarding its supposed superiority over independent neighbouring countries can be attributed to three main reasons: the mid-1970s' crash of copper prices that had a massive impact on the Zambian economy, Marxist policies by the Mozambican government which led to a collapse in economic investment and the lack of economic diversity in Malawi's economy that continued to suppress economic development. This meant Rhodesia continued to enjoy relative economic prosperity compared with its neighbouring independent countries.

Even in post-colonial Zimbabwe, subsequent generations of African immigrant labourers continued to be officially recognised as aliens by being excluded from the national project as they continued to be issued documentation as card-bearing aliens (Muzondidya 2007). As a result, Zimbabweans continued to harbour perceptions of being superior since their country's economy and infrastructure was in a better position than the neighbouring independent countries excluding South Africa. Just like in the colonial era, Zimbabweans enjoyed a higher standard of living. Black Zimbabweans therefore needed to be desensitised from this mentality of superiority over other Africans should they wish to view them positively not only within the confines of Zimbabwe's borders but also in the diaspora.

This high level of Federation immigration in Zimbabwe was not restricted to Africans from neighbouring countries. There was also a rapid influx of Whites from neighbouring South Africa and from Europe. Since colonisation, there had been determined efforts to encourage White immigration into the country in line with Rhodes' vision of developing Rhodesia as a White man's country. From the turn of the century and throughout the decades leading up to World War Two there had been deliberate policies to promote White immigration by the British. For example, the granting of responsible government status to Southern Rhodesia in 1923 by the British government (which ended BSAC control) facilitated British inauguration of a sponsored three-year settlement scheme (Mlambo in Crush and Tevera 2010). The inevitable result was substantial British immigration from 1924 to 1928. Although the numbers slowed down during the Great Depression from 1931 to 1936 because of the Rhodesian government's policy of minimising unemployment, and during World War Two due to the challenges of overseas travel, immigration levels dramatically picked up after the war. The new arrivals were mostly demobilised British soldiers and ordinary British citizens fleeing the harsh post-war living conditions in Britain (Mlambo in Raftopolous and Mlambo 2009).

The dramatic increase of British demobilised soldiers, as alluded to by Mlambo, was a result of the Rhodesian government's post-war settlement scheme with the British (Mlambo in Crush and Tevera 2010). The Rhodesian government had been so determined to maintain Britishness that in 1957 a Government Economic Advisory Council endorsed the long-standing policy of giving preference to immigrants from Britain. Apart from the dominant British immigrant community, there was also a sizeable number of Italians, Poles, Greeks, Americans, Germans, Czechoslovakians and Yugoslavians (Mlambo in Crush and Tevera 2010). Just like the Black African immigrants the European arrivals were also hoping to gain access to the country's economic prosperity. The economic benefits provided by Zimbabwe had become a haven for Whites, particularly the White working class who were enjoying a higher living standard than their European compatriots who had gone through the economic devastation of World War Two (Chung 2006).

It was this rapid increase in White immigration from within Africa and Europe that resulted in the Zimbabwean White community becoming culturally diverse. Such diversity was captured by Katja Uusihakala when

she pointed out that, in the 1969 census, of the 228,296 Europeans 40% were born in colonial Zimbabwe, approximately 23% were born in Britain and 22% in South Africa, with the rest coming from different parts of the world (Uusihakala 2007). The arrival of Whites from different parts of the world created a White Zimbabwean community that could be described as cosmopolitan since those who had been born in Zimbabwe were now joined by immigrants from within Africa, Europe and America.

The diverse post-colonial ancestral links were reflected by this research's White participants who were the children or grandchildren of the original migrants. Elizabeth who was born in Zimbabwe was of Greek heritage; Robert who migrated to Zimbabwe from Somalia in the early 1960s had Italian roots; Gareth was of Irish descent; Alison a Zimbabwean by birth had an English background; and Kenneth also born in Zimbabwe had Welsh roots.

Despite the cultural diversity of the White population, Jeffrey Herbst argues that they were all united by the awareness that they were numerically outnumbered by Africans (Herbst 1990). As a result, they would not accommodate any community divisions that would jeopardise their privileges in the productive sectors of mining, manufacturing or agriculture. The construction of a Rhodesian identity to repel any external or internal threats to dislodge their privileged status would not have been possible without the development of a sense of nationalism within the White community.

Nurturing a sense of nationalism indicated the determination Whites had in ensuring that Zimbabwe would be transformed into a White man's country with a permanent White population. Josephine Fisher acknowledges how creating an identity in which they saw themselves as a nation allowed subsequent generations of Whites to gradually lose attachment to the countries of their ancestors (Fisher 2010). This loss of attachment to their ancestral roots became evident at independence in 1980 when a significant number of them chose to remain in the country, as they were prepared to be part of post-colonial nation-building initiatives. However, failure to dismantle the sense of belonging to a White nation of Rhodesia always carried the potential of being a hindrance to positive social interactions with other Zimbabweans both in Zimbabwe and in the diaspora.



### *Unilateral Declaration of Independence*

The two decades following the end of Second World War witnessed an unprecedented surge of African nationalism that marked the collapse of European imperial rule throughout Africa. However, the trajectory of events in Rhodesia defied the political changes that were ending colonial control on the African continent. While other African nations were gaining independence, in Rhodesia the minority White community was determined to create and consolidate a White man's country (Mtisi et al. in Raftopolous and Mlambo 2009).

Seeing themselves as a nation combined with the need to preserve their privileged status enhanced the Whites' determination to fend off any threats to the status quo following the independence in Zambia and Malawi in 1964. The independence of neighbouring states made them vulnerable to nationalist demands for majority Black rule. To safeguard their privileged status within Rhodesia's economic and political structures, they had to come up with a political solution which was implemented by Ian Smith on 11 November 1965 when he unilaterally declared Independence from Britain. Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) not only meant that Rhodesia was now an independent state outside Britain's jurisdiction, but also that the minority 230,000 Whites would govern the Black population of over four million (Wills 1973). Denying Africans political power would allow Whites to continue implementing policies to protect their socio-economic privileges and interests. Support of Smith's UDI, which ultimately delayed Zimbabwe's independence, showed the extent to which nurturing a sense of nationalism by White Rhodesians had strengthened the determination to make Zimbabwe a White man's country in Africa.

The British government's response to Ian Smith's UDI was timid as it refused to militarily intervene to force Ian Smith to reverse his unilateral action. Instead, it imposed sanctions on the Rhodesian government. Although the economic sanctions imposed in 1966 led to a trade ban and an embargo on financial dealings between Rhodesia and British territories, they failed to end minority rule.<sup>1</sup> The Rhodesian government was able to adapt its economy by encouraging internal agriculture and manufacturing. As a landlocked country, it was also able to manage its exports and imports through neighbouring South Africa and the Portuguese colonies of Mozambique and Angola.<sup>2</sup>

In his autobiography Joshua Nkomo, while incarcerated with other nationalists, wrote how they were irritated and angered by Britain's inaction to remove the illegal Rhodesian government especially when British companies 'were allowed with impunity to evade economic sanctions' (cited in Nkomo 2013: 91). Lying on his prison bed in Bulawayo located 400 yards from the Johannesburg road, he would listen to the rumble of tankers arriving in the city during the night with precious fluid (oil) from South Africa (cited in Nkomo 2013: 91). The ability to manage the economy under economic sanctions emerged to be the basis upon which subsequent generations of Zimbabweans would compare the competence of the White-led Smith's government and that of Mugabe's post-colonial government. The consequence of that comparison was a significant determinant on how the Black diaspora community in Britain would perceive businesses owned by Blacks.

Britain's refusal to militarily intervene and the failure of economic sanctions had not only denied the Black majority independence, but it also consolidated racial segregation in accessing Zimbabwe's natural resources. With Blacks being denied the right to participate in politics, racially driven legislation to ensure some legitimacy in the inequitable distribution of the country's resources was passed with little or no opposition in parliament. For example, legislation such as the Land Tenure Act of 1969 (previously known as the Land Apportionment Act of 1930) became one of the most effective legislative tools in enforcing racially inequitable distribution of the country's natural resources.

Provisions in the 1969 Land Tenure Act legitimised racial categorisation of land in the countryside. Displaced Africans were given control of only 41.7% of poor-quality land. By contrast, Whites who were 5% of the population had access to 40% of the best arable land (Muzondidya 2007). The Act's racial demarcation of land had therefore disregarded the demographics of the population by allocating close to an equal amount of land to both Blacks and Whites irrespective of the overall size of the population.

The plight of Black peasant farmers gradually worsened when the colonial administration failed to readjust the size of land categories in line with increases in the population of the Black community. As a result, land reserved for Blacks became overpopulated, thus creating a growing class of landless Black Africans in rural areas. With depressed agricultural production and a growing landless peasant population, colonial

land distribution had firmly placed Zimbabwe on a racial collision course when dealing with the racial imbalance in land ownership. The success of any future nation-building agenda would therefore be determined by the extent to which White farmers would be willing to address the racially skewed ownership of agricultural land, or the methods Blacks would adopt in addressing colonial land imbalances.

African peasants' response to declining agricultural returns and increased landlessness was to migrate into urban areas in search of employment. The colonial administration responded to the growing number of Blacks in the urban areas by passing the Vagrancy Act of 1968 and the Area Accommodation Act of 1972 (Chirisa and Dumba 2012). These laws enforced rigid racial boundaries by not only restricting the movement of Blacks, especially within cities' central business districts, but also by enforcing separate residential areas for Whites and Blacks. Black access to White residential areas was restricted to domestic workers. For the convenience of their White employers the majority of domestic workers lived on the employers' residential premises. They were accommodated in separately built one or two-roomed domestic quarters (with a toilet, which also served as a bathroom) situated on the fringes of the back-yard garden so as to be as far away as possible from the main house.

With large gardens and excellent provision of sewerage and electricity, exclusive White residential areas, referred to as Low-Density Residential Areas, were in stark contrast to Black residential areas (Mutekede and Sigauke 2009). Black residential areas, known as High-Density Residential Areas, were usually ravaged with sewer and electricity problems, and limited access to health or education facilities (Rogers and Frantz 1973). The racial segregation of residential areas made some in the Black community reach the conclusion that any socio-economic success could only be measured according to the lifestyle or material possessions of Whites, which included proficiency in English.

Pondering the impact European living standards had on Africans, Gutu explained how uses of phrases like *dzimba dzechirungu* (White man's house), *Kudya kwechirungu* (White man's food) or *doro rechirungu* (White man's beer) started to be used by Blacks to commend or congratulate each other (Gutu interview, July 2013). Success was measured by the ability to speak English, or building a brick-walled house in a rural area, or changing food or eating habits to imitate a European lifestyle. Adopting the lifestyle of Whites became a dream for most Africans, thus indirectly reinforcing the superiority of Whites over them.

The colonial racist discourse that manifested itself in the hierarchical classification of the population had therefore marked a subtle indoctrination process of perceiving the Whites' way of life as a benchmark of socio-economic status. Such a categorisation of the population reinforced June Ellis' assertion that the enactment of colonial political legislation and socio-economic policies were usually driven by European myths characterising Africans as primitive, savage and trapped in 'ignorance, darkness and death' (Ellis 1978: 1). This stereotypical thinking turned out to be the driving force behind the construction of unbridled paternalism, built on the mission of civilising Africans. Exposure to Westernisation had therefore conditioned Africans to perceive the British way of life as the standard for civilisation. The consequence was the creation of Africans who despised traditional values and wanted a European way of life. Some traits of the European way of life gradually became more visible within an emerging African middle class. The belief that a European lifestyle was something to aspire to by some within the Black community resulted in the construction of personal identities that were to influence the social integration patterns of future generations.

### *Western Education and Rise of the African Middle Class*

Alois Mlambo identifies the introduction of European education and a monetary-based capitalist economy as being instrumental in creating a small African middle-class community of educated professionals in colonial Zimbabwe (Mlambo in Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009). Teaching, nursing, clerical and small-scale entrepreneurship turned out to be the main professions of the emerging African middle class. Although the creation of a small but well-defined African middle class was essential for managing and sustaining the socio-economic and political structures of the colonial state, it also marked the start of an evolutionary process that would have a profound impact on the educational aspirations of Africans linked to socio-economic status in a capitalist system riddled by exploitation and undermining of those occupying the lower echelons of society. Despite the influence of education in the upward social mobility of a minority of blacks, access to education by Africans was in line with the colonial policy of preserving the leadership position of Europeans in the socio-economic structure of society.

Rungano Zvobgo explains how the colonial education system gave the pretence of equal opportunity by creating an environment of pseudo-meritocracy for Africans in which they would identify educational attainment as the only route to escape the entrapment of colonial-induced poverty (Zvobgo 1994). Edward Shizha identifies the Education Act of 1966 as one of the most effective laws in giving Africans a false sense of meritocracy while excluding a majority of them from attaining educational qualifications or professional skills associated with the middle class which would allow them to compete with Europeans on the job market (Shizha and Kariwo 2011).

The Act legitimised the marginalisation of African children in the education system by screening and limiting the number of African children who could proceed to secondary school. The impact of non-commitment to the education of Blacks by discriminatory and restrictive educational policies was a disproportionate number of Blacks having the opportunity to go to the University College of Rhodesia. Between 1963 and 1970 only 356 Africans were enrolled compared with 2287 Whites. Placing limits on African children who could proceed with their education had therefore constructed a deliberate hierarchical socio-economic stratification of the Black community which had the potential of determining the relations within the Black community. With such restrictions, it was inevitable that the development of an African middle class would create an environment of pseudo-meritocracy.

Embracing education as the most significant and realistic access to upward social mobility was to be a major catalyst influencing how Africans were to construct their personal identities. Personal success for most individuals was to be measured by academic or professional qualifications. However, with limited opportunities to pursue education, a significant number of ambitious and academically gifted Africans were forced to train locally as teachers or nurses or wait for scholarship opportunities to leave the country to pursue their studies. Scholarships offered by the British government, British Council and the Commonwealth to study at British universities or colleges turned out to be an escape route for academically gifted Blacks who wanted to pursue further education but were denied the opportunity by racial policies (*The Times*, October 1974).

Although European formal education facilitated the equipping of Africans with academic or technical skills to improve their economic status, it also should be recognised that it prompted Africans to either

despise or ignore their historic civilisation. By depicting Africans as an illiterate group of people who could not even write their own history, the introduction of formal Western education positioned itself as a constant reminder to the African community that they should be thankful for colonisation. In the absence of written sources on Africa's history or civilisation it was therefore critical that formal education be presented in a way that would ensure it was a creation and product of a superior European culture.

Describing the Europeanisation (and Americanisation) of Africans by the colonial education system, sixty-one-year-old Edison, a beneficiary of the colonial education system in the 1960s, lamented:

Shaka the great Zulu warrior was demonised as Shaka the Savage whilst Napoleon was described as Napoleon the Great in history lessons. In geography we knew more about the Alps and the Rocky Mountains ... Children at a very young age were taught English Rhymes like Baa Baa Black Sheep and Humpty Dumpty instead of Shona or Ndebele folk songs ... it was therefore not surprising that for most Zimbabweans, being educated did not only mean competently speaking and writing in English, but it was also about how much European or American geography, culture and history you know. (Edison interview, January 2013)

Edison's assertion indicates how the colonial education curriculum had created Africans who subconsciously would have started to be sceptical of the relevance of their traditions or history in the face of what appeared to be the modern and progressive culture of Europeans. It was therefore crucial that at independence any nation-building initiatives had to be implemented with the aim of freeing Africans from some colonial mentality that national or personal identities should mirror European political or socio-economic structures. Failure to dismantle the colonial-constructed African mindset that the European way of life was more civilised would have an impact on how African immigrants would construct social or economic integration patterns.

The colonial education system not only created a sense of meritocracy within the Black community, it also legitimised the creation of racial cliques which were to determine future interracial interactions. This was made possible by embedding a racist discourse in educational provisions to allow them to mirror the hierarchical classification of the population. The colonial state's education system insisted on the creation of a

well-funded and resourced separate education for Whites, Coloureds and Asians which was being subsidised by underfunding in African schools (Austin 1975).

African education provisions were effectively bankrupted when education expenditure for Africans was reduced from 8.6% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1965 to 2% in 1967 (Shizha and Kariwo 2011). By 1972, £16.60 per student was being spent on Africans compared with £160.70 for Whites, Coloureds and Asians (Austin 1975). The better funded schools for the Whites, Coloureds and Asians were classified as Group A schools, whilst the poorly resourced Group B schools were for Africans (Shizha and Kariwo 2011). The imperial education system had therefore been designed to create White hegemony since reduced funding for African education meant that most Africans would be trapped in menial jobs.

Africans, as occupiers of the lowest threshold in the hierarchical classification of the population, were not allowed to enrol at Group A schools and Coloureds and Asians were not allowed to enrol at Whites-only schools. The educational experience of Jonah, one of the Black research participants, revealed the extent of the impact of racial segregation in the colonial education system. Despite being adopted by a White Jewish Rhodesian couple he recalled how in the 1960s he was forbidden to attend Founders High School, a Bulawayo-based secondary school for Coloureds and Asians (Jonah interview, March 2013). He had to cycle fifteen miles to the nearest African secondary school. Even after completing his O-levels he was not allowed to enrol for a bookkeeping course at the White-dominated Bulawayo Technical College. However, despite his education experiences, he was still able to become the first Black bank clerk at one of Bulawayo's Founders Building Society branches in the early 1970s, a position which he believed he could not have attained without his White parents' influence.

Educating children separately had created barriers to interactions that needed to be dismantled when implementing nation-building initiatives in a post-colonial Zimbabwe. The success of reconciliation initiatives in independent Zimbabwe would depend on the extent to which respective ethnic communities were willing to be desensitised from inherited colonial prejudices. Failure to dismantle race prejudices would mean memories of racial boundaries would inevitably be exported into the diaspora thus inhibiting interactions between different ethnic communities.

### *Racist Discourse in Economy*

Although the colonial capitalist system had created a small educated African middle class, it would be naive to think that they were at parity with Whites in attaining upward social mobility. By occupying the lowest position in colonial Zimbabwe's population hierarchy, Blacks were constantly subject to discriminatory systems that were curtailing their economic advancement (Herbst 1990). The experiences of the oldest male White research participants in the research, Gareth and Robert who started their education in the 1960s, show the extent of Whites' privileged status over Blacks in the formal employment sector. In 1968, despite not having excelled particularly well at school, Gareth explained how he was able to join the police at a higher rank than Blacks (Gareth interview, November 2013). As for Robert, although he admitted he did not have academic qualifications apart from his O-level, he was still able to secure a job ahead of Blacks in Zimbabwe's financial sector in 1967 (Robert interview, November 2013). By the time Zimbabwe became independent in 1980 he had risen to middle-management level, a position reached through on-the-job training in which Blacks were overlooked.

The colonial state's racist discourse within the economic system also complemented education in stifling the entrepreneurial potential of Blacks in major sectors of the economy such as mining, manufacturing or agriculture to challenge White dominance. With limited access to bank loans, Blacks' entrepreneurial activities were mainly restricted to small-scale grocery shops, bottle stores, maize-grinding mills and transport that could never challenge White-owned businesses. These were businesses that had been deliberately set up to serve the Black population either in rural or Black residential areas. Protecting Whites from entrepreneurial Blacks had therefore marked the start of subtly constructing a mindset in which Africans were gradually being conditioned to express their entrepreneurial skills by owning or managing small-scale businesses instead of large corporate companies. Economic subjugation had placed most Africans in 'an economically weak position' from which it would be virtually impossible to recover unless changes were made (Austin 1975). Understanding the economic activities of the Black diaspora community in Britain could therefore not be achieved outside the context of colonial economic systems that denied Blacks the opportunity to express any entrepreneurial potential deemed to threaten White economic dominance.



Political determination in stifling the socio-economic progression of Blacks was well articulated in 1938 in a speech by Godfrey Huggins, Southern Rhodesia's Prime Minister from 1933 to 1953 and the Federation's Prime Minister from 1953 to 1956. While the speech articulated reasons for barring Black workers from forming a trade union, it also sent a subtle message about the need to establish an ideal White African country in which the indigenous communities could be subjugated. In the speech, he emphasised that the economic participation of Black Africans should be limited to assisting Whites as labourers and not to compete with them. He stated:

.... The European in this country can be likened to an island of white in a sea of black ... with the artisan and the tradesman forming the shores and the professional classes the highlands in the centre. Is the native to be allowed to erode away the shores and gradually attack the highlands? To permit this would mean that the leaven of civilisation would be removed from the country, and the Black men would inevitably revert to barbarism worse than before. (Gwisai in Zeilig 2009)

An example of politicians' determination to maintain racial superiority within colonial economic structures, Anias Mutekwa expresses how adult Black employees were usually 'infanticised' (Mutekwa 2009). This was apparent when White employers would not address them by name, but as 'boys' or 'girls' regardless of age. For example, titles like 'house-girl' 'garden-boy', 'house-boy', 'spanner-boy' or 'tea-boy' were used to refer to Black employees. Such derogatory titles significantly conditioned Whites into believing they would always be superior to Blacks and therefore they should be respected. The development of such perceptions would have an impact on post-colonial Black-White relations both in Zimbabwe and in the diaspora.

The health sector, as pointed out by Diana Auret, was also not immune from the impact of colonial pluralistic socio-economic systems based on race (Auret 1990). As in other sectors of colonial society, racial classification of the population had facilitated the establishment of separate health facilities for Whites (with separate wards for Coloureds and Asians) and Blacks. The major White-only referral hospitals were Harare's Andrew Fleming (now known as Parirenyatwa) and Bulawayo's United Hospitals of Bulawayo. The disparity was clearer in health expenditure and distribution of personnel. For example, in 1979 32%

of the Z\$54.2 million health budget was allocated to Harare's Andrew Fleming (Auret 1990). With regard to service distribution, Bulawayo was a good example. The city's 410,000 Blacks in 1976 were served by one hospital whilst 69,000 Whites had three hospitals (Auret 1990).

This racial demarcation in health delivery was also complemented by a two-tier training system for health personnel in which few Blacks, unlike Whites, had the privilege of completing secondary education to be able to enrol for a full three-year nurse-training course that would have entitled them to qualify as state-registered nurses (Weinrich 1973). As a result, most Africans wanting a career in nursing ended up enrolling in a two-year course usually offered by mission schools to gain a lower State-Certified Nurse qualification (Weinrich 1973). The privileges accorded to Whites had therefore not only facilitated White-only hospitals manned by White nurses and doctors, but also facilitated the creation of an environment in which Whites would be placed at the pinnacle of the profession (Gaidzanwa 1999). With these privileges the health sector became important in determining whether Whites were prepared to not only work with Blacks as equals, but also how far they were prepared to provide health care to those they believed to be below them in the hierarchical classification of the population.

### *The Spread of Christianity*

Christian missionaries positioned themselves as both bearers of Christian ideology and agents of cultural imperialism by identifying themselves with an Anglo-Saxon civilising culture. The introduction of Christianity was based on demonising, despising and undermining traditional African religious beliefs and ways of life. For example, the role of ancestral spirits in African worship was not only equated with demonic worship of people possessed with evil spirits but was also blamed for stifling social development.

Africans embraced Christianity as a superior emancipating religion, which provided refuge against oppressive and irrational traditional customs. Belittling ancestral spirits by the missionaries undermined their relevance in Africans' socio-economic and political systems. The inevitable consequence was the creation of an African community that saw itself as a fortunate and grateful recipient of European civilisation. African Christian converts had started a transformation process that made them objects of European civilisation by ceasing to be active and rational

participants in the preservation of their history and identity. Christianity therefore turned out to be important in determining any future identity constructions of Black Africans that was to extend into the diaspora.

Understanding the impact of historically constructed identities and prejudices on Black Zimbabwean immigrants' economic and social integration could also not be divorced from the disparity in the spread of Christianity between the Shona and Ndebele during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This was apparent when twelve of the fourteen mission stations opened in Zimbabwe during the first decade of colonial rule (1890–1900) were in Shona areas (Zvobgo 1996). This was despite the pioneering mission work of the London Missionary Society in Matabeleland from 1859. This vicissitude of missionary activities in the two regions was attributed to four variable factors: the initial response of the Ndebele to Christianity, the colonisation process, the Anglo-Ndebele war of 1893 and the 1896–1897 uprisings.

Nineteenth-century Ndebele resistance to Christianity marked the start of a process that would lead to diversity in the spread of the religion between Mashonaland and Matabeleland. This was when the pioneers of missionary work in Matabeleland, the London Missionary Society, failed to win a single convert between 1859 and 1880 (Zvobgo 1996). Ndlovu-Gatsheni attributed this to Ndebele consciousness of their autonomy and their belief in the divine nature of their king, which were instrumental in the rejection of Christianity (Ndlovu-Gatsheni in Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2008). It was this pre-colonial resistance by the Ndebele that naturally stifled the implementation of plans by missionaries to evangelise Matabeleland during the first decade of colonial rule.

The colonisation process started by the Pioneer Column in 1890 also marked the beginning of the diverse Christian missionary activities between Mashonaland and Matabeleland that was to have a long-lasting impact on the socio-economic way of life of the Shona and the Ndebele. When the Pioneer Column set off for Mashonaland in 1890, it had close ties with missionaries. Canon Balfour of the Anglican Church, together with Father Andrew Hartmann, a Jesuit Missionary of the Roman Catholic Church, were chaplains of the Column (Ndlovu-Gatsheni in Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009). In return for services rendered during settling in Mashonaland the BSAC gave the Anglican Church £600 to cover the expenses of establishing missions in Mashonaland (Ndlovu-Gatsheni in Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009).

The BSAC's generous support of the Anglican Church was extended to other churches—namely, Roman Catholic, Wesleyan Methodist, Dutch Reformed, American Board Mission, American Methodist Episcopal and Salvation Army—through the allocation of land. This support naturally paved the way for an influx of missionaries into Mashonaland before Matabeleland. Working in partnership with the secular BSAC the missionaries could open mission stations in the region. Mission stations had two main objectives: to evangelise and to introduce Western education (Zvobgo 1996). The mission stations' objective of introducing Western education was invaluable in equipping Africans with skills to integrate in colonial socio-economic structures. For example, courses such as bricklaying, carpentry or tailoring at the Roman Catholic-run Chishawasha Jesuit Mission near Harare emphasised the inextricable link between Christian mission schools and equipping the Shona with skills to engage with the socio-economic structures of the colonial state at a more visible and faster rate than the Ndebele (Wild 1992).

Whilst missionary activities were taking off in Shona-dominated regions during the early stages of colonial rule, progress in Matabeleland was either halted or slowed down by the Ndebele uprising of 1893 and the insurgency (Chimurenga 1) of 1896–1897. Although the defeat of both the Shona and the Ndebele in the 1896–1897 uprising was followed by intensification of missionary activities in both Matabeleland and Mashonaland, the Shona were deemed more receptive to Christianity than the Ndebele.

Christianity was positively received by the Shona as a consequence of the manner in which they were defeated in Chimurenga 1. Unlike the case in Matabeleland, as argued by Ranger, the brutal suppression of the 1896–1897 rebellion in Mashonaland had caused disillusionment among the Shona (Ranger 1970). With their spiritual leaders surrendering unconditionally and suffering the humiliation of being put on trial and executed, a significant number of the Shona turned to the Christian god (Ranger 1970). Their Shona spiritual leaders had been portrayed as being weak and ineffective when confronted by an enemy worshipping the Christian god.

The Shona's receptiveness to Christianity, according to Zvobgo, led to the translation of the Bible into the Shona language ahead of the Ndebele language (Zvobgo 1986). By 1907, translation of the Bible's New Testament into Shona had been completed. Since early European

education had been pioneered by missionaries, it was inevitable that the Shona’s acceptance of Christianity resulted in them attaining literacy skills earlier and at a faster rate than the Ndebele. As a result, Zvobgo acknowledges that, unlike the Ndebele, ‘translation of the scriptures into vernacular enabled literate Shona converts to understand the teachings of the scriptures better than before’ thus triggering more conversions as some Shona took on the role of evangelising (Zvobgo 1986).

As more Africans converted to Christianity, the arrogant attitude of White missionaries led to the formation of African Pentecostal churches (Ndlovu-Gatsheni in Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009). Maxwell argues that Africanised versions of Pentecostalism which emerged in the 1920s had their roots in the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM), whose first recorded entrance into Southern Rhodesia was in 1916 (Maxwell 2006). Although AFM’s first mission was in Matabeleland, it was in Mashonaland where there was rapid growth of African churches. With a high conversion rate in Shona-dominated provinces, it soon became apparent that literate entrepreneurial Shona Christians would have the confidence to establish churches to counter the arrogant attitudes displayed by some missionaries. The result was the rise of African Pentecostalism, which had an ethnic bias in its leadership (Maxwell 2006). As shown in Table 2.1, of the six major African churches to have originated in Southern Rhodesia only two had Ndebele founders.<sup>3</sup> It was this ethnic identity within the African church that started

**Table 2.1** African churches established 1900–1960

<i>Church</i>	<i>Founder</i>	<i>Established</i>
Zion Apostolic Faith Mission	Samuel Mutendi (Shona)	1925
African Apostolic Church	John Marange (Shona)	1932
Gospel of God Church	Johane Masowe-Chishanu (Shona)	1932
Apostolic Faith Church of Southern and Central Africa <sup>a</sup>	Morgan Sengwayo (Ndebele)	1955
Harvest House International Church <sup>a</sup>	Colin and Sarah Nyathi (Ndebele)	1955
Forward in Faith (ZAOGA)	Ezekiel Guti (Shona)	1960

<sup>a</sup>Established in Matabeleland  
ZAOGA Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa

a process of constructing congregations that would mirror the ethnicity of the founder members in subsequent generations including those who migrated to Britain.

Since early European education was pioneered by missionaries, it was inevitable that the Shona's adoption of Christianity had resulted in them attaining literacy, numeracy and technical professional skills earlier and at a faster rate than the Ndebele. Attainment of numeracy and literacy skills gave the mission-educated Shona the confidence to be entrepreneurial by opening small-scale businesses. This became apparent when the earliest recorded licensing of African traders in 1900 was in Shona regions (Wild 1992). There were two African hawkers in Salisbury (Harare) and Fort Victoria (Masvingo) (Wild 1992). Between 1910 and 1920, Harare continued to experience a growing number of licensed African general retail shops including the opening of the first-ever catering business when a licence was obtained to operate a 'native eating house' in 1921 (Wild 1992). Two decades into colonisation the Shona within or near Harare owned a diverse range of businesses that included market gardening, public transportation using wagons and donkeys, bricklaying, carpentry and tailoring.

Mashonaland successes in establishing visible Shona-run businesses was not replicated in Matabeleland. The businesses were not as diverse as in Harare during the 1920s as most African traders were general dealers and petty-commodity producers such as 'boot-makers and tailors' (Wild 1992). The slow progress of the Ndebele in setting up businesses became evident when a survey in Bulawayo between 1949 and 1950 revealed that of the ninety general dealer shops run by Africans only twenty were run by the Ndebele (Wild 1992). The remaining African shopkeepers hailed from Northern Rhodesia (Zambia).

The diverse growth of African businesses in Shona and Ndebele regions had therefore created an environment in which there would always be a disproportionate ethnic representation in business ownership throughout the phases of Zimbabwe's history. This statistical disparity marked the development of Shona arrogance and prejudices against the Ndebele by viewing them not only as being less inclined to pursue educational attainment, but also as less entrepreneurial. The consequence of disproportionate ethnic representation in Black Zimbabwean businesses was not to be restricted to colonial Zimbabwe's economic structures, but also extended into Nationalist Movement activities.

### *The Nationalist Movement*

Although ethnic associations such as the National Home Movement, Matabeleland Home Society and Sons of Mashonaland Cultural Society (discussed earlier in the chapter) provided the perfect environment for the emergence of African nationalist leaders, they failed to stop the influences of ethnic allegiances in the Nationalist Movement (Msindo 2007). When the ZAPU party split up to form the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) in August 1963, it signalled a significant transition in Zimbabwean politics by creating a nationalist ideology that was bankrupt of the nation-building ideas needed to avoid fragmenting the African community along ethnic lines. This was because ZANU presented itself as a Shona political party at a time when a significant number of Shona leaders in ZAPU revolted against the leadership of Joshua Nkomo, who was associated with the Ndebele. They had become disillusioned by what they perceived as Nkomo's insistence in pursuing non-militant or passive methods of resistance (Herbst 1990). Of the new party's interim executive of seven, only two were Ndebele. Robert Mugabe was the executive secretary (Nkomo 2013). The formation of ZANU had pushed ethnic alignment which would blight Zimbabwean politics, in much the same way as did racial politics. This marked the end of Joshua Nkomo's undisputed credentials as 'Father of Zimbabwean Nationalism' and the extent of his political following could now be challenged (Stiff 2000; Nkomo 2013).

Besides the fundamental disagreement over methods to be implemented in the liberation struggle, many within what was to be the ZANU leadership criticised Nkomo for eliciting assistance from Asian businessmen and recruiting White advisors (Chung 2006). Some of his White advisors included 'Terence Ranger and John Reed from the University of Rhodesia; Leo Baron, a respected lawyer in Bulawayo; and Peter MacKay, a British military specialist' (Chung 2006). ZANU's initial resistance to non-Black participation in the Nationalist Movement courted perceptions of being an anti-White party that could not be trusted in nation-building initiatives in an independent Zimbabwe.

Ethnic allegiances within the Nationalist Movement were to undergo further consolidation when both the ZANU and ZAPU nationalist parties embraced the idea of a military armed struggle by 1965; a move that resulted in the creation of military wings to spearhead armed resistance. Shona-dominated ZANU's military wing was known as the Zimbabwe

African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) and ZAPU's military wing was known as the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA). ZAPU and its military wing had been supported by the Soviet Union together with Eastern Bloc states such as East Germany. On the other hand, ZANU's military campaign received assistance from China and incorporated the socialist rhetoric and teachings of Mao Tse-tung in its campaign (Nkomo 2013).

The respective military wings did not escape the clutches of ethnic identities which permeated the political structures of the Nationalist Movement. ZANLA, the military wing of Shona-dominated ZANU, could call on recruits from 80% of the African population, mainly in Mashonaland, Masvingo, Manicaland and parts of the Midlands (Kawewe in Dixon and Scheurell 1995). In contrast, ZIPRA's recruitment drive was heavily dependent on 15% of the African population made up of the Ndebele mainly residing in Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands and West Mashonaland.<sup>4</sup> Access to a larger recruitment area not only allowed ZANLA to operate over a larger geographical area but, statistically, they also had significantly more guerrilla fighters than ZIPRA. The glaring difference in the size of the two forces was exposed by Norma Kriger when she noted that 20,000 of the estimated 28,000 guerrillas fighting in Zimbabwe in 1979 were ZANLA fighters (Kriger 2003).

Until 1975 the political and military wings of both ZANU and ZAPU were based in Zambia's capital city Lusaka. However, this changed in 1975 when the newly independent Mozambique became the administrative and operational external headquarters for ZANU and its military wing ZANLA. Using the vast borders with Mozambique, ZANLA entered Zimbabwe from the east and north into the Shona regions of Mashonaland and Manicaland, thus allowing it to operate on a larger scale. The independence of Mozambique had therefore opened thousands of miles of border territory to ZANLA guerrilla infiltration, which would ultimately play a crucial role in the armed liberation (Chung 2006). Meanwhile, ZAPU continued to be based in Zambia, which allowed ZIPRA to enter Zimbabwe from the west.

Having clearly defined operational regions demarcated by ethnic boundaries exacerbated ethnic tensions between the military wings of the nationalist parties. Violent clashes often occurred when the military wings encroached each other's territory. Ethnic identity within the nationalists' resistance to colonial rule had entered a new phase in



which violence, hate speeches and slogans, which were once exclusively reserved for the White community, were now being used by Blacks against each other.

Disparity in the size of the military wings and clearly defined geographical areas of influence provided a platform for ethnic-influenced rhetoric explaining which military wing was contributing most in the armed struggle for independence. Contributions to the liberation struggle would have undeniably planted a seed of insecurity within the Ndebele community on how they would be treated in a post-colonial Zimbabwe ruled by a Shona-dominated government. As a minority ethnic community, the Ndebele would not have been naive to the impact historical interpretations minimising the contribution of ZAPU or ZIPRA during the armed struggle for independence would have in post-colonial Zimbabwe. The Nationalist Movement's armed struggle had therefore succeeded in entrenching nostalgic ideas devoid of ethnic unity whose significance was not to be restricted to post-colonial Zimbabwe's borders but was to extend to the Black diaspora community.

Both ZANLA and ZIPRA needed to mobilise mass support to ensure the supply of basic necessities on the frontline. However, on many occasions the impoverished peasants, already reeling under the oppressive colonial political system, were often forced to provide shelter and food (Mtisi et al. 2009). Failure to provide the expected support would lead to accusations of collaborating with the White administration. Regrettably, there were instances in which personal rivalries or jealousy would result in peasants falsely labelling each other as collaborators with the colonial state. Since death or torture were the ultimate punishments of those labelled as collaborators with the colonial regime, there were a significant number of innocent victims of the war. These methods and disciplinary measures to ensure support for the Nationalist Movement during the armed struggle brought about a Black community that was not only fearful of the colonial state's security forces, but also of each other. It was therefore imperative that post-colonial Zimbabwe had to be politically stable to build a nation in which relations with the political establishment would not be based on ethnic allegiances or political intimidation.

While the nationalist struggle for independence was promoting and consolidating communalism and fear within Africans, it also undermined race relations necessary for the development of a national identity. Despite Julie Kate Seirils' references to Coloured nationalists,

such as Gerry Raftopolous, Elaine and Joseph Culverwell and Herbert Foya-Thompson, the Coloured community's involvement in the liberation struggle either as guerrillas or political activists was patchy (Seirlis 2004). As for Asians, although there was little wide-scale support for the Nationalist Movement, there were notable exceptions such as Indian businessmen Manilal Naran and Kantibhai Patel who went on to become ZANU-PF Deputy Secretary for Finance and was appointed Senator.

Ellen, a widowed Coloured Zimbabwean in her sixties once married to one of the Black Nationalist leaders, admitted that she was one of the few Coloureds who chose to align with either ZANU or ZAPU in the struggle for independence in 1958 (Ellen interview, March 2013). She cited nationalists' attitudes toward Coloureds as playing a significant role in restricting their participation in the armed struggle. She recalled how she had to fight for recognition within the Black Nationalist Movement because of her mixed race background. This was despite proving her allegiance to the nationalist cause by quitting her nursing job to support her husband. For her, this was an expected response since a significant number of Blacks within the Nationalist Movement regarded Coloureds (and Asians) as beneficiaries of the colonial state's hierarchical racial categorisation of the population and therefore should not be trusted as communities that would support the liberation struggle. It had become an irrefutable fact among Africans that many Coloureds and Asians would rather collaborate with the colonial system than support any Black-led political movement whose victory might lead to a potential loss of their privileges.

With insignificant support from Coloureds and Asians against White colonial rule the Nationalist Movement's idea of the nation evolved into racist rhetoric. Wide use of the Shona slogan *mwana werhu* ('child of the soil') within ZANU, referring to the indigenous population, naturally delegitimised claims of being Zimbabwean by Whites, Asians, Coloureds, African immigrants and to some extent those from the Ndebele community (Chitando 1998; Muzondidya 2007). Use of such Shona slogans had therefore served to confirm how ZANU, as the biggest entity in the Nationalist Movement, was bankrupt of nation-building policies to be implemented in a multiracial post-colonial Zimbabwe. The slogans helped send subtle messages undermining the prospect of equal opportunities in a future independent Zimbabwe. ZANU was constructing perceptions of being anti-White, Coloured or Asian with the potential of practising reverse racism once in power in a post-colonial Zimbabwe.

### *Colonial Migration Trends*

Smith's UDI and the armed liberation struggle had an impact on migration trends. International economic sanctions and intensification of the liberation struggle resulted in Rhodesia ceasing to be an obvious choice for European immigrants. Instead, economic deterioration and political insecurity led to an increase in White emigration. Parallel with White emigration, there was also out-migration from Zimbabwe of a large number of Black African political refugees. It was estimated that over 210,000 Zimbabwean refugees were in neighbouring Mozambique, Zambia and Botswana when the war was at its peak between 1977 and 1978 (Makina 2014). Within the African community, there were also a sizeable number of young academically able Blacks leaving for Europe and the USA to further their education. In the 1970s young Black Zimbabweans left schools, tertiary colleges and universities to join the liberation struggle in either Mozambique or Zambia. It had become a common occurrence to discover abandoned student rooms in halls of residence.

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Whilst the pre-colonial arrival of the Ndebele led to tensions between the Shona and the Ndebele, it was the formal politicisation of ethnicity and race during the colonial era through the creation of ethnic-named administrative regions and racial compartmentalisation of the population that served to stimulate a consciousness of ethnic allegiances and racial boundaries. To ensure there would be no transgression of racial boundaries or privileges, the chapter established how Whites as occupiers of the top rung in the hierarchy were sheltered from competing with other races in colonial socio-economic structures by legislation such as the Education Act (1966), Land Tenure Act (1969), Vagrancy Act (1968) and Area Accommodation Act (1972).

By having privileged access to the country's resources, Whites emerged to be the main contributors to the country's economy in which many Coloureds and Blacks had been condemned to semi-skilled or unskilled labour. Colonial discriminatory policies had facilitated the creation of an environment in which Whites would feel indispensable to the economic needs of the country, a privileged economic position that nurtured perceptions of racial superiority. As a result, any successful

post-colonial nation-building project would be determined by the extent to which Whites were willing to relinquish their constructed economic privileges.

Colonial racial categorisation of the population had also exposed Coloureds and Asians to potential marginalisation in a Black-ruled independent Zimbabwe. As occupiers of the second rung in colonial social hierarchy, the Coloured and Asian communities were not as disenfranchised as Blacks. Instead, as a divide-and-rule tactic by the colonial administration, Coloureds and Asians were deliberately made to feel superior to Blacks by having separate and better equipped schools, and their own residential areas. In addition, Coloureds who had a kindred relationship with Blacks were forcibly removed from African environments and placed in residential homes with access to better facilities. In residential homes, they would be indoctrinated to align themselves with Whites. It was this privileged colonial position that justified perceptions within most Africans that Coloureds and Asians were communities vulnerable to shifting allegiances and therefore could not be trusted.

This chapter has also recognised the emergence of Black Africans who were becoming increasingly sceptical of the relevance of their traditions or history. These were Africans who were beginning to entertain racial ideologies that any future African way of life or socio-economic systems should be modelled around European socio-economic and political systems if upward social mobility was to be attained. A majority of these were Christian converts or beneficiaries of a Western education system. The development of a Black African middle class and emphasis on Western education resulted in the African community being stratified, which would not only determine future relations between Zimbabwean communities, but would also determine socio-economic interactions with host communities in the diaspora.

The chapter recognised that Rhodesian colonialism during the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland facilitated fragmentation of the Black community by categorising it as indigenous or non-indigenous. The indigenous population consisting of the Shona and the Ndebele developed prejudicial attitudes towards non-indigenous African immigrant labourers from Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique. These attitudes would encourage a feeling of superiority among Zimbabweans that would influence interactions with African immigrants and their descendants.

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## CHAPTER 3

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# Constructing Post-colonial Ethnic and Racial Relations

## INTRODUCTION

Like most African states, Zimbabwe as a nation-state is a colonial construct in which ethno-racial identities and prejudices had been developed and nurtured during the colonial era. At independence on 18 April 1980, the new government of Zimbabwe was therefore beset with challenges of constructing a new united nation that had been polarised by significant historic racial and ethnic allegiances. Regrettably, just as it was during colonial rule, the chapter will explore how the era of post-independence politics in building a new nation from the dungeon of colonial racial segregation and ethnic polarisation failed to escape historic ethno-racial tensions. Three main factors will be identified that will assist in understanding why creating a national identity became an illusion. These are failure of the Lancaster House Agreement to radically restructure the colonial legacy of White socio-economic privileges, civil conflict that led to the marginalisation and subordination of the Ndebele and a nation-building project based on a narrative that Zimbabwe was a bifurcated state of Black and Whites thus excluding Coloureds and Asians. The Zimbabwean diaspora community would therefore migrate with memories of unresolved ethnic and racial conflicts that would be significant in determining community interactions.

### *Lancaster House Constitution and Politics of Race*

Although the Lancaster House Constitution, agreed after cross-party negotiations held in London from September to December 1979, ensured a peaceful transition from colonial rule to multiparty democracy, it also promoted the emergence of a narrative that independence from minority rule was not brought about by victory in the nationalists' armed struggle but by the Lancaster House settlement (Sellstrom 2002; Herbst 1990). The initial terms of post-independence politics based on the Lancaster House Constitution would therefore have to reflect that victory in the armed struggle was disputed. This became apparent when the Constitution embodied a series of compromises that involuntarily gave the minority White community protection in the first decade of Black rule in which Zimbabwe was to be governed under the Lancaster Constitution. Mugabe's government found itself inheriting a bruised but undefeated settler White community which contained anachronistic elements that had the potential of becoming hostile to the political project of the new regime if the terms of the Constitution were not favourably implemented.

The most notable compromises under the Constitution's terms included not only guaranteeing Whites' continuous ownership of land acquired under colonial rule but also, more significantly granting them a political voice (Muzondidya in Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009). Of the one hundred seats in the newly established National Assembly, twenty were reserved for Whites (Muzondidya in Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009). Abolishment of reserved parliamentary seats for Whites (which could not happen within seven years of independence) or any amendment to the terms of the constitution required a unanimous parliamentary vote from the one hundred cross-party parliamentarians (Muzondidya 2009). The political and economic protection of Whites under the terms of the Lancaster House Constitution proved to be a significant determinant in assessing whether members of the White community could be genuine participants in dismantling their historical social and economic privileges in independent Zimbabwe.

Unfortunately, the success of the Lancaster House settlement in securing political and economic protection of Whites was not extended to Coloureds and Asians. This was apparent when the Constitution failed to explicitly address how the social, economic and political welfare of Coloureds and Asians would be managed in post-colonial Zimbabwe.

Moreover, leaders of these communities were not invited to the negotiations. Without official representation, the communities were grouped together with the White community on the voters' roll for the 1980 multiparty democratic elections (Gregory 1980). By being grouped with Whites in the first democratic electoral process, both communities were being placed at the periphery of society's social strata without official recognition that they had exclusive needs which had to be catered for if they were to attain upward social mobility in post-colonial Zimbabwe. In a subtle way, the outcome of the Lancaster House negotiations had therefore set in motion potential marginalisation of the Coloured and Asian communities in independent Zimbabwe.

Failure to officially recognise Coloureds and Asians at the Lancaster House negotiations had placed the respective communities in a precarious and complex position when attempting to construct a post-colonial identity. The agreed settlement had unwittingly started the construction of perceptions within the Coloured and Asian communities that post-colonial Zimbabwe would be a bifurcated society of Blacks and Whites, with Coloureds and Asians given little consideration. This perceived bipolarisation of Zimbabwe's complex multiracial society was always going to lead to much scrutiny on how reconciliation in independent Zimbabwe was to cater for both the victims and beneficiaries of Zimbabwe's colonial past.

With the Shona–Ndebele divide being so conspicuous during the liberation struggle, it would have been expected that negotiations would address historic communal tensions. However, as it turned out, the Lancaster House Constitution's racial partnership agreement between Whites and Blacks could not be translated to the ethnically polarised Nationalist Movement. The only symbolic gesture of unity in the Nationalist Movement was when ZANU and ZAPU delegates attended the negotiations under a single umbrella known as the Patriotic Front (PF).

### *1980 Elections and Ethnic and Racial Polarisation*

Without a sustainable agreement between ZANU and ZAPU the Patriotic Front coalition collapsed when the two nationalist parties resolved to contest the first multidemocratic elections in February 1980 as rivals. The decision to contest the elections as rivals trivialised adoption of the term Patriotic Front by both parties as it exposed ethnic

rivalry which would undermine any moves to create a national identity. ZANU led by Robert Mugabe became known as ZANU PF and ZAPU under Joshua Nkomo known as PF ZAPU.

The decision by the two nationalist parties to contest the elections as rivals placed their supporters on a collision course with each other in the run-up period to the elections. Peter Stiff describes how ethnic-driven intimidation as a method of electioneering became endemic in both ZANU PF and PF ZAPU areas of control (Stiff 2000). Just as it was during the liberation struggle, any opposing election agents who ventured into either ZANU PF or PF ZAPU areas of control were either harassed or in extreme cases murdered. Violent clashes between supporters of the major nationalist political parties exposed how trivial the nation-building agenda had become within the leadership of the Nationalist Movement. Violence only served to confirm that the Nationalist Movement's leadership had been too focussed on removing minority rule that they negated the urgency of formulating policies to deal with historic ethnic conflicts that always carried the potential of derailing any post-independence nation-building project.

Zimbabwe's ethnic demographics proved to be a major determinant in defining the outcome of the elections within the Black electorate. With the Shona constituting 80% of Zimbabwe's population, the Shona-dominated ZANU PF party emerged as clear winners with 63% of the votes while PF ZAPU managed only 24% (Sithole and Makumbe 1997). The landslide victory of Mugabe's ZANU PF meant that of the eighty seats reserved for Blacks in the one-hundred seat national assembly, ZANU PF had a majority with fifty-seven seats. Nkomo's PF ZAPU controlled twenty seats, while the United African National Council (UANC) led by Abel Muzorewa, Prime Minister of the short-lived 1979 Zimbabwe-Rhodesia government, had only three seats (Mtisi et al. 2009). The election results had therefore theoretically given Mugabe the mandate to rule the entire country including the two Ndebele Matabeleland provinces where at most only 10% of the electorate had voted for him (Herbst 1990).

Despite the Commonwealth Observers' Group (COG) describing the elections as 'free and fair', a significant number of the Ndebele rejected the ZANU PF victory (Alexander et al. 2000). These were individuals who convinced themselves that a combination of Shona numerical advantage, foul play, favouritism shown for ZANU PF by the British at the expense of PF ZAPU had led to ZANU PF's victory (Alexander et al. 2000). However, one outcome that was certain was that the election

results confirmed that Nkomo's credentials as 'father of Zimbabwe nationalism' had been rejected by all except the Ndebele ethnic community (Stiff 2000).

Whilst the Black electorate voting pattern reinforced ethnic allegiances, the White voters were creating a new dimension in post-colonial racial relations by voting for Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front party. Enjoying overwhelming support, the Rhodesian Front won all twenty seats reserved for Whites (Kriger 2005). The Rhodesian Front's monopoly of seats reserved for Whites meant that the White electorate had given Ian Smith the political mandate to represent them despite him being the architect of UDI which had prolonged minority rule. Victory by Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front had therefore made the White community vulnerable to accusations by Blacks that they were not ready to abandon the architecture of the undemocratic political system that had prolonged colonial rule. The development of such racial perceptions would naturally lead to much scrutiny on how Whites would respond to the government's reconciliation policies in the nation-building project.

### *Political Reconciliation Attempts*

The outcome of Zimbabwe's first democratic elections exposed historic ethnic and racial polarisation which had the potential of undermining community relations essential in creating a national identity. London-based motor mechanic Martins who had migrated in 1990 as a teenager after completing his secondary school education identified the political outcome in the 1980 elections as a major contributory factor to the political naivety of most older Whites (Martins interview, January 2013). He remembered how his parents and many other Whites were petrified when Mugabe won the elections. They had hoped that Nkomo, whom they perceived as a 'moderate', would win. Martins believed it was the outcome of the elections that undermined the resolve of some Whites to be part of a non-racial nation. As a consequence they continued to live on their farms or in exclusive residential areas with very little interaction with Blacks until they were violently evicted in 2000.

With the outcome of the 1980 elections exposing ethnic and racial allegiances, it was politically imperative for Mugabe's maiden speech on 4 March 1980 to allay the fears of those who felt politically insecure under a ZANU PF government by calling for reconciliation and national

unity. The speech was aimed at stimulating a national consciousness by encouraging Zimbabweans to think beyond racial and ethnic boundaries which had polarised the country for over ninety years. Emphasising the need for reconciliation, Mugabe said:

I urge you whether black or white, to join me in a new pledge, to forget our grim past, forgive others and forget, join hands in a new amity and together as Zimbabweans, trample upon racism, tribalism and regionalism.<sup>1</sup>

To bring about reconciliation the first cabinet of independent Zimbabwe not only consisted of victorious ZANU PF members but also included individuals from both PF ZAPU and the White community. To appease PF ZAPU supporters, six of the thirty-five cabinet seats were reserved for PF ZAPU (Gregory 1980). The most significant PF ZAPU cabinet member was Joshua Nkomo who assumed the role of Home Affairs Minister with a remit to control the police.

In a significant conciliatory gesture towards the White community, Mugabe appointed the former Rhodesian Front Finance Minister, David Smith, as the new Minister for Commerce and Industry, and the White president of the National Farmers Union, Dennis Norman, as the new Minister of Agriculture (Gregory 1980). The appointment of Whites into the cabinet reassured Whites who feared Mugabe's ZANU PF would implement the anti-White rhetoric popularised during the colonial era. The immediate visible impact of Mugabe's reconciliation policy on the White community was White emigration, which had peaked at 1558 in May 1980 compared with 1278 in April of the same year, began to slow (*The Herald*, 20 August 1980).

Coloureds and Asians were also part of the reconciliation drive. Although Coloureds were not given any cabinet ministerial posts, they felt represented in the government when Joseph Culverwell (Coloured community leader) was appointed a Senator in 1980 and Deputy Minister of Education and Culture between 1981 and 1988. To allay the fears of the Asian community, Mugabe, at an Asian-organised fundraising dinner in 1984 encouraged Asians to maximise their business skills as members of 'one unified nation'. Whilst referring to the expulsion of Ugandan Asians in 1972 he reassured them they were 'citizens of the country' and had an important part to play in the nation-building project (Fisher 2010).

### *The Matabeleland Civil Conflict (Gukurahundi)*

Despite political initiatives to pacify PF ZAPU supporters by establishing a government of national unity, it was not long before the envisaged nation-building project started to be derailed by the re-emergence of historic politically driven ethnic tensions. With Mugabe's ZANU PF government pursuing nation-building policies based on the party's socialist ideological framework of 'absolute power and moral authority within a one party state political and ideological framework', PF ZAPU and its Ndebele supporters were always at risk of being accused of derailing any nation-building processes spearheaded by a Shona-dominated government (Ndlovu-Gatsheni in Williams, Cawthra and Abrahams 2003). The vulnerability of the Ndebele in the process of building a new nation became a reality in February 1982 when military weapons were discovered on properties owned by PF ZAPU. Responding to the discovery of the arms cache, Mugabe accused PF ZAPU of harbouring a pre-independence hidden agenda of wanting to depose a Shona-led government if they lost the election.

Mugabe's treason accusations against PF ZAPU's leadership undermined any prospects of finding a peaceful solution to the discovery of weapons. This was after the government started a coordinated and ruthless process of ending PF ZAPU's participation in the coalition government. PF ZAPU leaders were arrested and detained without trial, and former Ndebele ZIPRA fighters were sidelined in the newly integrated Zimbabwe National Army. By the end of February 1982, Mugabe had sacked Nkomo, removed all PF ZAPU members from the coalition cabinet and confiscated PF ZAPU properties (*The Herald*, 18 February 1982).

The arrest and sacking of PF ZAPU leaders (most of whom were Ndebele) became part of government propaganda in stimulating awareness that the Shona would not tolerate any political forces from Matabeleland that were bent on destabilising the country. Ethnic tensions rose when the state-controlled national newspaper, *The Herald*, reported that hundreds of people in the Shona regions of Harare and Mashonaland cheered and demonstrated in support of Mugabe's sacking of Nkomo (*The Herald*, 19 February 1982). Such ethnic suspicions and tensions were subtly engineered by the state media and undermined the sincerity of Mugabe's reconciliation narrative in addressing historic ethnic tensions. Zimbabwe, two years into independence, was on the brink of a violent political upheaval that was to radically determine post-independence Shona–Ndebele relations within and outside Zimbabwean borders.

In protest at what they believed was deliberate persecution and polarisation of the Ndebele by Mugabe's government, a group of disgruntled former ZIPRA fighters took up arms against the government. Although the bulk of the dissidents consisted of ex-ZIPRA fighters, some Ndebele opportunist civilians also joined the disgruntled dissidents, taking advantage of the situation to commit crimes or carry out personal vendettas (Alexander et al. 2000). Without a clear political ideology and operating in former ZAPU-controlled areas the dissidents carried out acts of sabotage on government institutions, dams and communication and transport networks. Civilians such as White commercial farmers, members of the Shona community and foreign tourists were attacked and in some cases murdered (Alexander et al. 2000).

Faced with the possibility of newly independent Zimbabwe disintegrating into political turmoil, Mugabe had to act decisively against insurgents and their supporters whom the government had identified as the Ndebele. There were two major reasons the Ndebele were identified as supporters of the dissidents. First, the dissidents had chosen a tribalism discourse by attacking the Shona when expressing their disgruntlement and, second, they were operating in Matabeleland or areas of the Midlands which had a significant Ndebele population where they would have been guaranteed the support they needed to carry out their operations.

To dismantle the perceived civilian dissident support network, Mugabe authorised sending North Korean-trained soldiers of the Fifth Brigade into Matabeleland to 'apply a military solution to the dissident problem' (Herbst 1990: 169). The Fifth Brigade, which was only answerable to Mugabe, was a crack Shona unit 'with carefully chosen Ndebele speakers who were incorporated because of their knowledge of Matabeleland provinces terrain and language' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2003). With experience gained of guerrilla tactics during the liberation struggle, the army's objective was to decisively eliminate the source of dissident support, which had been identified as the Ndebele.

The process of dismantling dissident support would therefore include ruthless and brutal attacks on the Ndebele community. To instil fear, community members would be forced to witness torture and murder to discourage them from supporting the dissidents. Rape, depriving people of food by burning granaries and closing grocery shops in rural areas and detentions without trial were other methods used to deter people from supporting the insurgency. To undermine Ndebele particularism



the Ndebele were forced to speak Shona or risk being murdered or tortured. These attacks left lasting physical and psychological effects on the Ndebele community. It is estimated that 20,000 members of the Ndebele community were murdered by security forces between 1985 and 1987 (Phimister 2008).

The attacks carried out by the Fifth Brigade on the Ndebele were known by a Shona word *Gukurahundi* translated as ‘the rain that washes away chaff from the last harvest before the spring’ (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2003). To the Ndebele this meant that the harvest was the achievement of independence and the Ndebele were the chaff to be washed away before the spring rain, which represented the establishment of a one-party state in a united Zimbabwe under the control of the Shona-dominated ZANU PF (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2003). The brutal suppression of dissidents by targetting Ndebele citizens and the use of a Shona word to describe it only served to exacerbate post-colonial ethnic tensions.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni argues that the response by the Fifth Brigade had evoked pre-colonial memories of Ndebele raids on the Shona which naturally evolved to become a hindrance in unifying an ethnically polarised state (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2003). Some within the Ndebele community struggled with how they could be active participants in nation building when Shona-led military forces were carrying out what the Ndebele believed were punishments for their pre-colonial transgressions against the Shona. *Gukurahundi* had therefore returned the country to its pre-colonial tribal mode which was to determine future relations between Shona and Ndebele diasporic communities. The atrocities carried out on the Ndebele seemed to echo an article written by Robert Mugabe in 1977 regarding pre-colonial Zimbabwe in which he supported the assertion by Ngwabi Bhebe and Terence Ranger that it was ‘a natural Shona nation which had always sought to defend its autonomy’.<sup>2</sup> These sentiments subtly excluded the Ndebele from being recognised as indigenous Zimbabweans.

Parallel with the military campaign in Matabeleland was continuation of a sustained government propaganda campaign based on a biased narrative of the liberation struggle. National events meant to unite nations like Independence Day and Heroes Day celebrations degenerated into ZANU PF political rallies where Mugabe and ZANU PF were presented as the only authentic heroes of the liberation struggle. Mugabe and ZANU PF were elevated as heroic liberators or nation builders whilst Ndebele-dominated PF ZAPU’s contribution was trivialised, downplayed or

denigrated (Mhlanga 2013). PF ZAPU's leadership was being depicted as cowards and villains who were a threat to Zimbabwe's hard-won independence made possible by Mugabe's ZANU PF (Alexander et al. 2000).

The economic marginalisation of Matabeleland during the *Gukurahundi* and the atrocities committed by the army on the Ndebele would have undoubtedly consolidated feelings of despondency when attempting to pursue economic activities to compete with the Shona. Linda, an Ndebele immigrant in her fifties now living in Leicester claimed how under the pretext of *Gukurahundi* the government would frustrate entrepreneurial Ndebele by requiring them to send their business plans to Harare for approval (Linda interview, September 2013). The centralisation of business applications in Harare undermined the nation-building project by creating an environment in which the Ndebele perceived themselves as being discriminated against.

Ndebele perceptions that they were being economically marginalised were inevitable since most of their business applications were being handled by Shona civil servants who were subject to *Gukurahundi* propaganda demonising the Ndebele. For Linda, her perceptions of economic discrimination became justified when an acquaintance working at the Harare offices confided in her by revealing how at times 'they were instructed not to approve Ndebele business applications' (Linda interview, September 2013). The rapid rise of Shona-owned businesses especially in transport and retail shops in Bulawayo during *Gukurahundi* validated perceptions that the government was deliberately frustrating potential entrepreneurial Ndebele who could have challenged Shona dominance in the business sector. This ethnic disparity in business enterprise led to the Shona being presented as more entrepreneurial than the Ndebele, thus consolidating historic identities and prejudices, which were to be exported to the diaspora.

With increasing Ndebele civilian casualties and with the Ndebele leadership in prison or under house arrest, there was a need for a peaceful solution to end the Matabeleland insurgency. On 22 December 1987 the Unity Accord was signed between ZANU PF and PF ZAPU. Under the unity agreement the two parties merged to form a new ZANU PF party led by Mugabe with Nkomo becoming the party's vice president. However, to most ordinary Ndebele the Unity Accord was a non-event since it failed to erase the bitterness and memories of the Fifth Brigade atrocities (Sibanda in Kaulemu 2008). Neither did the Unity Accord end Shona dominance in the country's socio-economic structures.

For example, Shona dominance in Matabeleland continued in the post-*Gukurahundi* era as highlighted in 1999 by Abel Siwela, the mayor of Bulawayo. He bemoaned the fact that ‘the civil service and the private sectors are staffed up to 80 or 90% with non-residents’ (Sibanda in Kaulemu). Out of 15–20 bank managers in Bulawayo only two are Ndebele, a situation some Ndebele community leaders described as shonalisation of the region (Sibanda in Kaulemu 2008).

Even at the University of Zimbabwe, the Ndebele were not being fully incorporated into the Shona-dominated student community. Taku who was a student in the early 1990s recalled how proportional representation of Ndebele students was ‘not a true reflection of Zimbabwe’s Ndebele population’ (Taku interview, March 2013). With no chance of being represented in the Student Union because of their low numbers, Taku explained how most of them ended up being assimilated into the Shona-dominated student body resulting in Ndebele representation being insignificant. With depressed Ndebele visibility at the university, the Shona continued to nurture colonial-developed perceptions that they were more inclined to pursue higher education than the Ndebele.

Shona dominance in the country’s socio-economic and political structures had created an environment that would make the Ndebele feel insecure and marginalised. Lenny, a Zimbabwean-based business executive who in the 1990s was part of a taskforce asked to identify the reasons for underrepresentation of the Ndebele in Zimbabwe’s economic structures, blamed the Ndebele’s response to their perceived economic marginalisation (Lenny interview, July 2013). He pointed out how migrating to South Africa and not pursuing higher education had always been the most viable option for most Ndebele young men and women who were seeking upward social mobility. Although he acknowledged Ndebele marginalisation during *Gukurahundi*, he drew parallels with the Shona’s responses to marginalisation during the colonial era. Whilst the Shona were seen to be embracing education, he argued that for most of the Ndebele young generation

... there was not so much emphasis on education attainment as a means of facilitating upward social mobility. On completion of Form Four [O-level] *eZansi* [South Africa] was the next destination for a significant number. In contrast, the Shona did not have the luxury of a country they could find solace in as they did not have a country they shared ancestral links with. For the Shona, education attainment and entrepreneurship had always been their escape route.

### *Economy: Legacy of Race*

At independence the new government undeniably inherited a well-developed economy with an annual growth rate averaging 3.4% during the 1980s (Addison and Laakso 2003). However, this well-developed economic structure was still moulded by colonial racist policies as evidenced by Blacks who were still at the periphery of White-controlled economic structures. This racial imbalance in the economy was well represented in the distribution of wages and salaries. Blacks who accounted for 97.6% of the population received a disproportionate 60% of the wages and salaries with the rest being distributed among Whites, Coloureds and Asians who were less than 3% of the population (Mazingi and Kamidza 2011). This racial disparity in the distribution of wealth became a critical baseline to evaluate whether Zimbabwe's independence was all about political independence for Blacks with insignificant economic empowerment. Success of the reconciliation discourse would depend on the extent to which the economy would be transformed to allow Blacks to participate in the productive sectors of mining, farming and manufacturing. Therefore, for Zimbabwe's post-colonial nation-building project to be meaningful for Africans, Whites had to support initiatives to economically empower Blacks. This would be an essential component in the process of liberating themselves from a sense of colonial superiority within the socio-economic structures.

Regrettably, the Lancaster House Constitution's economic and political provisions subtly encouraged a significant number of Whites not to positively engage with nation-building initiatives by economically empowering Blacks. This became evident when rapid Africanisation of the public sector could not be replicated in the private sector where the government had no direct influence. Muzondidya attributed this to difficulties most entrepreneurial Blacks experienced in their attempts to obtain loans from White-controlled banks and thereby challenge the economic dominance of Whites (Muzondidya in Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009).

Ninety years of economic marginalisation had meant that most entrepreneurial Blacks did not have the collateral for bank loans to start large-scale businesses. As a result the most productive sectors of the economy continued to be closed to many Black entrepreneurs. Without the financial means to participate in the most productive sectors of the economy, aspiring Black entrepreneurs continued to be restricted to sectors of the

economy that had become synonymous with Black businesses during the colonial era. Regrettably, the environment allowed subtle continuation of colonial perceptions (especially among Blacks) that Whites were indispensable to Zimbabwe's economic success.

Perceptions that Blacks could not competently run the country's diverse economy were further consolidated when the government took over the management of twenty public enterprises spread across all sectors of the economy which had been successfully run during the colonial era (Zhou 2012). These included the Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Company (Rhodesia Iron and Steel Company), Grain Marketing Board, National Railways of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia Railway Lines), Air Zimbabwe (Rhodesia Airlines), Cotton Marketing Board, and Cold Storage Commission. These public enterprises, especially those in agriculture, had become a bastion of colonial administration and a buffer against the threat of international sanctions by 'subsidising inputs and promoting access to credit facilities to White commercial farmers' (Zhou 2012).

However, against this colonial backdrop of economic success Gideon Zhou describes how the newly acquired state companies started to operate under

untenable operational frameworks of dilapidated infrastructure and equipment, huge debts, undercapitalization, skills deficits, vandalism and looting by top ranking government officials and politicians ... operating below optimal levels, failing to service bills and facing frequent threats of industrial action from employees. (Zhou 2012)

It was therefore not surprising that the decline of once-thriving state enterprises dented the credibility of Blacks to run public or large corporate companies whilst inadvertently endorsing colonial perceptions that Whites were better in managing macrobusinesses or the economy. For most Black research participants these perceptions were justifiable when comparisons were made with companies under White ownership such as Olivine, Lever Brothers, and Rio Tinto.

Land ownership became the most contentious issue, symbolising the reluctance by some Whites to dismantle their colonial economic privileges and the accompanying prejudices that they were more economically competent than Blacks. Taking advantage of the 'willing-buyer' and 'willing-seller' principle enshrined in the Lancaster House Constitution, a significant number of White farmers frustrated any redistribution

of land to the landless Black population. With very few willing to sell their vast farms, most continued to hold on to their productive arable land. As a result, most Black farmers continued to be trapped in subsistence or semi-commercial farming on land inherited from the colonial era. As the Black population increased the urgency of addressing the land issue is captured by Muzondidya when he points out that by 1987 'the population in the Communal Lands had risen to 5.1 million and the national average population density was 36 people square km, up from 3.9 million and 27 in 1982' (Muzondidya in Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009: 190). The failure by the government to deliver land '... posed a challenge to national stability as peasants became more militant in their demands' (Muzondidya 2009).

White farmers' failure to engage honestly with land redistribution gradually evolved into racial tensions based on perceptions of mistrust, with the potential of derailing nation-building initiatives. The indifferent attitude of Whites towards the land reform programme put them on a collision course with the landless Black population who believed reclaiming the land was one of the most significant missing pieces in the independence jigsaw puzzle. For Blacks any post-colonial sustainable and meaningful racial reconciliation could not take place without a White-supported land reform programme that economically empowered Blacks.

With Blacks continuing to dominate the periphery of the productive sectors of the economy by the end of the first decade, Zimbabwe's independence had failed to translate to Black economic empowerment. A report on Black advancement published in 1989 showed racial bias at senior management level with 62.5% being White and only 37.5% Black (Muzondidya in Raftopolous and Mlambo 2009). Whites continued to enjoy socio-economic luxuries they had been accustomed to during the colonial era, thus failing to shed the colonial mentality of being economically superior to Blacks. A significant number of Black Zimbabweans had therefore migrated with a mindset that entrepreneurship was not for them. This was a consequence of not having had the opportunity to engage in business activities to challenge White business dominance since the colonial era.

However, it would be naive to conclude that continuation of a mindset in which Whites were made to feel indispensable to the economic viability of post-colonial Zimbabwe could only be attributed to the reluctance of some Whites to dismantle their colonial economic privileges. The Nationalist Movement also played a part in the economic

marginalisation of Blacks during the early years of independence. This was because the Nationalist Movement's focus on removing White rule through armed struggle negated the need to develop a comprehensive ideology and the manpower necessary to effectively manage the inherited sophisticated and efficient agriculture, mining and manufacturing sectors (Herbst 1990). Therefore, as a means of preventing collapse of the inherited infrastructure and economy, the new government felt indebted to the expertise of the Whites to continue to run the economy. The result was continuation of a mindset among Zimbabweans that Whites were better administrators of Zimbabwe's economy and they would feel happier working for White employers than Black employers.

The perceived invaluable role of Whites in Zimbabwe's economy was recognised by the then-Minister of Labour and Social Services, Kumbirai Kangai, in an address to White commercial farmers in 1980. In his attempts to discourage White emigration he expressed how he was amazed that after fighting so bravely during the war they were now emigrating from peaceful Zimbabwe by saying:

... through thick and thin you persisted in carrying on and were able to produce substantial outputs. I am extremely concerned to hear that there are quite a number of farmers already giving up, and many more thinking along the same lines ... This is your home. We want you to stay. (*The Herald*, 18 July 1980)

With Whites feted by the new political establishment, there was slow progress in disengaging the colonial mentality of seeing themselves as custodians of Zimbabwe's economy. The economic integration of Whites in the diaspora (to be discussed in Chapter 6) would therefore not escape the influence of socio-economic privileges and prejudices developed in the colonial era and continued to be relevant in independent Zimbabwe.

### *Racial Reconciliation: Education and Health*

To redress colonial inequitable practices in education, the Zimbabwe government committed itself to universal accessibility to educational opportunities by abolishing primary school tuition. This was to allow African children from lower socio-economic backgrounds to attend school. However, post-colonial democratisation of the education system by making it accessible to all failed to dismantle the remnants of

the colonial two-tier education system characterised by elite institutions. Without legislation to control the building of private schools, standardisation of tuition fees or school development levies, inequities between the former Group A and B schools continued to exist.

Former Group A schools and newly established private schools were permitted to charge significantly higher fees or school levies than former Group B schools. Some private schools, like Lomagundi College in Mashonaland West Province built in 1983, were constructed in donated White-owned farms. By charging higher tuition fees the schools could afford better facilities to suit the elite of society. As a result, the former all-White Group A government schools and the newly established private schools (most of them still administered by White headteachers) witnessed a gradual transformation in the racial demographics of their pupils. For most of the 1980s the schools continued to be dominated by White children who were gradually being joined by non-White children whose parents could afford the high tuition fees and school development levies. Attending these schools for most Black children became a status symbol which gradually became a determining factor in interactions both in Zimbabwe and in the diaspora.

The exorbitant tuition and school development fees charged by the former Group A schools or the private schools naturally precluded many Black children from attending the schools. With most Blacks' income one-tenth that of Whites in the early 1980s it was inevitable that most Blacks could not afford to send their children to these exclusive private schools or former Group A schools (Mazingi and Kamidza 2011). The former Group A schools and the newly established private schools had therefore manipulated the education system by allowing some Whites to continue a separatist agenda that only allowed them to coexist with Blacks without having to interact with them, which went counter to the nation-building agenda.

Discontinuation of a racially segregated health system at independence also highlighted the lack of willingness by Whites to interact with Blacks as equals. Democratisation of the health sector facilitated the development of an environment in which the nursing profession gradually ceased to be a desirable alternative profession for White nurses. It would have been inconceivable for them to work alongside Black nurses as equals whilst looking after patients from communities they had historically perceived to be below them in the colonial pecking order.



Their responses to democratisation of the health sector according to Sharai, who completed her midwifery training in 1985, were threefold: resigning from government hospitals to work in White doctors' surgeries, changing careers to work in White-owned companies or moving abroad with neighbouring South Africa being a preferred destination because of the Apartheid system (Sharai interview, March 2013). By the end of the first decade of independence Sharai confirmed that White nursing students and nurses in Bulawayo during the time of her training had virtually disappeared in State-run health institutions. She recalled how a majority of trained nurses had transferred to privately run Mater Dei Hospital. As a privately run hospital, there was little chance of making it more multiracial since most Blacks could not afford the hospital fees.

### *Racial Legacy: Coloureds and Asians*

Prior to independence, most Coloureds would have been excused for thinking they would get more recognition as they had a maternal kindred relationship with Blacks. However, in a subtle way, the outcome of the Lancaster Constitution had set in motion the marginalisation of Coloured and Asian communities in post-independence Zimbabwe. This was evident when the communities were made to feel insecure by some politicians whose references to colonial privileges only succeeded in reinforcing nostalgic thinking devoid of uniting a racially polarised nation. For example, in a speech on 29 October 1982, Zimbabwe's first Health Minister, Herbert Ushewokunze, classified Coloureds and Asians as part of the Rhodesian White community that exploited Blacks (Ushewokunze 1984). Instead of assuring these communities that past events would not disenfranchise them socially or economically in a new Zimbabwe, Ushewokunze coerced Asians and Coloureds into supporting the ruling party as a precondition to being fully accepted as citizens of independent Zimbabwe. Being criminally labelled as coparticipants in exploiting Blacks by ZANU PF politicians had therefore become the basis for marginalising Coloureds and Asians in Zimbabwe's economic empowerment programmes.

Parallel with economic marginalisation was the government's failure to address colonial racial prejudices by building more schools in Coloured residential areas. The inevitable consequence was that very few children from the community were motivated to pursue higher educational attainment, thus creating an environment in which there

was underrepresentation of Coloureds within Zimbabwe's academic establishment and middle-class professions (Nims 2013). A significant number of Coloureds found themselves anchored at the lower echelons of Zimbabwean socio-economic structures. Being placed at the periphery of society by Zimbabwe's Black-led government naturally forced some members of the Coloured community to re-evaluate and redefine their identities and relations not only with Blacks but also with independent Zimbabwe. The reassessment of such relations were not confined within Zimbabwe's borders, but were to extend into the diaspora.

The government had failed to recognise that Coloureds and Asians had priorities that needed to be catered for if they were to be socially or economically integrated in independent Zimbabwe. While Asians had always been successful retail entrepreneurs, Coloureds by contrast became more vulnerable to the impact of exclusionary government economic policies. Despite some within the Coloured community having historically occupied positions of prestige as teachers and nurses, Coloureds in post-colonial Zimbabwe continued to be overwhelmingly self-employed and unemployed (Nims 2013).

Patrick, one of the few successful Coloured business owners to migrate from Zimbabwe, illustrated how, unlike Asians, members of his community neither had the capital nor were affluent enough to support each other in building a visible and strong business presence to counter marginalisation in post-colonial Zimbabwe (Patrick interview, January 2015). As was the case in the colonial era a majority of individuals within the community continued to deal with their marginalisation by acquiring technical skills as electricians, motor mechanics or plumbers, skills that would allow them to be self-employed tradesmen.

The uncertain position of Coloureds and Asians was further complicated by some within the Black community failing to accept them as fellow citizens of an independent Zimbabwe with equal socio-economic opportunities. The social disenfranchisement of Coloureds and Asians was captured in the *Sunday News* of August 1987. The newspaper reported uproar from the mainly Black audience when two Coloured girls and an Indian girl won the Miss Teen beauty contest in Bulawayo (*Sunday News* cited in Raftopoulos and Savage 2004). Such explicit expression of racial hatred was a sign that Zimbabwe's nation-building project had failed to get Zimbabweans to think beyond racial lines. Seven years into independence, reverse racism by Blacks towards other minority races was emerging as a determinant in the construction of community relations.

Political utterances, disparity in the treatment of minority communities and anti-Coloured or anti-Asian rhetoric had made it apparent that peaceful transition to multiparty democracy had not led to reconciling a nation ravaged by colonial racial injustices. Whilst a significant number of Whites continued to hold on to their colonial privileges, Coloureds and Asians were made to believe that they were on the periphery of the society with limited equal opportunities. The experience of both privileges and marginalisation became salient in determining relations within Zimbabwe's communities in Britain.

### *Post-independence National Symbols*

For a country polarised for years on racial and ethnic grounds, there was also a need to create new visual or verbal national symbols to unite the people. After ninety years of White minority rule it was therefore inevitable that the early years of independence were marked by the successful removal of colonial identities. The process would involve renaming of street names, towns and cities; Africanisation of public services; and the removal of colonial statues (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009). However, the removal of colonial symbols was not immediately replaced by erecting new national symbols to engrain a sense of citizenship across a community with diverse historical experiences shaped by racism and ethnic allegiances. As the first decade of independence progressed it became apparent that the government was not in a hurry to establish recognisable national symbols necessary to nurture national pride. Except for a new national flag, there was little progress or emphasis in developing national symbols such as a national anthem or national dress.

It was this lack of urgency in developing national symbols that it was not until 1994 that the new Zimbabwe national anthem was used for the first time in 1994. Prior to that, the African National Congress' official anthem *God bless Africa (Ishe komborera Africa)* during South Africa's apartheid era was Zimbabwe's national anthem. Even the new national anthem failed to trigger a consciousness of national identity as pointed out by Bella, a fifty-five-year-old Zimbabwean Asian. To stress her point she revealed that few Zimbabweans across the racial divide took the initiative of learning the new national anthem 'as it was with *Ishe Komborera Africa*, which was known by a majority' (Bella interview, August 2013).

It would have been expected at independence that, in a country with diverse complex cultures and a history of ethnic and political

polarisation, some form of national dress would have been designed to invoke a sense of patriotism and confidence to reinforce the concept of the nation and national identity. However, there was no co-ordinated approach to national dress in the post-independence era despite its importance for national identity. There was nothing that had been developed to identify Zimbabweans in terms of dressing except, of course, church or political party regalia, which did not really count, at least outside the country.

Without a shared sense of identity that national symbols would bring about, multiethnic Zimbabweans created communities based on their own interpretation of what it means to be a Zimbabwean citizen (in independent Zimbabwe). Memories of a colonial and post-colonial environment of ethnic and racial prejudices, mistrust and suspicions would form the basis of these interpretations. Migrating without experiencing the construction of national symbols to unite Zimbabweans would therefore carry the potential of undermining the need to establish a cohesive multicultural Zimbabwean community that could be identified as a nation in the diaspora.

## POST-COLONIAL MIGRATION TRENDS

During the first three decades of independence, migration trends in Zimbabwe cut across all the racial boundaries that had been significant in the flow of Zimbabwean immigrants to Britain. The patterns and circumstances of migration, which varied between racial communities, were triggered by political insecurity and uncertainty, decline of the economy and opening up of economic opportunities.

### *1980s' Migration*

Emigration in the early years of independence was identified with White flight. Failure to adjust to political changes at independence resulted in an estimated 50,000–60,000 Whites leaving the country between 1980 and 1984 (Bloch 2006). With both South Africa and Britain absorbing the bulk of White migrants, Britain was usually the first-choice destination for those with British passports or those who had access to ancestral visas. However, starting in the late 1980s White emigration significantly declined partly because those who wanted to migrate for political reasons

had gone, leaving behind those who had accepted political change (Tevera and Crush 2003). Most of those who remained resided in urban areas. They consisted of professionals, businessmen and tradesmen as well as a small but powerful and economically significant community of commercial farmers (Fisher 2010). During this phase in the 1980s, there was also an exodus of mostly Ndebele to South Africa fleeing the political violence of *Gukurahundi*. The conflict led to out-migration of 4000–6000 Ndebele seeking political refugee status mainly in South Africa and Botswana (Pasura 2014).

Kasim, an ex-Zimbabwean Asian businessman living in Britain since 2002, explained how the Asian experience of East Africa's Africanisation policy created uncertainty for Zimbabwean Asians living in Zimbabwe when the country became independent in 1980 (Kasim interview, November 2013). With a colonial history perceived as exploiting Africans in their businesses, they were not sure how the Black Zimbabwean government would react to them and their businesses. It was therefore inevitable that, at independence, a significant number of Asian business owners like Kasim had packed their bags ready to flee Zimbabwe. It was only after the reconciliation speech by Mugabe in 1980 that Asians were given a sense of security that their businesses were safe from nationalisation under Black economic empowerment initiatives. Most Asians embraced the political message of reconciliation which ensured the safety of their businesses by remaining in the country and being allowed to run their businesses just as they did during the colonial era.

### *1990s' Migration*

Emigration in the 1990s was a direct result of the economic hardships brought about by implementation of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF)—supported Economic and Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP). Implementation of ESAP was necessitated by the government's 1980s' policies to establish a socialist and egalitarian state by 'promoting rural development ... achieving a more equitable distribution of the land ... improving and extending the basic socio-economic infrastructure in the communal areas' (Auret 1990). This massive expenditure on social services, not matched by an increase in tax revenues, resulted in the government incurring an ever-increasing financial burden which gradually led to economic decline.

Faced with increasing national debt and a declining economy, the Zimbabwean government in 1990 launched economic reforms under guidelines stipulated by the World Bank and the IMF. The government was instructed to liberalise the economy through devaluation of the Zimbabwean dollar, removal of subsidies on essential consumer products and cutting back government expenditure on social services (Muzondidya 2009). These economic reforms caused untold suffering among the Zimbabwean middle and working classes as real wages dropped rapidly due to removal of price controls and consumer subsidies. With the Zimbabwean economy shrinking by 30%, a significant number of middle-class Zimbabweans, especially from the Black community, opted for emigration as a means of escaping poverty with Britain being a popular destination for those who could financially sponsor the long trip (Saunders 1996). There was also a significant number of Whites who used their heritage links to migrate to Britain. The significant rise in the size of the Zimbabwean immigrant community in the 1990s was captured by a comparative analysis of Britain's 1981 and 2001 population census. In the 1981 census, there were 15,000 Zimbabwean-born residents. This increased by 136% to 47,000 in the decade 1991–2001 according to the 2001 census (Office of National Statistics).

However, the pre-emigration background of research participants in this study presented clear evidence that not all who migrated to Britain in the 1990s were middle-class professionals from the Black, Coloured or Asian communities. There were also young Zimbabwean Whites who wanted a break from Zimbabwe by taking a holiday. They would have completed either secondary school or tertiary education. Britain was the obvious destination for those with ancestral links to the country as they could be assured of family assistance in getting accommodation or advice on how to get temporary employment.

Martins, who migrated in 1990, was one of those young Zimbabweans with British ancestral links who decided to temporarily settle in Britain for one year after completing his course in motor mechanics. He planned to work for a year raising funds to travel the world before going back to Zimbabwe (Martins interview, January 2013). However, like most young White Zimbabweans, his stay became permanent after realising that Zimbabwe's economy was on the decline. Martins described how the decision to stay in Britain was supported by his Zimbabwean-based parents who were witnessing what he described

as ‘the disappearing job opportunities for young White Zimbabweans’. Taking advantage of his paternal Welsh heritage, he renounced his Zimbabwean citizenship in 1992 to become a British citizen.

By the late 1980s most Coloureds had concluded that they had been overoptimistic in believing they would get greater recognition under a Black government. Fisher alludes to the fact that most Coloureds would have hoped that their kindred relationship with Blacks would facilitate better treatment which would allow upward social mobility (Fisher 2010). However, as the first decade of independence progressed, it started to dawn on the community that prospects of upward social mobility would not be realised. Such a realisation was inevitable after missing out on economic empowerment initiatives such as land distribution (Muzondidya 2004).

With the Zimbabwean economy starting to deteriorate in the 1990s, Coloured individuals who could prove their claim to British ancestral ties embraced emigration as an escape route from what they perceived as deliberate economic marginalisation by the government. Without a strong or widespread network of Coloured businesses or individuals in managerial positions in the private or public sectors, the government’s policy of discriminatory economic indigenisation to empower Blacks condemned many Coloureds to stagnant or downward social mobility when the economy started to deteriorate in the 1990s. By the mid-1990s, emigration had become a viable route out of that cycle of condemned poverty.

The urgency to flee Zimbabwe by those who could claim their ancestral heritage was further heightened by rumours of anti-Coloured rhetoric attributed to Mugabe. Pamela recalled how Mugabe was accused of threatening Coloured claims to Zimbabwean citizenship by saying ‘you Coloured people go to England to your fathers’ (Pamela interview, October 2013). Although the rumours were unproven, Pamela expressed that most Coloureds had no reason not to believe that Mugabe had uttered the statement. For most of them the economic marginalisation of Coloureds was enough evidence to prove that Mugabe’s government was using their mixed heritage to disenfranchise the Coloured community. It was this social and economic disenfranchisement of Coloureds that, according to Pamela, forced a significant number of them to rethink their connection with Zimbabwe.

The slowdown of Zimbabwe’s economy in the 1990s triggered the first significant wave of post-colonial Asian emigration. Kasim, who owned a marketing consultancy firm, identified Asian professionals as

representing the bulk of the Asian community who emigrated in the 1990s. Britain, Australia, Canada and USA were the preferred destination of professionals living the country. Whilst professional Asians were migrating, those who owned businesses like Kasim decided to stay, adopting a wait-and-see attitude, with some describing themselves as ‘permanent tourists’ who could relocate at any time when they felt threatened.

### *Post-millennium Emigration*

Post-millennium emigration was largely triggered by the collapse of the economy following the seizure of white-owned farms and the imposition of international economic sanctions by the USA and the European Union and their allies which included Canada and Australia (Chingono 2010). The imposition of economic sanctions was not only a response to the violent eviction of White farmers from their land, but was also brought about by what the West perceived as government-sanctioned persecution of political opponents. The farm evictions and persecution of political opponents started in 2000 when Zimbabweans rejected a new constitution proposed by the government which would have given it powers to compulsorily seize land from White farmers without compensation unless it came from the former colonial master, Britain. Mugabe’s referendum defeat acted as a wake-up call for him to curb political opposition which he accused of being financially sponsored by White farmers and Western governments who were against land redistribution and Black economic empowerment.

Britain’s political recognition of victims of farm invasions and political violence resulted in the country becoming the first-choice destination of most political asylum seekers who could financially afford to travel. Although claiming political asylum turned out to be an easy option for most Black Zimbabweans migrating to Britain, the reality was that most of them were not victims of political persecution but were middle-class economic immigrants fleeing the demise of the Zimbabwean economy or they had families who could financially sponsor their migration (Bloch 2006).

David, who migrated in 2001, admitted that he was one of those who utilised political asylum after expiry of his visitor’s visa as an escape route from the imminent economic meltdown (David interview, January 2013). This was after realising that his income’s purchasing power of basic items like food had been eroded by the rapid increase of inflation.



For him, settling in Britain was the only way to escape poverty, a decision he has never regretted especially after virtual collapse of the economy in 2008 when annual inflation was over 230,000,000% (Raftopoulos in Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009).

Escaping the demise of Zimbabwe's economy was partly the reason a sizeable number of contemporary Zimbabwean immigrants denounced Zimbabwe by making false political asylum claims so as to be granted political refugee status. However, Zimbabweans who had not claimed political asylum took great offence to the lies peddled by asylum seekers in their attempts to be granted refugee status causing tensions within the Black immigrant community. By making false political claims they were labelled selfish individuals who were disregarding the negative impact it would have on Zimbabweans back home.

Although post-2000 migration was undertaken by all racial communities, the circumstances of White emigration were extraordinary as most of them had been forced into exile when they were violently removed from their farms or were facing threats of losing their businesses. This was a community in which many were either born in Rhodesia or had ancestral links to Britain. However, after the farm evictions the automatic right of domicile in Zimbabwe and the inalienable right to a home as citizens of Zimbabwe based on having been born in the country could no longer be guaranteed (Fisher 2010). The experience of not being able to protect their properties had exposed their vulnerability to Zimbabwe's violent attempts to resolve colonial injustices. In the absence of protection from the government, emigration by a significant number of Whites was the only route to escape the violence. The extraordinary scale of White emigration was clearly demonstrated within the farming community following the farm seizures. At the start of land invasions in 2000 there were approximately 4500 White farmers working eleven million hectares of arable land (Raftopoulos in Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009). By 2008 the number of White farmers had dropped to 500 (Raftopoulos in Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009).

Robert, who migrated in 2002 aged 52, identified three groups of Whites who remained in Zimbabwe following state-sponsored seizure of White farms. The first group consisted of Mugabe's ZANU PF supporters who had become part of the political system. The second group was made up of those who could not migrate because they could not trace their ancestral ties with Britain. These were third or fourth-generation Whites who saw Zimbabwe as their home. The final group were those

who had convinced themselves that they had no relevant skills or the necessary finance to start a new life in a foreign land (Robert interview, November 2013).

It was only after 2000 that members from the Asian community of all social classes started to migrate in greater numbers following threats by liberation war veterans to Asian businesses. Tim Butcher writing in the *Telegraph* revealed how the Liberation War Veterans Association, which had been actively involved in seizing White-owned farms, warned Zimbabwean Asian business people that nothing will stop them from reclaiming commercial national interests from them if ‘they do not stop looting the economy’ (*The Telegraph*, April 2002). Such threats naturally heightened the anxiety of the Zimbabwean Asian business community since they mirrored the rhetoric that preceded the expulsion of Asians in Uganda in the 1970s.

Facing an uncertain future, Zimbabwean Asians were left with two options. They either had to scale back their businesses or emigrate. While most chose to stay by adopting a wait-and-see attitude, Kasim explained how Britain emerged as the preferred destination for those who decided to emigrate (Kasim interview, November 2013). With significant South Asian communities of Indian descent already established in Britain, historic family ties were utilised to facilitate emigration. For those without traceable family links in Britain, like Kasim and Sharif, they could migrate using marriage visas or spouse visas if their wives were British citizens or had family in Britain (Kasim interview, November 2013; Sharif interview, April 2013). Another group of post-millennium emigrants consisted of those who migrated during the colonial era and had managed to stay long enough to attain British citizenship before relocating back to Zimbabwe when it attained independence. Bhavesh, who lived in Britain from 1975 to 1988, was part of the small group who were able to use their British citizenship acquired during colonial rule to relocate back to Britain (Bhavesh interview, September 2013).

Post-colonial migration cut across the country’s racial communities of Zimbabweans. It peaked in the 2000s and created a diverse community whose members had migrated with different historical experiences. Diverse experiences made it inevitable that each community’s interactions with others would be influenced by imported prejudices, identities or memories of unresolved conflicts that occurred during pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial phases of Zimbabwe’s history. Homeland influences would not to be restricted to race relations alone; examining

relations within the Black community also unveiled the extent to which historic ethnic allegiances and identities would linger in the diaspora.

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The chapter acknowledged that processes involved in constructing contemporary relations within Zimbabwe's community cannot solely be attributed to the tragic socio-economic and political policies instituted by the colonial administration. The Black Nationalist Movement's leadership turned out to be bankrupt of the policies needed to unite ethnically and racially polarised Zimbabweans after independence. For example, the 1980s' Matabeleland civil conflict served to confirm how the Nationalist Movement's obsession with overthrowing the White minority government had resulted in little effort being made in developing a nation-building agenda that would have overridden historic ethnic tensions between the Shona and Ndebele.

Taking into consideration the multifaceted reasons for contemporary interactions between Zimbabwean communities, the chapter critically examined the complexity of the political events that led to Zimbabwe's independence. The provisions of the Lancaster House Constitution were essential in determining how community relations would develop. The Constitution undermined the nation-building agenda by failing to provide a clear framework on how to reconcile a nation ravaged by colonial injustices. With the Constitution guaranteeing Whites' political participation and protection of economic privileges, most Whites continued to enjoy the luxuries they had been accustomed to during the colonial period. The racial partnership embedded in the Constitution also set in motion processes in which post-colonial Zimbabwe became a bifurcated society made up of Blacks and Whites, with Coloureds and Asians subtly relegated to the periphery of society. The post-colonial failure to disengage from colonial privileges and the perceived marginalisation of Coloureds and Asians set the tone for interracial relations in the diaspora.

In the absence of a definite policy on what Zimbabwe's reconciliation would entail, Zimbabwean communities prior to migration continued to coexist with minimum social or political interactions. In the absence of political urgency to develop national symbols apart from the national flag, the first decades of independence failed to rid communities of colonial memories of being superior or inferior to each other. It was therefore left to communities themselves to interpret what it meant to be

Zimbabwean, interpretations that would regrettably be based on colonial and post-colonial prejudices. Such interpretations would accompany the diaspora and ultimately determine relations between Zimbabwe's multi-ethnic communities in Britain.

The colonial invention of a state modelled along a divide-and-rule agenda brought about ethnic particularism which was not only restricted to the colonial and post-colonial phases of Zimbabwe's history, but would also filter through into the diaspora. Relations within the Zimbabwean Black diaspora community in Britain could not be fully understood without knowledge of historic or pre-emigration social, economic and political structures. Zimbabweans therefore migrated with identities and prejudices that were the result of social, economic and political structures in the country of origin. These imported identities and prejudices were to play an integral role in relations within the Black Zimbabwean immigrant community.

## NOTES

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## CHAPTER 4

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# Intercommunal Tensions: Post-1980 Black Immigrant Community in Britain

## INTRODUCTION

As established in Chapter 3, upon attaining independence on 18 April 1980 the new government faced insurmountable challenges in uniting a Black community that had been polarised by historic communal allegiances and tensions. The pre-colonial violent nature of Ndebele settlement in Zimbabwe had marked the start of ethnic particularism and consciousness which would evolve and blossom throughout the subsequent phases of Zimbabwe's history. Although implementation of the divide-and-rule agenda by the British during the colonial era and subsequent ethnic tensions within the Nationalist Movement's struggle for independence consolidated ethnic allegiances, it was the post-colonial civil conflict (*Gukurahundi*) of the 1980s which emerged to be the most emotive and potent factor in erecting imagined social boundaries between the Shona and Ndebele diaspora communities. The post-independence conflict served to confirm the extent to which the Nationalist Movement had been obsessed with ending White minority rule that they failed to come up with ideas or policies to unite the Black community that had been fragmented by historic tensions.

Although this chapter recognises ethnic allegiances as being critical to the construction of diaspora relations within the Black community, Zimbabwean scholars have been reluctant to critically engage in how identity and ethnicity interacted in post-independence nation building (Msindo 2007). Msindo's assertion has been affirmed by Brilliant Mhlanga who



reveals how any attempts to discuss ethnicity in post-colonial Zimbabwe risked being labelled as tribalism, which went counter to the creation of a united nation (Mhlanga 2013). The fear of politicisation and criminalisation when assessing the impact of ethnic relations in either the colonial or post-colonial eras has inevitably undermined detailed assessment on post-colonial government initiatives in building a united nation.

To unravel the impact historic memories had on Shona–Ndebele relations, the chapter will start by exploring how *Gukurahundi* reinvented and reinforced an ethnic consciousness that impacted relations within Zimbabwe’s Black diaspora community. The Shona-dominated government’s indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force on the Ndebele community in response to the Matabeleland insurgency allowed bitter memories to be carried through to the diaspora. The brutality of the security forces in suppressing dissidents operating in Matabeleland and the Midlands meant the Ndebele migrated not only with a strong sense of particularism, but also with deep emotional scars that would have serious consequences on diaspora relations with the Shona.

### *Gukurahundi Legacy*

Mabuza, a Ndebele immigrant living in Leicester who migrated in March 2003, revealed the extent of traumatic experiences the Ndebele went through by pointing out that nearly every Ndebele family in the diaspora either had a family member killed or tortured by the Zimbabwean security forces (Mabuza interview, June 2013). On a personal level, he emotionally recalled how his cousin was murdered by government soldiers in front of his young children after being suspected (without any evidence) of being a Ndebele dissident. He also recalled an incident when he was a seventeen-year-old Form 4 student in which one of the military commanders, Perence Shiri, arrived at his school in a helicopter and addressed both students and staff at his school, which was in rural area. His message was brief but explicit on how the security forces would deal with those identified or suspected to be supporting the dissidents. Mabuza remembered vividly Perence Shiri’s chilling warning: ‘If I hear you are supporting the dissidents, I will personally kill you’. This remark left the students and their teachers psychologically and emotionally traumatised as they contemplated what might happen to Ndebele civilians, especially when they were surrounded daily by heavily armed soldiers and military vehicles.

The presence of the military was not only restricted to rural areas, the same applied to urban areas in Matabeleland where there was a high Ndebele population, especially in Bulawayo. The inevitable consequence, as highlighted by the research participants, was that a significant number of the Ndebele diasporic community who would have been children at the time grew up having panic attacks brought on by the constant presence of military. Migrating with such emotional scars and memories of personal trauma and tragedies led to feelings of profound alienation from Zimbabwe to such a degree that many Ndebele migrants when they first arrived in Britain chose not to identify themselves as Ndebele Zimbabweans but as South Africans (McGregor 2006). The feeling of alienation was so profound they would go to the extent of saying that they spoke Zulu—a language closely associated with South Africa—instead of Ndebele.

The assertion that memories of *Gukurahundi* had generated powerful and emotional feelings within the Ndebele diaspora community became apparent during the interview process. Although Ndebele diaspora research participants did not explicitly condone Ndebele–Shona communal tensions, they were all unanimous in saying the civil conflict was the reason they could legitimately use to disassociate themselves from the Shona. Research participants' reference to *Gukurahundi* as a reason to keep their distance from the Shona trivialised the fact that most of the research participants could not have personally experienced the atrocities carried out by government security forces on Ndebele civilians. This was because 72% of the Ndebele research participants in 2013 were below forty-five years old and would have been too young to remember much about the conflict. Identifying *Gukurahundi* as a reason to steer clear of Shona immigrants served to confirm the extent to which the events of the conflict had become an integral part of Ndebele history passed down from generation to generation.

Zanele, who emigrated in 2002 and was in her thirties at the time of the interview, was one of many Ndebele diaspora parents in Britain who believed it their duty (just as was the case for their parents) to tell their children of the persecution the Ndebele experienced at the hands of Shona security forces (Zanele interview, March 2013). The irony was that, just like most Ndebele diaspora parents of her generation, the conflict took place when she was barely ten years old. Nevertheless, she could recall albeit fuzzily (since most of what she knew was passed on to her from her family) an incident when her family were forced to flee their

home in Gweru (Midlands provincial administrative city) to Bulawayo in the middle of the night ‘without wearing any shoes’.

The experience of Zanele’s family highlighted the extent to which the conflict created communal tensions along ethnic lines in communities that had lived in peace with each other in Britain. The city of Gweru and its surrounding rural areas by virtue of bordering Matabeleland had a mixed community of both Shona and Ndebele that had coexisted peacefully for decades before *Gukurahundi*, despite the Shona being the majority ethnic community. This peaceful coexistence was attributed to intermarriage which facilitated cultural respect and tolerance that manifested itself in both Shona and Ndebele being spoken by most members of the communities. In schools, students were also given the option to learn both languages. However, *Gukurahundi* changed the dynamics of these cordial relations. By targetting Shona members of the community while carrying out acts of sabotage, the dissidents’ actions had made the Ndebele in the Midlands province vulnerable to brutal reprisals both by Shona-dominated security forces and civilians. Feeling threatened, Zanele narrated how her family and many other Ndebele families had little choice but to secretly relocate to Ndebele-dominated areas in the middle of the night to avoid detection by their Shona neighbours.

The relocation of Zanele’s family demonstrated the extent to which the political violence of *Gukurahundi* had led to intercommunal tensions which made individuals feel safe only when surrounded by people of the same ethnicity. Being forced to flee their homes naturally hardened ethnic particularism. The Ndebele were clearly being denied citizenship rights that would have ensured protection by the state security machinery; instead, they were left traumatised. Memories of such traumatic experiences hardened the resolve of most Ndebele immigrants who were determined to make the conflict an integral component of their history.

Timothy, a Leicester-based Shona academic, also used the example of a former Ndebele work colleague to confirm the extent to which *Gukurahundi* had been entrenched in Ndebele history (Timothy interview, 10 May 2013). He explained how his former work colleague now resident in Britain would not shy away from publicly declaring in his presence how he did not like interacting with the Shona. His dislike of the Shona was driven by the belief that forging close links with the Shona community would be betraying his father who was murdered by security forces during *Gukurahundi*. Therefore, as a way of dealing with the tragic loss of his father, he not only disassociated himself from the

Shona diaspora community, but also felt obliged to constantly remind his son that his grandfather, who the grandchild never knew, was killed by the Shona.

### *Diaspora Ethnic Particularism: Language*

The attitudes behind using *Gukurahundi* to justify ethnic particularism by the diaspora community were evidently based on convictions that it was an ethnic conflict that had little to do with security. These memories first began to form at the height of the conflict when the government security forces forced the Ndebele to speak Shona or risk being murdered or tortured. Language had therefore emerged to be a weapon of war as it not only undermined Ndebele identity, but was also used as an emblem of loyalty to the Shona-dominated Zimbabwean government by the Fifth Brigade (a crack Shona unit).

With memories of attempts to outlaw the Ndebele language, it was inevitable that language would emerge to be a significant force in fanning diaspora anti-Shona sentiments. The use of language as a platform for fuelling communal tensions was legitimised by the fact that very few Shona immigrants could speak Ndebele. This was partly because there had been no deliberate efforts by the government after independence to end the colonial education system of teaching African languages based on geographical ethnic distribution. Ndebele continued to be taught in Matabeleland and parts of the Midland province where there was a visible Ndebele presence, whilst Shona was being taught in the Shona-dominated provinces of Mashonaland, Masvingo, Manicaland and parts of the Midlands. The Zimbabwean government had once again demonstrated that it had no strategy to create a national identity in a society that had been polarised by ethnic allegiances and identities. The consequence was migration of a Black community that had no language as a focal point to unite them or forge a sense of community identity.

Lydia, a Shona immigrant who migrated when she was in her early twenties in 2000, articulated the impact of Zimbabwe's post-independence education that had denied Zimbabweans of her generation the chance to learn both Shona and Ndebele (Lydia interview, September 2017). With reference to her 2003 De Montfort University group of Zimbabwean student nurses, she pointed out how 'embarrassing' it was that she was the only one who could speak both languages. This was only because she had been born and raised in Bulawayo.

To emphasise the dominance of the Shona language within the Zimbabwe student community, Lydia recalled how Ndebele students would be pressurised to learn Shona since there was not a large enough Ndebele student community to forge support networks. To illustrate the extent to which Ndebele students' minority status forced them to learn Shona, she gave the example of her best friend, who despite migrating without being able to speak a word of Shona, had made the effort to learn the language. Her friend was disappointed when the Shona students did not reciprocate by showing an interest to learn Ndebele.

This lack of interest in learning Ndebele was also evident among research participants from the Shona diaspora. Only ten percent of the Shona interviewed spoke or had limited understanding of Ndebele beyond greeting phrases. The two most common excuses for not speaking Ndebele were they did not see the point of learning a language spoken by the minority, and they had no intention to marry an Ndebele let alone living in Matabeleland. The few Shona individuals who spoke Ndebele like Sharai had made an individual choice of learning the language when they were either students at tertiary colleges in Bulawayo or were employed in the city (Sharai interview, March 2013). Sharai had done her nursing training in Bulawayo in the 1980s and on completion had decided to live in the city until she emigrated in 2002.

Zanele admitted that it was this lack of interest to speak Ndebele by most Shona immigrants that naturally restricted interaction. The majority within the Ndebele immigrant community found it difficult to forge interactions with a Shona diaspora community that historically had shown no interest in learning their language. This lack of interest had the effect of reinforcing the view of the Ndebele community that most Shona considered Ndebele as a language of the minority foreigners—one that was not worth learning as it was of a lower status than Shona. This made most Ndebele parents discourage their children from learning Shona.

The intense dislike of Shona by some within the Ndebele diaspora community was highlighted by Irene when she recalled an incident in which her husband rebuked their ten-year-old son and seven-year-old daughter for attempting to speak Shona after learning it on a family visit to Zimbabwe (Irene interview, April 2015). Using scaremongering tactics, he told them not to speak in Shona as it would lead to 'falling of their teeth'. Despite Irene challenging him and telling the children that it was not true, he refused to retract the statement. The anti-Shona

stance by Irene's husband demonstrated the extent to which language had become the embodiment of Ndebele diaspora attitudes towards the Shona. As mentioned in Chapter 1, it was imperative that, as a Shona, I had to ensure the interview process would not resuscitate language tensions by giving the Ndebele research participants the option of being interviewed in either Ndebele or English.

### *Impact of Generational Differences*

Ndebele research participants were unanimous in acknowledging that passing on imported memories of unresolved conflict with the Shona from generation to generation deterred some young Ndebele growing up in Britain from forging cordial relations with Shona of their generation. There were references by some parents to incidents in which their children were rebuked by their peers for forging intimate friendships with the Shona. For example, Jabulani spoke of how his twenty-year-old daughter was demonised by some of her Ndebele friends for having a Shona as her best friend (Jabulani interview, February 2013). The experience of Jabulani's daughter reinforced the slow process or lack of will to build relations which would ultimately encourage cordial social interactions between future-generation Shona–Ndebele diaspora communities.

The testimony of Natalie, a twenty-one-year-old Zimbabwean university student from High Wycombe of dual Shona–Ndebele heritage, also exposed the impact of unresolved ethnic tensions within the young Zimbabwean diaspora community (Natalie interview, October 2014). Having a Ndebele mother and a Shona father made her realise how attitudes of young Zimbabweans on both sides of the ethnic divide were still influenced by historically constructed negative prejudices and stereotypes entrenched in historic events. As someone with dual Shona and Ndebele heritage, Natalie experienced what she referred to as banter with derogatory ethnic undertones based on historic events which had been immortalised by their parents. Her Shona friends would often point out that Zimbabwe 'belongs to us', implying that her Ndebele side of the family were foreigners who migrated from South Africa. Her ability to speak both Shona and Ndebele also courted a backlash from some of her Ndebele friends who would often rebuke her for speaking Shona, a language they described as 'sounding disgusting'.

Natalie also recalled how, during family gatherings such as parties, discussions would usually turn to historic tribal conflicts especially

among the older members. The most popular and emotional discussions revolved around *Gukurahundi* (usually started by Ndebele side of family) or labelling the Ndebele as foreigners (Shona side of family) who invaded Zimbabwe. Such remarks made it unavoidable for the younger generation in her family not to be aware of the unresolved historic ethnic tensions that were being resuscitated in the diaspora. Without any willingness to let go of the historic causes of communal tensions that were being indoctrinated to the younger generation, Natalie was convinced that relations would not significantly improve within the foreseeable future.

Allowing memories of unresolved pre-emigration conflicts to be passed from generation to generation also had a negative impact on interethnic diaspora marriages. Ralph, an unmarried Ndebele immigrant in his early thirties, admitted that there were a significant number of Ndebele families who consciously discourage intermarriage with the Shona, especially when it involved Ndebele women (Ralph interview, May 2013). Such discouragement was driven by the need to preserve Ndebele identity since traditional Zimbabwean marriage practices required married women to assimilate into their husband's family and adopt Shona cultural and traditional values. This was a situation most Ndebele diaspora families found difficult to come to terms with, especially with a history of unresolved conflicts between the two communities.

With very little diaspora intermarriage between the two ethnic communities, Zanele admitted that healing the emotional wounds caused by historical conflicts, especially *Gukurahundi*, would be a slow process. Despite her acknowledgment of the importance of intermarriage in healing the wounds of *Gukurahundi*, she believed that intermarriage in the diaspora would continue to be stifled if similar-minded Ndebele parents like hers continue to indoctrinate their children to construct relationships with the Shona through the lens of *Gukurahundi* atrocities.

### *Ethnic Particularism in Political Activism*

Organisations like the Mthwakazi Republic Party have been capitalising on Ndebele particularism and bitterness by actively encouraging disengagement from the Shona through political activism spearheaded by a separatist agenda. Muzondidya and Gatsheni-Ndlovu described Mthwakazi as a 'divisive Ndebele separatist political organisation

with an aim of creating “an autonomous Ndebele state called United Mthwakazi Republic” in Matabeleland’ (Muzondidya and Gatsheni-Ndlovu 2007). These pressure groups use internet web forums such as <http://1893mrm.org/Mthwakazi-Restoration> and <http://www.umthwakazireview.com/index-id-inkundla.html> to spread their separatist agenda thus endorsing the late Matabeleland Governor, Welshman Mabheha’s views for an independent Ndebele state. In a 2007 letter to the British Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Mabheha advocated for an autonomous Matabeleland state saying he was tired with people who ‘... mix up my country Matabeleland with Zimbabwe ...’ (Ndlovu Gatsheni 2008). The Mthwakazi Republic Party according to Leicester-based Ndebele political activist, Jabulani, had a ‘very active Leicester branch’ in the 2000s which once invited him to take an active role in organising the commemoration of ‘Mzilikazi Day’ in the city (Jabulani interview, February 2013). He declined the invitation on the pretext that celebration of the founder of the Ndebele community would not only consolidate ethnic particularism but would also promote tribal animosity without healing the wounds of *Gukurahundi*.

The attitude of Ndebele immigrants to creating a separatist state can be traced back to the colonial conquest, when the Ndebele refused to give up on their dream of re-establishing themselves as a nation with a new king (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008). Ndlovu-Gatsheni goes on to argue that post-colonial state violence brought about by *Gukurahundi* and Matabeleland marginalisation hardened Ndebele ethnic particularism by encapsulating the Shona-dominated government as serving Shona interests at the expense of the Ndebele. Ndebele particularism and the campaign for a separate state had been perceived by some Shona immigrants as a continuation of deliberately refusing to accept the reality of their minority status. David’s advice to Ndebele acquaintances was that instead of seeking political asylum in Britain they should accept the reality that ‘... they can never rule Zimbabwe as the Shona will not allow it ...’ (David interview, January 2013).

### *Shona Diaspora Attitudes*

Although it was undeniable that a significant number of Ndebele immigrants were using homeland historic communal tensions to disassociate themselves from the Shona, it would be misleading to conclude that they were the only ones using memories of unresolved conflicts



to fan tribalism within Zimbabwe's Black diaspora community. There were also individuals within the Shona community who were not interested in pursuing reconciliation with the Ndebele. These were individuals whose perceptions and memories of *Gukurahundi* were the result of Zimbabwe's state-controlled media propaganda of the 1980s which blamed Ndebele politicians and some Ndebele civilians for instigating and sustaining political instability in Matabeleland. It is this recollection of 1980s' state propaganda that encouraged Shona-speaking immigrants like David to trivialise the impact of *Gukurahundi* on the Ndebele. They were convinced that the government's response to the disturbance was the only way to deal with a group of 'Ndebele armed bandits who were using guerrilla tactics' to destabilise the country under the leadership of a Shona (David interview, January 2013).

In defence of the government response to the conflict, David argued that the security forces' response was nothing to do with tribalism as claimed by some members of the Ndebele diaspora community. For him, it was a necessary and appropriate reaction to political instability which had been started by a group of Ndebele-dominated dissidents who were using guerrilla tactics to

... murder the Shona and to disrupt the economy. As a result, it would have been natural that the security forces would face difficulties in distinguishing Ndebele civilians who were mingling with the dissidents. The Ndebele should remember that the soldiers fighting the dissidents were former guerrilla fighters during the liberation and were acquainted with guerrilla tactics of depending on civilians for support. Therefore, there is no reason why the Shona or the government should feel obliged to apologise to the Ndebele civilians neither should the Ndebele keep on holding to memories of *Gukurahundi* to justify their separatist attitude. *Gukurahundi* is an unfortunate part of our history and should be left as that.

Such comments by individuals within the Shona community on how they perceived *Gukurahundi* had been a hindrance to establishing a cohesive Zimbabwean Black immigrant community interested in pursuing reconciliation. Most members of the Shona community were either oblivious to the atrocities of *Gukurahundi* or they blamed the Ndebele for bringing the atrocities upon themselves. Without a consensus on the interpretation of *Gukurahundi*, interactions between the Shona and Ndebele in the diaspora will always be engineered by unresolved conflicts of suspicion and mistrust with no internal or external motivation

to end historic hostilities. Shona research participants made it clear that the *Gukurahundi* narrative, which had been advocated by the media and most politicians, had been biased as it only focussed on Ndebele casualties while ignoring the atrocities committed by the dissidents on Shona communities.

There was a consensus among most Shona research participants that the Ndebele were using *Gukurahundi* to shield their inherent historic tribalism towards the Shona. They referred to derogatory terms the Ndebele had always applied to the Shona ever since they arrived on the Zimbabwean plateau such as *amasvina* (those who are always dirty) which the Ndebele believed made them ethnically purer. Lydia, whose mother was a midwife in Bulawayo, spoke of how a significant number of Ndebele women would not allow her to assist in the delivery of their babies (Lydia interview, September 2017). The refusals became more frequent during and after *Gukurahundi*.

Apart from their interpretation of *Gukurahundi*, the Shona still held firm in their beliefs of how historic events allowed the Ndebele to settle in Zimbabwe in the 1830s. They equated their settlement with the arrival of the British colonisers both of whom they regarded as foreigners. As a result, most Shona respondents do not shy away from expressing divisive comments like ‘an Ndebele will never rule Zimbabwe and should be content with position of being deputy to a Shona president’. They back this up by referring to the 1987 Unity Accord when Joshua Nkomo was made deputy of Mugabe in the new ZANU PF. Such comments demonstrated the extent to which most Shona are still holding to the belief that the Ndebele are foreigners who should not expect to be accorded the same privileged status as the Shona.

### *Impact of Post-independence Migration Trends on Ethnic Demography*

The ethnic demography of Zimbabwe’s Black immigrant community in Britain at the turn of the new millennium was another contributory factor inhibiting the formation of cordial intertribal interactions by creating an environment in which historic memories of ethnic conflicts, allegiances and prejudices were still rife. Although there was no specific ethnic data for different groups of Zimbabweans in Britain, a study of Zimbabwean immigrants by Alice Bloch found that most respondents were Shona. According to her findings, nearly three quarters spoke

Shona fluently, a third spoke fluent Ndebele, while twelve per cent spoke both languages (Bloch 2008). Her findings justified the Office of National Statistics (ONS) decision to print a Shona census form in the 2011 British Census.<sup>1</sup> By printing a form in Shona the ONS had inadvertently stimulated a consciousness within both communities that the Shona were the majority Zimbabwean immigrant community and therefore deserved official recognition. The Ndebele had been unwittingly made invisible within Zimbabwe's Black diaspora community.

Differences in the Shona–Ndebele immigrant population was the result of three factors: first, ancestral heritage links between the Ndebele and South Africa; second, the recruitment drive of nurses and student nurses by British institutions to fill vacancies in the health sector; and, third, the development of post-independence political events—namely, *Gukurahundi* and formation of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) political party in 1999.

Since pioneers of the Ndebele Kingdom had migrated from the Zulu Nation in South Africa, the country had always been a natural and viable destination for most individuals from the Ndebele community (Crush and Tevera 2010). Ancestral heritage with South Africa, as suggested by Jonathan Crush and Daniel Tevera, meant the Ndebele could easily assimilate into the Zulu community because of the similarities in language, history and some aspects of traditions with the Zulus of South Africa. Although South Africa had always been the preferred destination for most Ndebele, it would be misleading to conclude that there was no Shona immigration into South Africa (Crush and Tevera 2010). The proximity of South Africa to Zimbabwe also encouraged individuals from the Shona community to migrate to South Africa. Recruitment of labour in South African gold mines during the colonial era initially triggered both Ndebele and Shona emigration (Pasura 2014). However, without ancestral links South Africa was not a natural destination for most Shona.

In the absence of close historical ties with South Africa, which would have made it an alternative and natural viable first-choice destination for the Shona, there was consensus among the respondents (both Shona and Ndebele) that the Shona were the first to utilise opportunities to migrate to Britain in greater numbers than the Ndebele. Shona migration to Britain became more pronounced from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s when a significant number took advantage of organised recruitment of Zimbabwean professionals by British-based employment agencies who needed nurses, engineers, social workers and teachers (McGregor 2006).

JoAnn McGregor explains how agencies enticed professionals (especially in the health sector) by holding periodic recruitment drives in public venues in Zimbabwe such as hotels between late 1992 and 2002 in Harare (McGregor 2006). Taking advantage of the recruitment drive was Sharai, a Zimbabwean Shona-trained nurse who migrated at the beginning of 2002 after being issued a work permit. On arrival in Britain, Sharai undertook an adaptation course at a Leicestershire nursing home which would allow her to work as a qualified nurse. When asked to comment on ethnic representation, Sharai admitted that she encountered very few Zimbabwean-trained Ndebele nurses while she was on the adaptation course or in hospitals or nursing homes in Leicester where she worked. Since there were very few Ndebele nurses on adaptation courses, as highlighted by Sharai, it seems a reasonable assumption that the Shona had positively embraced opportunities of migrating to Britain earlier than the Ndebele.

The recruitment drive for Zimbabwean nurses to fill vacancies in the health sector was complemented by a surge of Zimbabweans applying for nurse training at British universities. The British government before 2002 had unwittingly encouraged foreign applications for nurse training by allowing international students to access non-refundable grants and bursaries. It was therefore inevitable that Zimbabweans would seize the opportunity to study in Britain and enjoy some financial stability at the same time. They could apply for nurse-training places whilst in Zimbabwe and then travel to Britain once they had been invited for interviews.

Prior to 2002 this was the main migration route used by most potential student nurses since Zimbabweans did not face immigration restrictions requiring them to apply for a British visa before travelling. They could get a six-month holiday visa upon arrival in Britain which would give them enough time either to apply for student-nursing places or attend interviews. If unsuccessful, they would have enough time to apply to other universities or enrol on a different course. Memory, a Shona nursing student at De Montfort University (DMU) from January 2000 to 2003, was one of those who used the student-nursing route to migrate in July 1999 after having being invited by De Montfort and Thames Valley Universities for interviews. When DMU offered her a place, she applied for a student visa before her six-month visa had expired (Memory interview, November 2013).

There was consensus among research participants that, unlike the Ndebele, the Shona were the first to utilise the student nurse route to migrate to Britain. The dominance of Shona students training as nurses was confirmed by Memory and Daniel, an Ndebele who enrolled at Thames Valley University in 1999 as a mental health student nurse (Memory interview, November 2013; Daniel interview, November 2013). Memory could only recall four Ndebele out of over forty Zimbabwean students in her year group. The high number of individuals from the Shona community enrolled at DMU created the perfect environment for the establishment of migrant networks, which triggered a rapid rise in the Shona population in Leicester. This was because married students like Memory arranged for their spouses and children to join them. In the case of Memory, her husband and children joined her in 2000 and 2002, respectively. Apart from organising migration for her immediate family, she also sent student nurse application forms to her two brothers and a cousin to come and join her in 2000 and 2001, respectively. It was this form of chain migration prevalent within the settled Shona student nurse community that naturally helped the rapid increase of the Shona community in cities with educational institutions offering student-nursing courses.

The notably higher presence of Shona at Britain's universities in the early 2000s was used to resuscitate historically constructed prejudices that the Ndebele had never been as motivated as the Shona in the pursuit of higher professional or academic qualifications. Shona research participants would express historic arrogance and prejudice toward the Ndebele during the interview process with comments like *mandex* (informal name used by the Shona referring to the Ndebele) *haadidi kudzidza* ('Ndebele do not want to learn') to explain the low representation of Ndebele immigrants in higher education (especially in nursing) at the turn of the millennium. Lydia, who graduated as a qualified nurse in 2003, gave support to the perception that Shona were more inclined to pursue higher educational qualifications by pointing out that in her group all the mature students aged above forty years were Shona (Lydia interview, September 2013).

However, these comments ignored the fact that, once the Ndebele immigrants regularised their immigration status, they also pursued education as the most useful tool in attaining social mobility. This was clear when seventy two percent of Ndebele interviewed had acquired a British professional or academic qualification after they had regularised their

immigration status. With this high percentage of Ndebele enrolling for further education the derogatory comments by the Shona served to confirm their historic arrogance engrained in their numerical superiority over the Ndebele. The noticeable number of Ndebele immigrants enrolling for further education marked the start of demographic transformation of the Black Zimbabwean diaspora community connected with political events back home.

Changes in Zimbabwe's landscape, following the formation of the MDC political party in 1999 under the leadership of trade unionist Morgan Tsvangirai, triggered emigration patterns that would transform the ethnic demography of Zimbabweans in Britain. The results of the parliamentary elections in 2000 not only heralded the start of a significant challenge to Mugabe's government by the MDC, but also provided the Ndebele with a new impetus to choose Britain as a migration destination. This was because the 2000 parliamentary elections served to confirm that, just as was the case in the 1980s, Matabeleland was still anti-Mugabe. This was apparent when, of the twenty-three parliamentary seats in Ndebele-dominated Bulawayo and Matabeleland, the MDC (Africa Watch 2005). The election results provided the evidence that, as was the case during *Gukurahundi*, the Ndebele were still vulnerable to Mugabe's accusations that as an ethnic group they were still not prepared to be partners under Shona-dominated ZANU (PF) rule. As a result, most Ndebele were motivated to migrate and ask for political asylum.

Although claiming political asylum in Britain was an easy option for both the Shona (who mostly claimed to be MDC supporters) and the Ndebele, Zanele admitted that Ndebele asylum seekers had greater confidence of succeeding in gaining political refugee status (Zanele interview, March 2013). They were encouraged that the British government would be more sympathetic to their political asylum applications because of historical factors. Unlike potential Shona political asylum seekers, the Ndebele could use their support of the MDC as proven by the 2000 election results to claim that they would always be vulnerable to persecution from Mugabe's government just as in the 1980s' civil conflict.

The experience of Lydia, a Shona participant originally from Bulawayo, confirmed the extent to which the British legal system had become aware of the vulnerability of the Ndebele to Mugabe's government, which had inadvertently encouraged them to as for political asylum. She narrated how a British judge had asked 'so you are not one of

them?’ after realising she was not Ndebele (Lydia interview, September Lydia 2017). This was after she had successfully won an appeal to get a two-year working visa for her brother in 2005.

The diverse way political asylum was sought between the Shona and the Ndebele was apparent to the research participants. Of the eight Shona who gained political refugee immigration status, only two had claimed political asylum as a first option when they arrived. The other six only sought political asylum when there were changes in their immigration status following the expiry of their six-month visitor or student immigration status. This was in contrast to Ndebele research participants as all but one used political asylum as their first option. If that failed, they would have joined their spouses or families who had already been granted political asylum. Daniel was the only Ndebele who did not seek political asylum. He arrived in 1999 for an interview at Thames Valley University to train as a mental health nurse.

David was one of those Shona immigrants who decided to apply for political asylum in 2002 at the expiry of his visitor’s visa when he realised that going back to Zimbabwe was no longer an option because of deterioration in Zimbabwe’s economy. Similarly, Panganayi changed his immigration status when he arrived in 2001 as a visitor. During his six-month visitor’s visa, he successfully applied for a student visa when he enrolled for an engineering course with a college in London, which gave him the right to seek work. For four years he would be able to renew his student visa if he attended classes at least once a week. It was only after the Home Office started to query continual renewal of his student visa in 2006 that he decided to apply for political refugee status. This was the time when the Home Office had made the renewal of student visas difficult with the aim of curbing bogus colleges and stopping students overstaying by enrolling with a different college. He was granted refugee status in 2011 after engaging in diaspora politics by joining the MDC. As a member of the MDC he was able to legitimise his application for refugee status by claiming his association with the opposition party would make him vulnerable to political persecution if he returned to Zimbabwe.

### *Ethnic Transformation on Shona–Ndebele Relations*

The post-2000 rapid increase in the number of Ndebele asylum seekers coincided with implementation of the Immigration and Asylum Act of 1999.

The Act introduced a dispersal policy which empowered the UK Border Agency to relocate asylum seekers from London and the South East of England to cities and towns in northern England where there was more affordable accommodation (Hynes and Sales 2010). In the search for a dispersal area where there was reasonably cheap housing, Leicester—which had relatively cheap accommodation in the St Matthew and Highfields areas—was designated a dispersal area for Zimbabwean asylum seekers by the Information Centre about Asylum and Refugees (ICAR). Although there is little statistical verification of Zimbabwean political asylum seekers dispersed to Leicester on arrival, data gathered at the end of May 2004 by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) identified Zimbabwean asylum seekers as second only to Somalis on the list of asylum seekers needing assistance (ICAR).

The dispersal policy led to rapid change in ethnicity of the Black Zimbabwean immigrant community in dispersal cities like Leicester which were once dominated by the Shona. This change in ethnicity of the diaspora community brought to the fore historic memories of unresolved conflicts between the Shona and the Ndebele immigrants. The trigger that brought these historic memories to the fore was the realisation by a significant number of Ndebele new arrivals that the Shona were already settled in employment, engaged in higher education (with nursing and social work being the most popular courses), or holding leadership positions in social organisations such as churches or community support networks (Zanele interview, March 2013).

As an Ndebele asylum seeker in 2002, Zanele admitted that such a realisation by the Ndebele of a Shona immigrant community they perceived to be already settled in Britain's social and economic structures led to jealousy-driven perceptions that they would always play catch-up with Shona immigrants. This inadvertently brought ethnic prejudices back to the fore, just as was the case in Zimbabwe. With memories of how their minority status had always prejudiced them when they had to compete with the Shona, it was therefore inevitable that on arrival in Britain there were some among their number who were determined to assert their influence in areas where they believed their population was high enough to challenge Shona dominance without fear of reprisals.

As mentioned above, Leicester was tasked with accommodating political asylum seekers. In 2001 it started to experience a rapid increase in Ndebele immigrants aiming to attain political refugee status. Sharai, who witnessed the rapid changes in the ethnic demographics of Zimbabwe's



Leicester community, explained how the rapid increase of the Ndebele community in the city naturally attracted other Ndebele from all over Britain. As the Ndebele population increased in the city, it did not take long for some members of the Shona community to realise that there were individuals who were determined to use pre-emigration ethnic tensions to pursue a separatist agenda that would demarcate the Black Zimbabwean community along ethnic lines.

Jabulani, a political activist within Leicester's Ndebele community, admitted that were it not for an increase in the Ndebele population they would not have had the confidence to initiate a separatist agenda activated by historic or traditional commonalities entrenched in their conflicts with the Shona (Jabulani interview, February 2013). Such commonalities turned out to be unifying focal points which enabled the Ndebele to establish support networks. For example, Jabulani gave an example of how he and a few other members of the Ndebele community in Leicester established a burial society to financially assist or give support to bereaved members of the community. Although he claimed that the burial society was open to all Zimbabweans, he admitted that as an Ndebele-run support network it was dominated by the Ndebele.

Happison, a Derby-based Shona community worker who lived in Leicester from 2000 to 2006, also reaffirmed the negative impact on community relations following the rapid increase of the Ndebele population in Leicester (Happison interview, January 2013). As someone who used to be involved in activities in the city to unify the community, he recalled moments when consensus on certain issues would be difficult to obtain. Football emerged to be one of those platforms in which the Zimbabwe diaspora community would compete for ethnic supremacy and recognition. Ethnic rivalry would be based on imported historic and contemporary pre-emigration enmities between the Shona and the Ndebele. The inevitable result was the establishment of teams based on ethnic identity, which allowed them to give vent to their tensions on the pitch. The experiences of Jabulani and Happison helped to unravel the way in which rapid change in the ethnicity of Leicester's Zimbabwean Black community had hindered establishing cordial diaspora interactions between the Shona and the Ndebele. The change in ethnicity invoked historic memories of prejudices, tensions and ethnic allegiances.

There was a growing perception among the Shona that a significant number of Ndebele in Leicester harboured anti-Shona sentiments. This was not only triggered by the increase in the number of exclusive

Ndebele-organised social events or support networks, but also by the Ndebele's use of ethnicity to influence leadership positions in organisations previously dominated by the Shona. Mathew, a former secretary of an organisation that was part of the Leicester-based Zimbabwe support network, explained how the election process to choose leaders had to adapt to changes in the ethnic demographics of the organisation's membership (Mathew interview, February Mathew 2013). As the membership became more diverse, his position and that of the Shona chairman became untenable, a situation which forced both to resign even though they had not completed their tenure in office as stipulated by the constitution. He pointed out that changes in the leadership structure were instigated by some Ndebele members in the organisation who were demanding tribal balance in the leadership structure to reflect what they perceived as their significant numerical position in Leicester.

The Ndebele initiative to address perceived unfair ethnic imbalance in the leadership structures of Zimbabwean community organisations was also experienced in Derby. Despite the Shona being the majority within the Zimbabwean community in Derby, Jacob who had been living in the city since 2002 reported a gradual rise of ethnic conflicts within some Shona-run community organisations. He explained that the situation came to a head when the Ndebele realised that their population in the city was increasing. As the population increased, Jacob claimed the Ndebele became reluctant to participate in Shona-led community organisations even when the Shona agreed to incorporate them in leadership structures (Jacob interview, January 2013). The consequence of this, according to Jacob, was the Ndebele seemingly made a conscious decision of not wanting to get involved in community activities led by the Shona. This Ndebele lack of interest in Shona-organised activities was described by Jacob as an attitude that not only trivialised the fact that Shona-led organisations were being 'competently run', but also undermined what he described as 'democratically run institutions'.

Hains, a Shona immigrant who migrated in 1999, reinforced the assertion that some members of the Ndebele community in selected British cities initiated a separatist agenda when it became clear that their population had become large enough to construct an identity to challenge that of the Shona. Using the example of Luton, he pointed out that in 1999 there seemed to be cordial relations between the majority Shona and the minority Ndebele. However, as the population of the Ndebele started to increase at the turn of the millennium,

Hains explained how the Zimbabwean community in Luton started to be subtly fractured along ethnic lines. This became apparent when the Ndebele started to hold exclusive social events or functions such as parties.

### *Ethnicity and Political Allegiances*

The build-up of ethnic tensions within Zimbabwe's Black immigrant communities as a result of rapid changes in ethnicity was further compounded by ethnically constructed political allegiances. The source of contemporary political allegiances could be traced back to the MDC, the main opposition political party, splitting into two factions in 2005. One faction was led by Shona-speaking Morgan Tsvangirai and the other by Ndebele-speaking Welshman Ncube. Panganayi, a former MDC committee member of the British branch in Reading, revealed how in the initial stages after the split the majority of MDC supporters in his area responded by using their ethnicity to choose which group to align with (Panganayi interview, March 2013). This became apparent when most Shona-speaking supporters (including him) aligned with Tsvangirai and most Ndebele supporters aligned with Ncube. The MDC split provided a remote chance for the Ndebele to destabilise the political dominance of the Shona, a wish which Paurosi, a former Shona war veteran described as 'wishful thinking which would never happen' (Paurosi interview, July 2013). Allegiances drawn along ethnic lines within the MDC had indirectly mirrored the ethnic split of the Nationalist Movement during the colonial era.

Community tensions attributed to political allegiances were not restricted to ethnic factionalism within the opposition MDC party, but also extended to imported intense and acrimonious rivalry between Mugabe's ZANU PF and MDC diaspora supporters. Memories of the post-2000 clampdown on political activism by the Zimbabwean government had led to a vocal and visible diaspora group of opposition supporters who were not only anti-Mugabe, but also pursued an agenda of ostracising ZANU PF sympathisers.

For example, MDC sympathisers or anti-Mugabe supporters in Leicester were in control of most community support associations since as a result of them seeking political asylum to settle in Britain. Nyasha, a political refugee and a member of one of these community associations since settling in Leicester in 2010, accused the association's leadership

of reincarnating memories of animosity between the two major political parties in Zimbabwe (Nyasha interview, April 2013). She described how leaders had made it an exclusive association for MDC supporter by denouncing Mugabe and his supporters ‘a situation which had made ZANU PF supporters in Leicester feel intimidated to be associated with the Association’.

After I attended five fortnightly public meetings as an observer, the extent to which one of these associations had evolved into an anti-Mugabe movement became apparent. The structure of the meetings rarely changed. The proceedings would always start with Christian song(s) and a prayer, followed by an interactive address with the audience by the chairman or a member of the leadership team. It was during the address that Zimbabwe’s political issues were brought up which ranged from reports of unsubstantiated political violence, collapse of the economy, growing poverty and the need to change the government in Zimbabwe. Political references negated the fact that the association was to be perceived as apolitical with the aim of not only helping MDC-supporting asylum seekers, but any Zimbabwean who might require assistance. The meeting would end with socialisation of the members and guests whilst eating Zimbabwe’s staple food of *sadza* (‘thickened porridge made from maize meal’), meat stew and green vegetables.

The impact of homeland-developed ethnic prejudices in determining community relations in cities like Leicester had not been reciprocated in urban areas where there was no significant change in ethnicity to challenge the dominance of the Shona. Using the example of Stevenage, Mathew explained that during the time he lived in the town between 2004 and 2009 the Shona-dominated community had managed to construct a cohesive and united Zimbabwean Black community. He explained how organised community social activities such as sporting events and the establishment of networks to support community members in bereavement were invaluable in uniting the Stevenage Zimbabwean community.

Mathew identified the unity of Zimbabwean Black immigrants as one of the major reasons why Stevenage Town Council allowed the community to have access to facilities at a community centre. He acknowledged that during the time he lived in the town the availability of the community centre enhanced community cohesiveness by making it easier to hold community meetings and organise social events such as church services, parties or weddings. Were it not for the cohesiveness of the

Zimbabwean community, Mathew was convinced that Stevenage Town Council would not have continued to be twinned with Zimbabwe's Kadoma City, a partnership that started in 1989.

Mathew was also convinced that the ethnic demographics of the Zimbabwean community in Stevenage in which the Shona were the dominant group was the most plausible reason for construction of a cohesive Zimbabwean community. He justified his conviction by highlighting that the Zimbabwean community in Stevenage was fortunate in that there was one predominant ethnic group—the Shona. As a result there were no detrimental tribal conflicts. The minority Ndebele who could also speak fluent Shona were willing participants in Shona-organised events as there was no opportunity or motivation to promote ethnic differences.

Mathew's assertion served to confirm that Shona dominance in urban areas like Stevenage would have created pseudo community relations which offered a false sense of cordial ethnic relations. The Ndebele would have reluctantly accepted the fact that had they wanted to exclude themselves from the Shona, they would have found it difficult to access community support networks dominated by the Shona. The creation of such pseudo community relations justified why some individuals within the Ndebele community migrated to cities like Leicester where there was a significant Ndebele population. This would have been the most effective way of constructing a united and visible community which would be able to resist dominance of the Shona (as was the case in Zimbabwe), especially in multiethnic social gatherings or meetings. To emphasise this point, Panganayi, a Shona who resides in Reading, gave an example of an incident which occurred at one of the Zimbabwean Days of Fellowship organised by his Church for predominantly Black members (Panganayi interview, March 2013). The Days of Fellowship held at least four times a year aimed to socialise and fundraise for Zimbabwean projects whilst holding church services. This is the way it is done back home, especially by singing songs in Zimbabwe's vernacular languages.

It was the need to recreate a Zimbabwean feel to the services which triggered tensions between the Shona and the Ndebele at one of those meetings in 2005. Panganayi described how the Ndebele took advantage of their increasing numbers to verbally express their displeasure when Shona songs were dominating services. To avoid future disruption of the day's proceedings, Panganayi pointed out that the organisers of subsequent Days of Fellowship had to ensure that both communities

were equally or proportionately represented in all church services, with English being used as the medium of communication when addressing the congregation. If vernacular languages were used, the organisers would ensure that both languages were used alternately; that is, if a Shona song is sung it had to be followed with an Ndebele one. Despite the positive response to Ndebele protests, Panganayi was convinced that such protests and subsequent changes would not have occurred in the early 2000s when the Ndebele were significantly in the minority.

### *Ethnic Identity: Churches*

The incident in Panganayi's church revealed that the Black Zimbabwean Christian community in Britain was not immune to ethnic identities or tensions, which had the potential of hindering interactions between the Shona and the Ndebele. The churches frequented by Zimbabweans started to undergo rapid changes in ethnicity in the 2000s in response to the rapid increase of Zimbabwean immigrant population. As the Zimbabwean population increased, there was a spontaneous growth of diaspora congregations whose ethnic demographics were an extension of the churches in Zimbabwe (Pasura 2012). Just as was the case in Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwean home-grown Pentecostal Churches diaspora founded by Shona clergy continued to be dominated by members from the Shona community. Examples of these Shona-dominated home-grown Churches include Family of God, Forward in Faith Mission International, African Apostolic Faith, Johanne Masowe Chishanu, Johanne Marage and Apostolic Faith Mission.

Traditional church congregations had also not been spared Zimbabwe's ethnic demographics. While home-grown church congregants' ethnic identities were reflective of the ethnicity of the founding leaders, the diaspora demographics in traditional churches such as the Salvation Army, Seventh Day Adventist, Church of England, Roman Catholic or Methodist could be traced back to the spread of Christianity during the early years of colonial rule. Although Chengetai Zvobgo points out that missionary operations commenced in full force after the defeat of the Shona and Ndebele following the uprising of 1896–1897, it is important to note that the impact of Ndebele initial resistance to Christianity and the colonial process of colonising Mashonaland first could not be ignored when seeking to understand the diverse (diaspora) ethnic representation in most traditional churches (Zvobgo 1996).

For example, due to Ndebele resistance to Christianity in the nineteenth century and the Ndebele uprising of 1893, Zvobgo identifies the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) church as one of the few churches involved in pioneer missionary activities in Matabeleland (Zvobgo 1996). The church consolidated its presence in the region by opening Solusi Mission School in 1894. Although the Ndebele rebellion of 1894 and a severe famine disrupted evangelistic work, SDA missionaries were able to organise a church in 1902, evidence of the church's progress in its evangelistic work. By 1933 an SDA school had been established at Solusi Mission which over the years expanded into one of the largest church-run private educational institutions in Zimbabwe's Matabeleland region (Clarke 1992). It is this early presence of the SDA church in Matabeleland that explains why a significant number of the Ndebele both in Zimbabwe and Britain are members of the church.

Similarly, the trend in the construction of ethnic identities in churches like the SDA which had an early presence in Matabeleland was replicated in most other traditional churches involved in establishing mission stations in Shona-dominated regions of Mashonaland and Manicaland during the early stages of colonial rule. Examples of churches actively involved in the Shona regions during the first decade of colonial rule included Roman Catholic, Wesleyan Methodist, American Methodist Episcopal, Anglican, Dutch Reformed and Salvation Army (Zvobgo 1996). As a result of their early presence in the regions, these churches have always had a strong Shona presence, a presence which has extended to diaspora congregations.

For example, the Roman Catholic Church in Britain has catered for the historic dominance of the Shona community in its congregations by holding diaspora Mass Services in Shona and rarely in Ndebele (John interview, March 2013). Services are held across the country in urban centres where there is a strong Zimbabwean immigrant population such as London, Leicester, Birmingham and Slough. Zivanayi and John, who are both members of the Roman Catholic Church, admitted that having Mass Services in Shona which catered solely for Shona congregants had naturally excluded or stifled Ndebele participation. By having services in Shona, use of the language would bring back memories of the influence of linguistic differences in enforcing Shona–Ndebele demarcations. This was because Ndebele participation in Shona services according to John (who attended services in Slough) had been restricted to members of the Ndebele community who were fluent in Shona whilst the rest would feel comfortable attending English services.

### *Insecure Community*

Black research participants also revealed an insecure diaspora community which was riddled with imported historically constructed mistrust and jealousy that was not influenced by ethnicity. This became apparent when most of them admitted reluctance to share sensitive personal issues such as immigration status to other Black Zimbabweans before regularisation of immigration status when they first arrived in Britain. Collins, a former journalist in Zimbabwe, identified this lack of trust as the main reason why those who were illegally working ‘without papers’ would refrain from socialising with other Zimbabweans while processing regularisation of their immigration status (Collins interview, February 2013). This was largely because of cases in which individuals were reported to immigration officials for working illegally by fellow Zimbabweans they would have confided in regarding their immigration status.

This lack of trust compounded by fear and suspicion, which superseded ethnicity, within the Black community could not be understood outside the context of political events in both the colonial and post-colonial eras. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, the Nationalist Movement’s brutal methods of soliciting support from the masses and repressive and authoritarian governance of the Rhodesian government had created a mindset of fear and mistrust between Black Zimbabweans. In his journalistic work, Collins revealed how it was apparent that the advent of independence failed to desensitise Black Zimbabweans from a culture of being tolerant of each other as the government continued to employ coercive tactics to elicit civilian compliance by ruthlessly suppressing political opposition, striking workers and students, or civil society (Collins interview, February 2013). For most Zimbabweans this demonstrated a ‘continuity of authoritarian governance from Rhodesian Front to ZANU PF’ (Muzondidya in Raftopolous and Mlambo 2009). Migrating with memories of violence against each other would have naturally constructed a Black Zimbabwean diaspora community who found it difficult to escape the influences of the undesirable environment of insecurity when among other Black Zimbabweans.

Parallel with mistrust and suspicions within the community were feelings of jealousy driven by historical influences of linking education with social mobility. The consequence of seeing education as major means of attaining middle-class status had resulted in the attachment of stigma to those who could not proceed with their education as they were regarded



as not being intelligent enough to ensure upward social mobility. Most Black Zimbabweans had therefore migrated with a mindset of wanting to continue being conspicuously different from other Zimbabweans they perceived to be below them in the pre-emigration social hierarchy.

However, cultural import of the significance of education in the lives of Black Zimbabweans into the diaspora inadvertently started the process of dismantling pre-emigration social class identities. This was because Britain's education sector had provided all Zimbabweans, regardless of social class, opportunities to achieve social parity with those who were above them in Zimbabwe's social structure. Kudzi, a 35-year-old radiography student in Bradford who arrived in Britain with no professional qualification identified Access into Nursing and Foundation Degree as the most popular routes used by those who had been perceived, as she was, to be less academically gifted to attain academic-oriented qualifications or university degrees (Kudzi interview, April 2013). With educational opportunities provided by the foundation courses, upward social mobility in the diaspora was no longer the privilege of deskilled professional Zimbabweans or those who migrated on student visas.

For the Black Zimbabwean immigrant community with a pre-emigration history of idolising social upward mobility through education, Britain's educational opportunities attracted jealousy-driven ridicule from Zimbabweans who had migrated as professionals. Seeing former class or schoolmates, perceived as academically weak or incompetent, attaining a university degree or professional qualification made some within the Zimbabwean community question whether entry qualifications at some British universities were rigorous enough. Inevitably, questioning the integrity of enrolment requirements at some British universities resulted in two main theories to explain how they would have succeeded in their studies.

The first theory was presented by Brenda, a Zimbabwean-trained nurse living in Luton, who was convinced that some of her compatriots only succeeded by asking or paying trusted friends and relatives to write their assignments (Brenda interview, 23 October 2014). Her conviction was a result of having worked with British-trained Zimbabwean nurses whom she knew had failed their O-levels back home. Hains highlighted the second theory when he accused some Black Zimbabweans of fraudulently obtaining academic certificates to meet the minimum entry requirements of university courses (Hains interview, March 2013). The conviction for fraud of a Coventry University-trained Zimbabwean

nurse, Sibusiso Nyoni, in October 2014 for faking her Zimbabwean O-level certificate, strengthened the argument of fraudulent activities by desperate Zimbabweans wanting to use education to attain social mobility ([NewZimbabwe.com](http://NewZimbabwe.com)).

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The historic processes throughout the different phases of Zimbabwe's history formulated ideas of belonging whose outcome had been the construction of ethnic attachments and allegiances based on memories of shared historic experiences. It was undeniable that examination of the emerging contemporary Black Zimbabwean immigrant population unveiled a community riddled with historically driven ethnic particularism, political allegiances, mistrust and jealousy. This was a community who had migrated as products of unresolved ethnic conflicts that had been developed and nurtured throughout the phases of Zimbabwe's history. Besides ethnicity, the chapter also established how Black Zimbabweans' history had been defined by mistrust of each other which evolved into jealousy. It was therefore inevitable that the Zimbabwean diaspora black community would find it difficult to celebrate the achievements of others. As a result, the quest for a cohesive Black Zimbabwean immigrant community in Britain had been hindered by memories of unresolved conflicts or historic experiences.

Exploring the dynamics of diaspora relations between the Shona and the Ndebele exposed how both the Nationalist Movement and the post-colonial government failed to implement the nation-building initiatives needed to unite Africans who had been polarised along ethnic lines. Although ethnic particularism, which formed the basis of intercommunal tensions, could be traced back to the pre-colonial era's violent attacks on the Shona by the Ndebele, the chapter presented an argument showing how the civil conflict of 1982–1987 (*Gukurahundi*) emerged to be the dominant factor in restricting interactions between Shona and Ndebele immigrants. Memories of atrocities committed by security forces on the Ndebele during *Gukurahundi* (which some within the Shona diaspora community trivialised) became a major deterrent to uniting Black Zimbabwean immigrants.

The chapter also established how the failure of having an indigenous language(s) to unify the nation resulted in the absence of a crucial national identity marker within the Black community. Three main

reasons were identified as denying language from being used as an essential commonality within the diaspora community. These were the use of language as a weapon a war during *Gukurahundi* by Shona security forces, the failure by the post-colonial government to include the teaching of both Shona and Ndebele in all the provinces and the reluctance of most Shona to learn Ndebele.

The construction of Ndebele–Shona diaspora relations and personalities within the Black community in Britain should therefore not only be explained as ‘recent tragedies of colonialism’ since they also stemmed from the post-colonial failures to deal with historic inter-communal tensions. The chapter’s discursive construction of the Zimbabwean diaspora community revealed how early on into independence the nationalist government of Robert Mugabe undermined efforts to unite Black Zimbabweans when it became embroiled in ethnic conflicts. Politicisation of the *Gukurahundi* conflict and criminalisation of the Ndebele by the Shona-led government of Mugabe constructed and nurtured ethnic perceptions of resentment that were to be imported into the diaspora. The impact of the failure to develop an effective nation-building project was not only restricted to the Black immigrant community but was also to extend to Whites, Coloureds and Asians.

## NOTE

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## CHAPTER 5

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# Zimbabwe's Minority Communities in Britain Reliving Colonial and Post-colonial Memories

Chapter 4 explored how Black Zimbabweans migrated as products of unresolved ethnic conflicts that had developed and been nurtured throughout the phases of Zimbabwe's history. Historiography of the different phases of Zimbabwe's history has also not shied away from unveiling social and economic and political systems which were instrumental in erecting community boundaries riddled with racial identities and prejudices within Zimbabwe's minority communities. This chapter will therefore acknowledge how creation of the diaspora community of Zimbabwean Whites, Coloureds and Asians was a consequence of historical influences. It will dig deeper into what was alluded to in the introductory chapter (Chapter 1): that is, that the diaspora Identities and interactions within these minority communities of Zimbabwe could not escape the influences of historical, political and cultural processes through which the ideas behind belonging came to be defined.

By focussing exclusively on Whites, Coloureds and Asians, this chapter will be demonstrating that the Zimbabwean immigrant community in Britain was not a monolithic group of Blacks, but a racially diverse community. Analysing the diaspora interactions of Zimbabwe's minority communities considered more privileged than Blacks during the colonial era provides a perspective on the complexities of eradicating imported historically constructed racial prejudices.

The colonial racial hierarchical categorisation of the population that had elevated Whites to be the masters of Zimbabwe's races and the Lancaster House Constitution's failure to explicitly address the welfare of Coloureds

and Asians discouraged communities from thinking beyond homeland racial prejudices and identities. It was the evolving nature of experiences of privileges and marginalisation which became essential in developing salient discourses which would determine how the various diasporas constructed their identities and interactions. The chapter will recognise the diverse nature of pre-emigration experiences by discussing each group separately. The racial colonial categorisation of the population and the failure to radically design a national identity after independence meant that each community migrated with memories of imagined boundaries which stifled interaction with Zimbabweans outside their community.

### WHITE IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY: LEGACY OF THE PAST

As established in Chapter 2, the development of a sense of nationalism during the colonial era to repel any threats to dislodge their socio-economic and political privileged status facilitated the establishment of effective support networks within the White community. Living or owning businesses in the countryside where families lived far apart from each other on their farms had made most Whites vulnerable to attacks from African liberation fighters. As a result, strong support networks emerged to be invaluable essentials to ensure protection. Alison, whose family owned a farm, described how through the support networks they constantly communicated, visited each other, offered shelter to those under threat from the nationalist fighters, or travelled in convoys for protection (Alison interview, November 2013).

After independence, White Zimbabweans continued racial exclusiveness essential in maintaining support networks by retreating from 'public life into the laager of sports club, home entertaining and the video' and withdrawing to more exclusive suburbs by setting up gated communities (Muzondidya 2009). It was therefore inevitable that, when the violent attempts to redress the colonial imbalance in land distribution started in the 2000s, the community would once again rally around to support those who had been evicted from their farms by offering accommodation, financial assistance or giving them advice on emigration.

However, on arrival in Britain the community was at risk of losing their pre-emigration strong community support networks as they found themselves being scattered across the country. This was because a significant number within the community chose to settle in areas where they

had family or ancestral ties thus leading to the population being unevenly dispersed across the country. To prevent loss of their pre-emigration support ethos, virtual social networking emerged to be an invaluable tool in maintaining a sense of collective identity for the dispersed community. 'Rhodesian in the UK', a Facebook account, was created in 2010 after the account administrator realised he could not find anything on social media regarding any Rhodies in the UK to stimulate consciousness of a community identity based on past experiences. With a membership of 3210 (as of 21 June 2015), the social network site had firmly established itself as an invaluable point of contact for the White immigrant community.

Since its inception, the Facebook virtual community evolved into a support network providing financial support and giving advice on immigration and employment opportunities for a majority of White Zimbabwean immigrants who would have gone through the trauma of emigration. The Facebook support network had firmly positioned itself as not only a forum to reconnect with old friends or acquaintances, but a potential ally to individuals who would have arrived without strong or extended families for assistance. This was because most immigrants were third or fourth-generation descendants of the pioneers of the colonisation process who regarded themselves as Zimbabweans with little attachment to their British heritage.

Three groups were identified as needing assistance. The first group consisted of individuals or families who would have arrived with depleted financial resources after being evicted from their farms or would have been victimised to the point of abandoning their businesses. The second group was associated with those who had arrived with no transferrable professional qualifications or skills to find suitable employment. They needed financial assistance or temporary accommodation while being signposted to employment opportunities. The third group comprised pensioners or individuals experiencing health problems who would have found it difficult to work in physically demanding menial jobs. Some of these, according to Alison, would not have stayed long enough in Britain to apply for permanent residency immigration status to have access to British government benefits.

A posting by a member of the Facebook virtual community and subsequent positive responses she received summed up the ethos of mutual assistance by writing:



... well I'm on a mission again for my oldies – not only Byo peeps but the ones who have found themselves in the UK and need support. This is a huge upheaval for them and yes have a 'haven' but in a strange place away from family and friends and to be honest it's scary! I need people to contact me who will 'adopt' these people – it's not about money but guidance and support until they find their feet ... helping people in UK with the red tape and finding accommodation, doctors etc. want to build a database of oldies and adoptees and match them.

By appealing for assistance for 'oldies' in 'Byo' (Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second largest city), the Facebook member brought out a perspective that the virtual community was not only about assisting those in Britain but was also concerned about the welfare of pensioners in Zimbabwe. To ensure sustainable and transparent management and coordination of supporting those in Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Pensioners Support Fund (ZPSF) was set up by members of the virtual community after highlighting their plight. The main objectives were to relieve financial hardship, sickness and poor health of the pensioners who would have lost everything to Zimbabwe's hyperinflation of the 2000s or during the violent seizure of farms. Without family members abroad who could support them, they were facing abject poverty.

Although the support fund was not advertised as targeting any race, the ZPSF beneficiaries' partial list published on the 'Rhodesian in the UK' Facebook account in June 2013 showed a racial bias. An analysis of the surnames showed that of the 447 beneficiaries, only 7 were Blacks (Facebook 2014). The Black beneficiaries were identified by Alison as most likely to be former domestic workers of the White immigrants who were left with no means of supporting themselves following the farm evictions or when their White employers involuntarily migrated following threats to their businesses (Alison interview, November 2013).

Having a support ethos allowed the virtual community to establish a diaspora network that not only assisted those with kinship or friendship connections, but also strangers who were only linked to the community by circumstances that had forced them to migrate. For example, Alison highlighted how the virtual community once rallied to purchase an air ticket for a White Zimbabwean living in South Africa who had been left stranded after being robbed of his money and travelling documents when on a visit in Britain. On a personal level, she also recalled how appeals posted on Facebook encouraged her to give 'free temporary accommodation' to a White Zimbabwean immigrant for two weeks whilst he

sought ways of establishing himself. By volunteering to assist a stranger, Alison claimed it was testimony that the Facebook virtual community had become a sanctuary of White Zimbabweans who were experiencing the trauma of forced migration from a country they once called 'home'.

### ANGER TOWARDS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT

The Facebook virtual community established itself as a platform to express anger and bitterness not only toward the Zimbabwean government, but also to Tony Blair and the British government. A comment below by one of the members responding to an announcement by the Zimbabwean parliament in 2013 that the 'Country is Broke' sums up this bitterness. The member's response was:

... sad but true they have screwed the country into the ground as we said they would when the British handed it to them on a plate to destroy. The British had to because there was NO WAY in a hell they would EVER come close to winning it in a war situation.

The comment endorsed the assertion that there were some individuals within the White immigrant community who still entertained thoughts that the independence of Zimbabwe could not have been possible without the compromise and participation of Whites represented by Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front (following Britain's persuasion) at the Lancaster House negotiations. It was this consciousness of the role Whites perceived they played in Zimbabwe's independence which Alison identified as the source of their anger towards the British government. There was a strong conviction within the community that Britain should have militarily intervened to protect White farmers from farm seizures as a recognition and appreciation of the role they believed they played at the Lancaster House negotiations. By not militarily intervening, most Whites felt they had been 'sold out, dumped and betrayed' by the British (Alison interview, November 2013).

The perceived inactivity of the British had only served to reinforce perceptions that the Lancaster House agreement was based on under-the-table shenanigans with the Black Nationalist Movement which were not about the long-term interests of the White community in Zimbabwe. Alison claimed that since Zimbabwe's independence the White community had always been subjected to an anti-colonial nationalist ideology of

‘terrorising Whites whilst disregarding the fact that Blacks in Zimbabwe during the colonial era were enjoying a better standard of life than those in neighbouring states ruled by Black governments’ (Alison interview, November 2013). The anti-White rhetoric was a common occurrence at national events through slogans which ostracised Whites as Zimbabwean citizens. Examples of the slogans included *pasi nevarungu* (‘down with Whites’) or describing Whites with the slogan *vapambivepfumi* (‘plunderers of Black wealth’). Therefore, for most Whites the farm invasions at the turn of the millennium were the conclusion of a process which started after the signing of the Lancaster House Constitution; that is, of undermining Whites’ claims to be citizens of post-colonial Zimbabwe. For the White Zimbabwean diaspora community the violence that accompanied the farm evictions marked a new kind of post-independence, one which revoked the politics of reconciliation by inscribing what Brian Raftopoulos described as ‘victimhood of White identities’ as Zimbabwean citizens (Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009: 216).

Despite the perceived inactivity of the British government to stop the farm invasions, Alison explained that there were some within the White community who had not lost hope of pressurising the British government to facilitate their return to their ‘homes’. She identified the most prominent White Zimbabwean protesters as those who had been active participants in a multiracial Zimbabwe Vigil which took place every Saturday from 14:00 to 18:00 outside the Zimbabwean Embassy in London. The multicultural vigil which started in 2002 was part of a protest against Mugabe’s government whose policies of perceived ‘gross violations of human rights’ had been deemed to be the source of the post-millennium mass exodus of Zimbabweans that cut across all racial groups and social classes (Pasura 2010).

### WHITES’ SOCIAL EVENTS AND RHODESIAN IDENTITY: JULY BRAAI

Outside the Facebook virtual community, events had also been organised to promote physical interaction within Zimbabwe’s White immigrant community. July Braai was and still is an annual event held in Derby organised by the Rhodesian Pioneer Club (RPC), usually during the last weekend of July. Alison explained that the choice of Derby to annually host the event had been influenced by the uneven dispersal of the White population across Britain. Its central location provided a fairer and easy commute for the dispersed population. On the RPC website the 2014

July Braai event was advertised as a family event which caters for both children and adults whilst fundraising for the ZPSF. Fun events included adults and kids' fancy dress, tug of war, boerewors sausage competition and shooting. Artists such as The Buzz band, Stu Walker and Those Guys with a strong Rhodesian connection provided the entertainment.<sup>1</sup>

To create a Zimbabwean feel to the occasion the stalls were always stocked with South African food (which resembled food consumed in Zimbabwe) and products with a Rhodesian theme. Approximately 1000 individuals would attend the event which is held on a Saturday. Alison, who had been attending the event for ten years, explained how July Braai over the years gradually established itself as the largest gathering of White Zimbabweans from all over Britain. The occasion provided the opportunity and platform for adults with similar historic backgrounds to establish new friendship networks as they reminisced about the past. As the largest gathering of White Zimbabweans in Britain the RPC also utilised the occasion to fundraise for ZPSF.

One major characteristic of both the Facebook community and the RPC-organised July Braai event had been the reincarnation of a colonial identity. 'Rhodesians' had been stuck in what Tony King described as 'an idealistic time warp about the old days'.<sup>2</sup> This was reflected in the Facebook community by use of the colonial name Rhodesia and its flag, playing the colonial national anthem, showing photographs of attachments of the Rhodesian army celebrating victories over the nationalist liberation fighters and use of the Rhodesian coat of arms on its website.

Reactivation of the colonial identity naturally excluded non-White Zimbabweans from attending the July Braai event or joining the Facebook virtual community. Racial demography was evident on promotional videos of the 2014 July Braai on the RPC website which portrayed it as an exclusive gathering of Whites. Similarly, of the 1902 members of the 'Rhodesian in the UK' Facebook virtual community (as of March 2014), only 11 could be identified as being non-White.

Elizabeth, a White Zimbabwean who had grown up in colonial Zimbabwe, identified the failure to dismantle imported colonial racial boundaries as the major reason why she was discouraged from inviting her Zimbabwean Coloured friend to the July Braai. She was advised that her Coloured friend would 'feel out of place' as she would have no shared historical experiences with the majority of the event attendees (Elizabeth interview, November 2013).

Although Alison admitted that the July-Braai event conveyed a message of being exclusively for Whites, she refuted the accusations that the decision to use the name Rhodesia and its emblems was a deliberate resuscitation of colonial identities aimed at provoking non-White Zimbabweans (Alison interview, November 2013). In justifying her claim, she argued that it would have been naive to ignore the fact that Zimbabwe used to be called Rhodesia. For her, the use of the name Rhodesia was and still is an essential component in stimulating a shared historical identity of a multiracial community which was once known as Rhodesia. She stressed her point by highlighting that ‘once upon a time there were people of all races who lived in Rhodesia and therefore there are Rhodesians ... therefore that Rhodesian identity is not a racial White identity, but it is recognition of those who lived in Rhodesia ... Black or White’ (Alison interview, November 2013). The determination to assert a Rhodesian identity rather than a Zimbabwean one signalled concerted keenness on the part of White diasporas to emphasise what Kate Law describes as pioneer credentials to ‘legitimise the use of the term and references to the idea that their ancestors carved out a country in a complete wilderness’ (Law 2016).

To ensure the growth and survival of a Zimbabwean White immigrant community and its support network, the organisers of social events like the July Braai event actively encouraged attendees to be on the lookout for any new arrivals so that they too could be invited. Robert, who migrated in 2002, was one of those who experienced this active seeking-out of new arrivals. He spoke of how he was surprised when he received a letter from an ex-White Rhodesian inviting him to the July Braai (Robert interview, November 2014). What surprised him was that he had not given his contact details to anyone except a few friends he knew from back home. This deliberate and conscious attempt to search for White Zimbabweans dotted across Britain with the aim of creating a database was therefore an essential ingredient in sustenance of an active community.

### CASE STUDIES: BLACKS’ ENCOUNTERS WITH OLDER GENERATION WHITES

Outside the confines of Zimbabwean White social events, Mary, a Black Zimbabwean who migrated in 2002 and settled in Cambridge, spoke of how on two separate occasions she also encountered Zimbabwean Whites still clinging to Rhodesian identities and memories (Mary

interview, October 2013). Her first incident involved a visit to a widowed White ex-Rhodesian soldier in his late seventies who was being looked after by her church. She revealed how surprised she was to witness the extent to which he had gone to maintain a colonial identity in his house by 'displaying Rhodesian flags and plaques on the wall, with nothing to show that he had embraced Zimbabwe's independence despite having lived in post-colonial Zimbabwe' for over a decade.

Her second experience was in 2010 with a White Zimbabwean lady in her forties who had failed to accept the reality of the permanent demise of Whites' colonial privileges over Blacks. Although the White lady would have been a young girl during the colonial area, Mary was 'shocked' by her colonial mentality that Black Zimbabwean women should work for Whites for virtually nothing. Mary's realisation of this colonial attitude happened when she and her Black Zimbabwean friend were offered 'valueless Zimbabwean dollars' to babysit and iron her clothes. Mary's experiences served to highlight the extent to which the colonial mentality was still embedded in the lives of some Whites who were naturally finding it difficult to let go of colonial memories. These were memories that made them believe that they were still superior to Blacks.

### DIFFERENT ATTITUDES TO COLONIAL LEGACIES

However, it would be misleading to conclude that all ex-White Zimbabwean immigrants endorse a colonial identity. These individuals had migrated in the belief that the reconciliation message at independence had encouraged them not to abdicate from engaging in the post-independence national-building project. Events like the July Braai turned out to be a source of exposing divisions on the extent to which historical memories influenced the construction of a Zimbabwean White immigrant community identity. After attending two July Braai events, Elizabeth decided never to attend again. This was after realising that she had nothing in common with most of the attendees.

Despite being born in 1964 and having enjoyed the benefits of being White in colonial Zimbabwe, Elizabeth could not condone explicit and subtle racist rhetoric based on past experiences. She narrated how these imported racist memories were usually expressed during role-plays in which research participants attempted to recreate life in colonial Zimbabwe. Terry, who migrated in 2004, described the racist-themed

role-plays in which participants would pretend they were African domestic maids by blackening their faces and dressing like a maid 'imitating a Shona accent and go on to entertain themselves by saying racist jokes about Black maids ... creating much amusement among the onlookers' (Terry interview, November 2013).

Elizabeth believed growing up in the city of Gweru shielded her from nurturing racist attitudes. This was because the urban environment she grew up in did not expose her to the violence of armed struggle or to racial hatred. Her parents would also not allow her to watch certain news reports on the liberation war. She compared her experience with White children living in the countryside on farms where they were not shielded from the impact of the liberation war or racial superiority which existed on farms. Constant attacks from Black nationalist fighters and sight of the Rhodesian army not only meant racial-driven hatred was condoned, but also incentivised them to protect their colonial privileges and Rhodesian White identity. The need to protect their colonial identity and privileges coupled with exposure to Nationalist Movement attacks, according to Elizabeth, had been influential in determining the extent to which the White diaspora of her generation were going to interact with Blacks.

The behaviour of the White diaspora community at these social events in reincarnating Blacks as inferior mirrored historic and pre-emigration prejudices that had been officialised by the colonial racial hierarchical classification of the population and had not been effectively addressed after independence. David Hughes acknowledges that, whilst a few liberal Whites would have crossed racial boundaries after independence by inviting Blacks into their social circles such as restaurants or sport clubs, the majority had continued to maintain their identity especially on farms or any out-of-city location despite the gradual decline of all White neighbourhoods (Hughes 2010). It was therefore inevitable that within the White older generation diaspora community there were individuals who would have migrated without taking any initiative to cross the racial divide by either attending social events where Blacks dominated such as a football matches. Moreover, they would not have taken the initiative to learn indigenous languages or buy a house in the high-density residential areas established in the colonial era for Black urban workers. Without any historic interactions outside the remit of employer and employee, it was therefore not surprising that most Whites found it difficult, if not impossible, to let go of their colonial identities and interact with non-Whites.

In this self-imposed diaspora isolation from other Zimbabweans, Whites' fixation on a Zimbabwean identity went no further than the country's climate, wildlife, farm life and socio-economic privileges.

### INTERGENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

The importation of homeland prejudices within the White immigrant community exposed intergenerational differences. This was because young Zimbabwean Whites who were born towards the end of the liberation struggle or in independent Zimbabwe added another dimension to the complex process of historical influences on the construction of a Zimbabwean White diaspora community. These were individuals with no recollection of colonial lifestyle or propaganda to persuade them to adopt a colonial identity or to relate to what went on at Rhodesian-themed events such as July Braai. Their memories of Zimbabwe would be based on a multiracial society with no official racial boundaries to determine a person's position in society. Neither did they bother to join the virtual community on Facebook. Twenty-four-year-old Terry and twenty-six-year-old Jessica, both born in independent Zimbabwe, recalled how after attending the July Braai with their parents they vowed not to return because of the racist rhetoric (Terry interview, November 2013; Jessica interview, November 2013). Kenneth, who migrated in 2001 when he was eighteen, also admitted that Rhodesian-themed events never appealed to him despite his parents being regular attendees (Kenneth interview, January 2014).

With friends or acquaintances across the racial divide, there was awareness that associating with groups or events with visible links to colonial Rhodesia might jeopardise the friendships established prior to migration. Kenneth also explained how rejection of a colonial identity by young White Zimbabweans had made them feel comfortable with participating in the multiracial Zimbabwe Music Festival (ZIMFEST) held in London. ZIMFEST had emerged to be one of the largest single annual summer events bringing together Zimbabweans from across the cultural or racial spectrum to celebrate Zimbabwe's music, sports, food or arts. The use of Zimbabwean flags and the participation of musicians across racial or tribal lines had provided a platform where post-colonial Zimbabwe's memories and experiences were celebrated by Zimbabweans from different racial or ethnic backgrounds.



Despite ZIMFEST being hailed as an event that brings multi-racial Zimbabweans together, it was rejected by some older generation Black Zimbabweans who castigated it as a false and misleading representation of the Zimbabwean diaspora community relations. Happison described the event as a ‘profit driven commercial venture by predominantly White organisers with no interest in addressing historical racial issues to bring sustainable unity between the racially fragmented Zimbabwean communities in Britain’ (Happison interview, January 2013). He also trivialised the involvement of Blacks in organising the event by accusing them of being ‘used’ by Whites to ensure Black attendance. He justified his claim that ZIMFEST is a business venture with no interests in promoting racial relations by questioning why the event:

... charge as much as £30 entry fee per head and once inside buying food or drinks can be expensive when a plate of Sadza and relish of green vegetables and meat-stew, plus a one can of beer can be over £20. Imagine the cost for a family of four.

Although events like ZIMFEST had been perceived as noble attempts to bring Zimbabweans together, the experience of Jessica showed how naive it was to conclude that cordial relations were easy to construct between younger generation Zimbabweans of different racial backgrounds (Jessica interview, November 2013). Jessica revealed how she found it difficult to establish friendships with Black Zimbabweans of her generation. She blamed the nature of interracial relations back home, especially with her school or classmates for creating barriers when attempting to interact. Despite having had Black friends at school she described the friendship as ‘superficial’ since she could not recall inviting her supposedly Black friends to her house. Neither could she remember being invited to the homes of her so-called Black friends. Without any pre-emigration experiences of relations outside Zimbabwe’s school environment, Jessica believed there was no basis or incentive to establish intimate interracial relations in the diaspora.

Jessica also blamed the historic privileges of Whites for undermining the creation of positive relations with some Blacks of her generation. She recalled a racial incident in Lincolnshire when she was confronted by a young Black Zimbabwean student she shared accommodation with at university. Upon realising that she was from Zimbabwe the Black Zimbabwean student humiliated Jessica in front of her friends by

expressing her hatred of White Zimbabweans by referring to the colonial racist policies that exploited Blacks. She made it clear that she would never sympathise with White farmers who lost land. Jessica's unpleasant experience with a Zimbabwean whom she thought she could relate to since they were both born in independent Zimbabwe made her feel reluctant to seek out Black Zimbabweans as she could not bear further public humiliation. Being a lesbian, Jessica knew she would face difficulties being accepted by most Black Zimbabweans who still hold on to cultural anti-gay attitudes.

### *White Zimbabweans: Twice Immigrants*

Parminder Bhachu defines 'twice immigrants' as people who had initially moved from a country of origin to a destination where they became part of an established diaspora via an intermediary country or countries (Bhachu 2015). The presence of twice immigrants within Zimbabwe's White immigrant community had further complicated the influence of historical memories on the construction of community interactions with other Zimbabweans. The experiences of twice immigrants Gareth and Elizabeth showed the extent to which White Zimbabweans who travelled to Britain via intermediate country/countries had different approaches to how their Rhodesian identity would determine their interactions.

Gareth, who was born in South Africa in the 1940s but raised in Zimbabwe, is an ex-Rhodesian policeman who was not comfortable with Ian Smith's racial policies. He left Zimbabwe in 1978 to take up employment in Swaziland's police as a consultant. However, when Zimbabwe became independent he abandoned plans of relocating back to Zimbabwe as he was not certain what would happen to Whites when the Lancaster House Constitution expired in 1990. Although he admitted he always felt safe and welcome whenever he visited his parents, he identified the post-colonial nationalist rhetoric as the main reason why he developed perceptions that Zimbabwe might be unsafe for the White population (Gareth interview, November 2013). He was aware that there had not been radical policies to dismantle the colonial legacies of White socio-economic privileges. Driven by fear of the unknown he decided not to rejoin his parents who still lived in Zimbabwe but instead migrated and settled in Cyprus where he stayed until 2010 before deciding to use his Irish heritage to relocate to Britain. The main reason he migrated to Britain was his daughter's education who was at secondary school.

Upon settling in Britain, Gareth realised that the circumstances which had forced him to leave Zimbabwe in 1978 inhibited him from establishing close relations with other White Zimbabwean immigrants of his generation already settled in the country. He was aware that a majority of White Zimbabwean immigrants who had reactivated a colonial identity were doing so as compensatory behaviour in dealing with the bitterness following the loss of their socio-economic privileged status at independence in 1980 or loss of their farms in the 2000s. Although Gareth sympathised with those who had lost their farms, he admitted that he did not share similar pre-emigration experiences to comprehend the bitterness being exhibited by his White compatriots to the extent of reactivating a colonial identity that deterred interactions with non-White Zimbabwean immigrants. Unlike most of them, he had voluntarily left Zimbabwe to live in Swaziland in 1968 because he did not approve of Ian Smith's policies. He was not personally affected by post-colonial policies which culminated in the eviction of Whites from their farms. Relocating to Europe was a voluntary choice based on 'unfounded fears at that time' (Gareth interview, November 2013). Therefore, adoption of a colonial identity moulded along racial lines would be anathema to him as he had been an advocate of creating a non-racial Zimbabwe during the colonial era. It was this principle which had made him relocate to Swaziland when it gained independence in 1968.

With such an attitude, Gareth did not see the need to actively identify himself with White Rhodesian groups on internet social networks on arrival in Britain since he had little in common with them. He also acknowledged that he would not bother to attend any social events organised by the White Zimbabwean diaspora if he became aware of their colonial identity. Instead, he bemoaned racial fragmentation of the Zimbabwean immigrant community as he wished all Zimbabweans could come together 'meeting as a community of friends in pubs' with no racial boundaries inhibiting interactions. Without the influence of White Zimbabweans, Gareth's memories of Zimbabwe were not influenced by colonial privileges but by how much he 'misses the land, wildlife, weather and people' (Gareth interview, November 2013).

Gareth's attitude as a twice immigrant when it came to establishing interactions with other White Zimbabweans in Britain contrasts with that of Alison who migrated in 1999. Alison had initially left Zimbabwe for South Africa in 1981 as part of a contingent of Whites who did not feel safe in a Black-led country. Following the transition to independence, it

was an inevitable expectation that the Zimbabwean government would implement a new phase of democratic revolution that would redress colonial economic injustices by ensuring that the White minority would not dominate in the economy. It was therefore natural for most White women, apart from fear of the unknown in an independent Zimbabwe, to be concerned at attempts to deracialise the economy (Law 2016). These fears and anxieties of White women were apparent in Alison's post-independence experience.

As a newly married woman in 1981, Alison believed her fears were justified since her new husband and her father had been in the Rhodesian army and therefore were vulnerable to Black hostility. Her fears became a reality when her husband failed to secure employment, a situation she believed was exacerbated by her husband's involvement in the Rhodesian army. She blamed this on what she called 'independence euphoria' which made people with certain historical backgrounds like her husband feel neither safe nor have the confidence to start another life in the new Zimbabwe. It was therefore inevitable that emigration for the newly married couple was the only way to escape what they perceived as selective persecution of Whites. Although the initial plan was to use her ancestral ties to settle in Britain, they found living in apartheid South Africa the best option because of the presence of a large White Zimbabwean community who had been disillusioned by Zimbabwe's independence. Assisted by apartheid policies and a community of former White Zimbabweans, Alison and her husband were able to settle comfortably in South Africa until 1999 when she decided to migrate to Britain following the collapse of her marriage.

Prior to migrating to Britain, the White community of Zimbabweans who shared the same historical experiences had been an integral part of her life both in Zimbabwe and South Africa. With memories of the importance of community support networks in her life, it was therefore inevitable that upon settling in Britain she tried to seek out other White Zimbabweans. Her efforts were made easier during the early 2000s by the influx of White farmers who had been evicted from their land. She described how her attempts to find other White Zimbabweans initially started by word of mouth, and then by social networking. She identified the initial success of social networking to find White Zimbabweans as the reason why there was 'a structured Zimbabwean community of Whites unlike in South Africa where White Zimbabweans were assimilating themselves and becoming South Africans' (Alison interview, November 2013).

Acknowledging the mindset of ex-White Zimbabweans who wanted to maintain their identity, she made every effort to ensure that social networking should evolve into networks supporting (mainly) White Zimbabweans in both Britain and Zimbabwe.

### COLOURED IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY

By the turn of the millennium there was a small settled Coloured community in Britain assisting emigration of family members and friends from Zimbabwe. The result of assisted migration was the development of a Coloured community in urban areas where there was a high concentration of pioneer immigrants who migrated in the 1970s. Milton Keynes emerged to be one of those urban areas outside London that experienced a rapid increase of Zimbabwean Coloureds after 2000. Most of the new arrivals in Milton Keynes had been drawn by the presence of pioneer immigrants, as they would have been guaranteed invaluable assistance in settling in an unfamiliar environment. Although Pamela agreed that the presence of pioneer Coloureds in Milton Keynes in the 1990s triggered an influx of new arrivals, she also regrettably admitted that the influx had created an ‘enclave of Coloureds with limited interaction with other Zimbabweans’ (Pamela interview, October 2013).

Despite Milton Keynes being identified as having the largest concentration of Coloureds, the research participants (as shown in the final chapter titled ‘Interviews and Research Participant Details’) presented clear evidence that there were some members of the community spread across Britain. To ensure there was effective interaction that allowed the maintenance of imported Coloured consciousness, different communication ways had to be explored by members of the community. Panikos Panayi pointed out how communication networks allowed the ethnicity of migrants to be perpetuated in modern societies. Such networks would facilitate the sharing of experiences. The internet was pivotal in establishing a cohesive Coloured diaspora community (Panayi 2010).

Clayton Peel recognised the role of the internet in the formation of Zimbabwean Coloured diasporic interactions. Through websites such as goffal.com, Peel explains how Coloureds during the early years of the 2000s were able to mobilise themselves as a community (Peel in McGregor and Primorac 2010). The website became an important forum for coping with homesickness, sharing job hunting and

social concerns, or commenting on the deterioration of the political and socio-economic situation back home in Zimbabwe. In addition to fostering community interactions the websites also promoted a racial discourse by promoting the notion of charity initiatives that exclusively targeted Coloureds still resident in Zimbabwe. Pamela confirmed diaspora-sponsored charity work targetting Coloureds in Zimbabwe when she highlighted how the community financially assisted a lady to start home schooling in Arcadia<sup>3</sup> for academically gifted Coloured children who could not afford hiring tutors for extra tuition.

Creation of a cohesive and close-knit diaspora Coloured community could not solely be attributed to the guarantees of support from pioneer immigrants (as was the case in Milton Keynes) or through internet interactions. This was because the process of preserving Coloured consciousness (as discussed in Chapter 2) could also be traced back to the colonial era when exclusive Coloured foster homes were established as vehicles for transmitting common bonds essential in constructing a coloured identity. The progressive development of common bonds during the different phases of Zimbabwe's history naturally enforced familiar community boundaries and emotional commitments which were later to be reincarnated in Britain. As a minority community within Zimbabwe, interactions could not be established outside their historic consciousness of the need to protect their identity. Limiting interactions with other Zimbabweans would therefore be regarded as essential in protecting collective identities and values which had always separated them from other Zimbabweans.

Despite the influence of past experiences in protecting a Coloured diaspora identity, there were intergenerational variations on the extent these experiences determined interactions with other Zimbabweans. Acknowledging the impact of intergenerational dynamics on community identity was Hughes, a Zimbabwean Coloured who migrated in 2002. He described how the older generation's failure to 'let go of the past' had been the main reason why there had been very limited interaction between the Coloured community and other Zimbabwean immigrants (Hughes interview, November 2013). By promoting a separatist attitude based on historical memories the older generation was described by Esther as being 'narrow minded'. She explained how she had been ostracised by some members in her community for 'playing White', just because she refused to prescribe to the separatist philosophy that is entrenched in historical experiences (Esther interview, June 2013).

Spurred by racial prejudices nurtured during colonial segregation of the population, it was an inevitable outcome that David Mason's use of the generic term 'Black' to identify 'people who are not White' would be rejected by some older generation Zimbabwean Coloured individuals (Mason 2000). Pamela, who spoke of being rebuked by other Coloureds for describing herself as Black, admitted that for most Coloureds adopting the term 'Black' challenged the conditioning process some of them went through when they were being indoctrinated into believing that they were superior to Black Africans (Pamela interview, September 2013). Unfortunately for her, identifying herself with the Black community was unavoidable since all her siblings are Black. She described herself as one of the few Zimbabwean Coloureds who had to make a conscious decision to adopt a dual identity by maintaining relations with her maternal Black family, the only family members she had known since birth.

Leo Lucassen's assertion that intermarriage can dismantle racial boundaries did not resonate with older generation Coloured immigrants' attitude towards Blacks (Lucassen 2005). This became apparent when the historically constructed separatist attitude of Coloureds discouraged intermarriage, especially when it involved Blacks. It was therefore not surprising, according to Pamela, that strong resistance to marrying Blacks in Britain was closely linked to the development of attitudes of racial superiority (over Blacks) during the colonial era's hierarchical compartmentalisation of the population (Pamela interview, October 2013). She acknowledged that colonial classification of the population in which Coloureds were being conditioned to align with Whites had instead led to acceptance or tolerance of relationships between Coloureds and Whites. However, despite the conditioned alignment to Whites, Pamela recognised that historical racial prejudices had resulted in no intermarriages between Coloureds and White Zimbabweans as far as she knew. In affirming Pamela's observation, Esther admitted that a small group of Coloureds, who had chosen to marry outside the community like her two sons, would have chosen Whites who were not Zimbabweans (Esther interview, June 2013).

Simon, a Coloured immigrant in his late twenties, stated that despite being encouraged to maintain exclusive Coloured boundaries by most older generation Coloureds the younger generation occasionally broke down the barriers when they hosted social events such as parties (Simon interview, September 2013). The party-goers were mostly individuals who interacted with the Coloured community prior to migration.

They normally consisted of former schoolmates who empathised or were familiar with the Coloured way of life. However, outside these social gatherings Simon admitted there was very little meaningful interpersonal interaction with other Zimbabweans.

However, it is important to acknowledge that not all the Coloured older generation had a separatist philosophy when they migrated. Hughes, a practising Christian, admitted that being a member of a religious organisation facilitated more interaction with Zimbabweans outside the Coloured community (Hughes interview, November 2013). Like most Coloured Christians, his church and not his Coloured community had become the source of welfare and moral support. This was because, in the absence of proximate families, diaspora congregations would not only be sources of spiritual solace, but also invaluable in providing material and welfare support. The development of Christian fellowship between Coloureds and other Zimbabweans was usually evident in traditional churches, but not in Zimbabwean home-grown churches. This was because traditional churches had multiracial congregations unlike home-grown churches which were dominated by Black Zimbabweans. Coloureds' interaction with other Zimbabweans in the diaspora would therefore be influenced by historic consciousness of their minority status within Zimbabwe's population structures. For most Coloureds in the diaspora, limiting interactions with other Zimbabweans (even in a religious environment) was essential to maintaining historic boundaries that had always separated them from Black, Asian and White Zimbabweans.

Hughes also described how the way in which Coloureds migrated to Britain played a significant role in consolidating their historic minority status within the Zimbabwean diaspora community (Hughes interview, November 2013). Unlike a significant number of Black immigrants who sought asylum or applied for work or student visas, there were fewer Coloureds. Whites generally used ancestral rights to migrate. Hughes attributed this to the British government tightening up the use of ancestral rights in visa applications. Prospective Coloured immigrants were required to produce proof of their ancestral rights such as death or marriage certificates. Obtaining these documents proved to be a challenge too far because most Coloured children were the result of illicit relations between White men and Black women (Pape 1990). As a result, most Coloureds born during colonial rule like Anita found it impossible to emigrate because they did not have any documents proving that their fathers were British (Anita interview, July 2013).



## ASIAN IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY

Although Asians imported their Zimbabwean attitudes of separation, they quickly assimilated themselves into Asian communities in cities like Leicester and Slough where there was a large Asian population. Religion, language and caste had been historic key classification markers Zimbabwean Asians used to construct identities essential in forging interactions. However, allowing such commonalities to evolve into social aggregates facilitating interaction naturally excluded a large proportion of non-Asian Zimbabweans who were mainly Christians, did not speak Gujarati or subscribed to the caste system. This was because assimilation into British Asian communities they shared commonalities with could be brought about by reactivating generic Asian identities; a process described by Abdi, a Zimbabwean Asian immigrant in the 1970s, as a major catalyst in excluding themselves from other Zimbabweans (Abdi interview, June 2013). He identified shared commonalities as the main reason why former Asian Zimbabweans residing in Leicester, who make up at least 40% of his golf club's membership, were still perpetuating racial segregation by actively marginalising themselves from the rest of the Zimbabwean community (Abdi interview, June 2013).

With very little Asian emigration in the 1980s (as discussed in Chapter 3), the affluent Asian community back in Zimbabwe had developed post-independence Asian enclaves in most cities. The most prominent Asian enclaves had been the Belvedere and Ridgeview suburbs in Harare, which affluent Asians transformed into upmarket residential areas. Gutu, a retired senior official in Zimbabwe's civil service, illustrated the resolve of Asians to create post-colonial exclusive Asian areas. He explained how in 1989 the need to create Asian enclaves forced a work colleague to relocate from Belvedere to the more multiracial affluent suburb of Mt Pleasant in Harare (Gutu interview, July 2013). This was after sustained persuasive and at times aggressive pressure from his affluent Asian neighbours to relocate. The determination to make him move became apparent when, in addition to being paid a substantial amount of money above the market price for his Belvedere house, he was also given a retail shop in Harare and a smaller house in the Midlands' administrative capital city of Gweru. The aggressive methods to make him relocate demonstrated the extent to which some within the Asian community wanted to create their own enclaves, which would be a hindrance to the nation-building project.

Failure to be desensitised from this isolationist agenda would naturally form the basis on which they would interact with other Zimbabweans in the diaspora. Zimbabwean Asians therefore migrated without experiences of intimate or close relations with other Zimbabwean racial communities. They still saw themselves as 'puritanical' in principle and practice, and therefore any limited interaction with Coloureds or any other Zimbabweans would safeguard them from moral or cultural contamination; hence, the need to interact with non-Zimbabwean Asians they shared historic commonalities with.

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Whilst it is undeniable that colonial hierarchical categorisation of the population created the conditions for racial prejudices, post-colonial events cannot be omitted when examining interactions within Zimbabwe's minority communities in Britain. Although the periods of immigration might have been different, most post-colonial Zimbabwean White immigrants were united by bitterness caused by the circumstances that forced them to migrate. Cherished memories of colonial privileges and the nature of migration were instrumental in developing a united White diaspora community with a colonial identity. Holding on to the colonial identity by using the colonial name Rhodesia and its emblems by members of the Facebook virtual community and openly displayed by them at social events had created interaction barriers with non-White Zimbabwean communities.

Imported historical memories had also been a significant determinant of the way in which the contemporary older generation Coloured immigrant community interacted. Memories of how the Coloured consciousness was stimulated during the colonial era and of how marginalisation in both colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe was perceived increased the resolve to construct a united Coloured diaspora community with its own support network. Harboured memories of past experiences of marginalisation and prejudices, especially within the older generation, had placed limits on the extent to which the Coloured diaspora community should interact with other Zimbabweans.

Despite the influence historical experiences had when it came to identities and interactions, most Zimbabwean immigrants in Britain were still comfortable to introduce themselves to new acquaintances as Zimbabweans. Their identity with Zimbabwe was mainly based on

cherished memories of their homeland. These memories include physical features (climate and tourist attractions) and social features (food, drinks and family connections). However, memories of colonial and post-colonial social and economic and political structures had erected racial barriers restricting interactions based on shared cultural heritage.

The chapter argues that imported historical prejudices and identities constructed during different phases of Zimbabwe's history erected imagined ethnic and racial boundaries which placed limits on interracial interactions. The ultimate consequence was the creation of separate insular Zimbabwean immigrant communities of Whites, Coloureds and Asians who rarely organised or participated in interracial events. Since fragmented Zimbabwean communities used historically constructed identities and prejudices to construct relations with other Zimbabweans in Britain, comparative analysis between Zimbabwe's ethnic groups (to be examined in Chapter 6) will unveil diverse and complex economic integration patterns whose influences can be traced back to colonial and post-colonial experiences.

Colonial hierarchical categorisation of the population created the conditions needed for racial boundaries to form and to impact interracial interactions between Zimbabwe's diaspora communities. The research participants present clear evidence of how most older generation Zimbabweans migrated in the absence of any extensive interracial relations; hence, the difficulty to initiate interactions with other Zimbabweans in Britain. These were individuals who had been accustomed to the racist environment of colonial Zimbabwe in which racial segregation was officially practised. Good examples are those adult Whites who had grown up on farms where they had formalised a master-servant relation with their Black workers and held on to the belief that they were superior to Coloureds and Asians.

## NOTES

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2. Cited in Kate Law, 'From Settlers to Strays: White Zimbabwean Women, Historical Memory and Belonging in the Diaspora, c. 1980–2010', *Women's History Review*, vol. 25 (2016), pp. 551–562.
3. Residential suburb that had been designated for Coloureds during the colonial era.

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## Historical Influences on Zimbabwean Economic Integration in Britain, 1990s–2000s

### INTRODUCTION

The colonisation of Zimbabwe irrevocably set in motion the construction of identities, skills and attitudes which cannot be ignored when exploring economic integration processes of the Zimbabwean community in Britain from the 1990s. Integration can be broadly defined as the way in which migrants ‘find their place in society’ (Lucassen 2005). The quest of Zimbabwean immigrants to effectively integrate economically was not a neutral process immune from historical experiences. This was because the Zimbabwean diasporic community had migrated with memories and experiences developed and nurtured in both the colonial and post-colonial phases of Zimbabwe’s history. These homeland influences became invaluable tools when it came to searching for economic integration processes to facilitate upward social mobility. The chapter’s overarching aim is to uncover and explore the homeland influences that had an impact on the economic integration patterns of Zimbabwean immigrants as they established themselves in Britain.

To comprehend the historical influences affecting the economic integration of Zimbabweans in Britain the chapter will concentrate on employment (formal and self-employment) and educational attainment as key indicators to measure the extent to which they positively engaged with Britain’s economic structures. It will also establish how deskilling that had dismantled imported social class identities motivated Black Zimbabweans to reactivate homeland experiences or memories

by selecting integration processes that had the potential to bring about upward social mobility.

By including self-employment in the employment discussion the chapter will be affirming the complexity of historical influences on economic integration processes of Zimbabwean immigrants that have not been recognised by most emerging academic work. The literature on Zimbabweans self-employment in Britain provides a general overview and does so by restricting the debate to two perspectives. One side of the debate explores the reasons why some Zimbabweans decided to be entrepreneurial whilst the other side focusses on different types of entrepreneurial or business activities (Mbida 2011; Pasura 2014). However, the debate fails to reveal how homeland influences, developed and nurtured in both the colonial and post-colonial eras, had an impact on the nature and success of the diaspora businesses. The chapter's examination of historical influences will therefore provide alternative arguments that do not seek to romanticise self-employment or businesses of the Zimbabwean diaspora. Instead, unveiling the nature of the business and the ethnic or racial diversity of those with businesses will demonstrate the extent to which homeland influences negatively impacted entrepreneurialism in Britain.

Although the chapter recognises how homeland influences played a major role in determining the economic integration of Black, White and Coloured Zimbabweans, examination of the economic activities of Asians will unveil the extent to which their entrepreneurial activities were impacted negatively by post-war South Asian immigration to Britain. This was because, as a small community of late arrivals compared with other South Asians, first-generation Zimbabwean Asians were not keen to establish businesses that would be perceived to be competing with established non-Zimbabwean Asian businesses.

How historical experiences influenced economic integration processes within the racially diverse Zimbabwean immigrant community is analysed in this chapter by taking evidence from older generation research participants who at the time of migration would have been old enough to be in employment or enrolled at a tertiary college. They would have migrated with pre-emigration employment experiences and/or academic qualifications which would not only determine their economic integration patterns, but also the nature of employment they found themselves in. With most contemporary post-independence Zimbabwean immigrants arriving with experience of the neo-colonial monumental and tragic

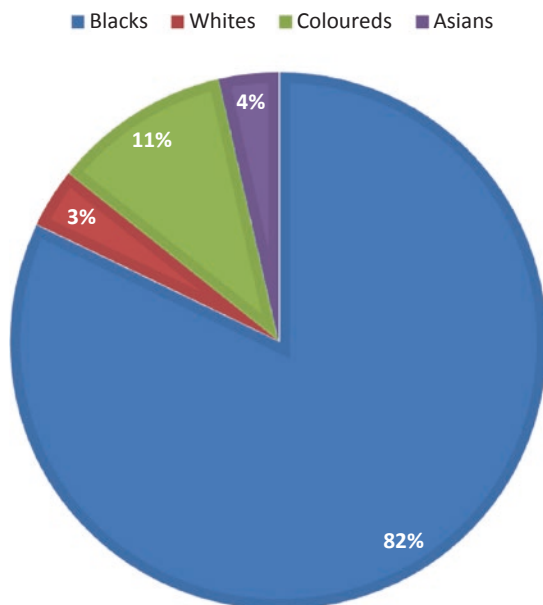
collapse of Zimbabwe's economy not envisaged at independence, their economic integration depended on how they interacted with Britain's economic structures to ensure up social mobility. However, up social mobility proved to be elusive as most professionals experienced deskilling.

### *Deskilling: Legacy of the Past*

Statistical evidence of older generation research participants (illustrated in Fig. 6.1) showed Black arrivals as the Zimbabwean community with the highest proportion of individuals possessing higher educational qualifications such as a university degree or a tertiary diploma.

However, despite possessing academic or professional qualifications that should have given them middle-class status when they first settled in Britain, most Black respondents found themselves struggling to get into the labour market because of deskilling. Less than 10% of those who arrived with a professional qualification or a university degree were able to find work that matched their qualification. The rest, some educated

**Fig. 6.1** Profile of older generation participants who arrived in Britain with higher educational or professional qualifications





to degree level, found themselves in menial jobs as care assistants in the National Health Service (NHS) or residential homes, or as factory or warehouse operatives. A notable exception were nurses who, despite having qualified as state-registered nurses, still had to undertake adaptation courses to be allowed to work as qualified nurses in Britain.

Deskilling was a common trend among other Zimbabwean immigrants settled across Britain (Bloch 2006). Deskilled Zimbabweans were forced to work side by side with fellow Zimbabweans who would have been below them in Zimbabwe's social hierarchy leading to the popularisation of the Shona phrase *Britain maenzanise* ('Britain has made us equal'). David's experience demonstrated how deskilling for most Zimbabweans was a direct consequence of a lack of congruence between what the British labour market required and Zimbabwean professional qualifications. This was when he realised, upon his arrival in 2001, that his Zimbabwean business administration qualification would not be accepted as equivalent to British qualifications. As a skilled immigrant who used to have a good job, 'flying business class' and owner of three residential properties, David recalled the 'traumatic and humiliating' experience of finding himself working in a factory and living in social housing on the St. Mathews' Council Estate in Leicester (David interview, January 2013).

By describing his experience of down social mobility as 'traumatic and humiliating' David was inadvertently highlighting the extent to which deskilled Zimbabweans prior to emigration had modelled their middle-class status according to what Fiona Devine and Mary C. Waters describe as 'a shorthand way [of] conveying [the] standard of living' (Devine and Waters 2004). Prior to emigration, this was a standard of living normally conveyed in multiple and interrelated ways, which included showing off educational or professional qualifications, car or property ownership, living in company houses, driving company cars, or employing a domestic worker. After being accustomed to such an affluent lifestyle which had differentiated them from other Black Zimbabweans, it was an inevitable reaction for deskilled individuals like David to feel embarrassed when they experienced down social mobility.

James, a Zimbabwean-trained accountant, also summed up the humiliating experiences he and other deskilled Zimbabwean faced by saying that the

... nature of jobs we found ourselves in, working in care homes for the elderly or in industries have forced many to lie or to conceal to our former work colleagues back home the jobs we were doing. This was a way of countering derogatory jokes to describe the nature of our employment. The most demeaning joke was being described as scrubbers of white old ladies' backs ... Here in the UK some of us found it difficult to tolerate sarcastic comments like 'UK has made us equal' coming from less educated Zimbabweans who marvelled working side by side with their former bosses in a sandwich factory doing a 12-hour shift ... (James interview, December 2011)

The humiliating experience of working side by side with those who had been below them in Zimbabwe's pecking order was to an extent a consequence of the rapid transformation of Zimbabwe's immigrant population responding to the evolving nature of post-colonial emigration patterns. At the turn of the millennium the Zimbabwean immigrant community had started to be more social class diverse when earlier immigrants, identified by James Muzondidya as professionals and middle class, started sponsoring the emigration of less affluent family members or friends (Muzondidya in Murithi and Mawadza 2011). Among those who were financially sponsored were unskilled secondary school leavers or individuals from the working class who, without financial support, would not have been able to raise enough funds to sponsor their emigration. These were individuals who took delight in working side by side with their former bosses and would coin derogatory phrases to describe how deskilling had made them equal.

The embarrassment experienced by deskilled professional Zimbabweans not only pulled the veil on changes in the Black Zimbabwean immigrant community, it also served to affirm how social class was idolised within the community. This was because throughout Zimbabwe's history, Black Zimbabweans had been conditioned to view social class as a key component of identity (Weedon 2004). Glorifying social class had its origins in the creation of the educated African middle class to support colonial social, economic and political structures (Mlambo in Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009). The emerging African middle class (as discussed in Chapter 2) wanted to stand out from Africans they perceived to be below them in the social hierarchy.

Idolising social class in this way was continued in post-colonial Zimbabwe as the growing Black elite professional and middle class

duplicated the extravagant lifestyle of Whites by sending their children to exclusive private schools, buying or renting houses in former exclusive White-only residential areas. For deskilled Zimbabweans, economic integration in the diaspora would inevitably be motivated by the need to attain or re-establish middle-class identities. Lucassen pointed out that the social up mobility of immigrants was linked to education and employment, and hence the escape route from the lower echelons of British society was the attainment of better educational or professional qualifications (Lucassen 2005).

### *Educational Attainment a Historical Legacy*

The research identified four categories of Zimbabweans who utilised education as a plausible integration process to facilitate up social mobility. The first group consisted of deskilled individuals like David who decided to upgrade their Zimbabwean qualifications by either retraining or enrolling for adaptation courses. With a Zimbabwean business administration qualification, he envisaged that graduating in 2010 with a BSc degree in computer science from Leicester University and an MSc in information technology from De Montfort University in 2011 were invaluable steps in improving his prospects of finding employment in Britain's competitive high-tech labour market.

The second group consisted of those who decided to change careers by gaining new skills in professions they believed would increase their employability chances. Examples include Zanele and Daniel who made the decision when they realised their Zimbabwean teaching diploma qualification could not be accepted as a UK-equivalent teaching qualification. Daniel trained as a mental health nurse at Thames Valley University in 1999 whilst Zanele decided to train as a social worker at Northampton University (Zanele interview, March 2013; Daniel interview, November 2013).

The third group was associated with individuals, mostly of the younger generation, who migrated in their late teens or early twenties with secondary school qualifications but would not have had the opportunity to gain a professional qualification or progress with their education. This could have been the result of a variety of reasons such as not having the required grades to enrol at Zimbabwean state universities because of high competition, not having afforded the high tuition fees at private-owned universities whose threshold entry requirements were

lower than at state universities or not having family members already settled in Britain who could financially sponsor their emigration soon after completing their secondary education.

The fourth group consisted of those who did not have secondary school academic qualifications to continue with further education. Prior to emigration they would have established themselves within the lower echelons of Zimbabwe's society. Their emigration would have been made possible by being financially sponsored by kith and kin already settled in Britain. Some of them hoped to supplement their Zimbabwean-acquired educational qualifications by enrolling for further education once settled in Britain to improve their employability chances in high-status jobs.

This universal acceptance by Black immigrants of linking education with meritocracy was not a spontaneous illogical reaction to disadvantages and discrimination of Britain's economic or social sectors. Instead, it was rooted in homeland influences that had been developed and nurtured in both the colonial and post-colonial eras. Creating a small African middle-class community of educated professionals in colonial Zimbabwe had marked the start of an evolutionary process that would have a profound impact on the educational aspirations of Africans. By occupying the lowest position in colonial Zimbabwe's population hierarchy, embracing education emerged to be the most realistic route to escape the entrapment of colonial-induced poverty. The post-colonial government's policy of 'education for all' that was deliberately targeting Blacks further consolidated Africans' colonial perceptions of associating educational attainment with up social mobility (Kanyongo 2005). It was this colonial and post-colonial historically nurtured inclination to pursue education success that would inevitably play a pivotal role in the economic integration of the older generation Black Zimbabwean diaspora community in Britain.

### *Racial Legacy and Educational Attainment*

However, the research participants presented unmistakable evidence on how the impact of imported homeland influences on the adoption of education as a plausible route to successful economic integration was not uniform across the multiracial Zimbabwean older generation immigrant community. Statistical evidence of the age profile of adults who were used for this study unveiled clear evidence of the extent post-independence older generation Black Zimbabwean immigrants

outpaced other communities in embracing education as an essential process to successful economic integration. These were individuals who had grown up in colonial or early years of post-colonial rule when education was being perceived as Blacks’ plausible route out of poverty. Their motivation to pursue higher educational or professional qualifications in the diaspora was therefore embedded in their pre-emigration memories and experiences of linking education with social mobility. This explains why, unlike other races, Black Zimbabweans’ trend in embracing education as a means of facilitating successful economic integration (as shown in Table 6.1) was not restricted to the younger generation but also extended to the older generation.

However, Black Zimbabwean immigrants’ pursuit of better educational qualifications and their visible presence in professions such as nursing encouraged the resuscitation of identities based on intellectual superiority and arrogance over other Black Africans, especially those from Central and Southern Africa. With JoAnn McGregor identifying Zimbabweans as the fourth largest foreign nationality in the nursing profession, more than any other African community, it was therefore not surprising that Tarisai described Zimbabweans as an intelligent African immigrant community that cannot be compared with other Africans (McGregor 2006; Tarisai interview, April 2013). Comparing themselves with Africans with whom they share colonial history shows the extent to which Black Zimbabweans’ exhibition of intellectual superiority was an historical phenomenon whose origin (as discussed in Chapter 2) was embedded in the colonial era’s categorisation of the Black population into indigenous (Shona and Ndebele) and non-indigenous (African immigrants). The Zimbabwean diaspora public discourse of viewing Malawians, Mozambicans and Zambians as the inferior other was therefore a continuation of historical prejudices.

**Table 6.1** Age of research participants who attained British university qualifications within ten years of arrival

	<i>Age range (years)</i>			
	<i>20–29</i>	<i>30–39</i>	<i>40–49</i>	<i>+50</i>
Race of research participants				
Blacks	1	11	8	2
Whites	1	0	1	0
Coloureds	1	0	0	0
Asians	1	0	0	0

### *Educational Attainment: Whites*

With fifty-year-old Elizabeth being the only White participant of over forty years enrolling for further education, the statistical evidence in Table 6.1 reveals the extent to which older generation White Zimbabweans had placed educational attainment at the periphery of their economic integration patterns. Elizabeth had decided to enrol for a university degree in social work once she was satisfied that her Zimbabwean-born children had been integrated in Britain's society. This was after her eldest daughter had enrolled at university, her son had enrolled for a motor mechanics course and her youngest daughter was in sixth form. Despite facing apposition from other White Zimbabweans who could not understand why she was going back to school when she was approaching fifty (Elizabeth interview, November 2013). For her, enrolling for a social work degree course was not primarily for social mobility but fulfilment of a long-term need for 'personal satisfaction and achievement' that had been marginalised by the privileges of being White in Zimbabwe. She wanted to liberate herself from the identity tag of 'uneducated housewife' she had imported from Zimbabwe.

Reflecting on her life in Zimbabwe, Elizabeth admitted that the apparent trivialising of education by older generation White Zimbabweans in the diaspora should not be understood outside the context of a colonial privileged lifestyle that extended into independent Zimbabwe. During the colonial era, by occupying the pinnacle of the social hierarchy, they would have been accustomed to an environment in which they would move up the country's economic structure without having to put much emphasis on higher academic or professional qualification attainment. As already explored in Chapter 3, the colonial economic structure and education system sheltered Rhodesian Whites from non-White competition.

Even after independence the political and economic provisions of the Lancaster House Constitution had allowed most Whites to continue being in control of the country's main economic structures (mining, farming, manufacturing and banking) without motivation to pursue higher education qualification to move up the social ladder. With this background of pre-emigration social and economic privileges a significant number of older generation White Zimbabweans in Britain migrated without being nurtured by a cultural attribute that elevated educational attainment. It was therefore an expected outcome that,

once settled in Britain, most members of the older generation failed to develop a new mindset that would have motivated them to enrol in further education so as attain qualifications which would have made them competitive on the British labour market.

However, it would be misleading to conclude that the inherited colonial lifestyle of socio-economic privileges was the sole reason why older White Zimbabwean immigrants were not motivated to pursue education as an alternative route to successful economic integration. White research participants also gave an insight into how the post-colonial violent seizure of their properties at the turn of the new millennium (which triggered their exodus from Zimbabwe) was a significant homeland event that discouraged the community's older generation from adopting educational attainment as an essential component of economic integration processes. Alison described how the economic integration patterns of most older White Zimbabweans, especially ex-Zimbabwean farmers, were instead driven by consciousness of the loss of their businesses or properties which had robbed their children of their inheritance (Alison interview, November 2013).

There was consensus among White research participants on how the violent circumstances surrounding their emigration made it inevitable for many White farmers to arrive with no savings or financial security to retain the quality of life they had been used to prior to migration. Arriving as an economically disadvantaged community and in financial distress, their immediate aim was not to attain British academic or professional qualifications but to seek appropriate accommodation and basic needs for their families. Alison described how it would have been perceived as 'selfish' and 'foolish' pursuing personal gains of academic attainment at the expense of providing the best quality of life for their children. Instead, she explained how a significant number of White parents felt more comfortable in seeking employment as skilled or unskilled personnel to ensure that they provided the best possible upbringing for their children to enable them to interact positively with Britain's social and economic structures.

### *Coloureds: Education Attainment*

A survey of the Coloured research participants also presented clear evidence on how educational and professional progression was not embraced by older generation members of the community when they

settled in Britain. The reluctance to adopt education as a means of facilitating economic integration to attain up social mobility could be traced back to colonial and post-colonial eras. Sustained socio-economic marginalisation in the colonial era had created and consolidated the desire to preserve Coloured consciousness by making choices that trivialised self-development through education (Nims 2013). In post-colonial Zimbabwe the government's inability to correct racial inequalities in education, by providing more schools and training opportunities to the Coloured community, was a missed opportunity to implement policies to eradicate attitudes of trivialising education within Coloureds (Fisher 2010).

With colonial and post-colonial marginalisation in education a significant number of Coloureds had migrated with no history of having been motivated to excel academically. It was therefore expected that older generation Coloured immigrants would not adopt economic integration processes that would involve pursuit of better educational or professional qualifications. Hughes, a Zimbabwean Coloured living in Essex who had no desire to enrol for further education, admitted that a significant number of first or older generation Coloureds experienced social stagnation, just as they did in Zimbabwe where they had successfully constructed an identity within the economic realms of Zimbabwe which lacked 'tangible and traditional markers of elite status' (Hughes interview, November 2013; Nims 2013).

Although the pre-emigration history of Coloureds would have been characterised as trivialising education, it would be wrong to conclude that there were no highly skilled or professional Coloured immigrants who found themselves frustrated in their attempts to be integrated in Britain's labour market. For example, Esther, who migrated as a secondary school teacher and was one of the few Coloureds to enrol at the University of Zimbabwe in the 1970s, recalled her frustrating days as a supply teacher as she struggled to find a permanent teaching post when she migrated in 2000 (Esther interview, June 2013). Similarly, Patrick, despite having been a director of his own company and living in Borrowdale Brookes, one of Harare's affluent residential suburbs, spoke of how he had to survive in what he described as Britain's 'cash-driven economy' by starting at the bottom of the social ladder. To be able to survive he explained how he had to work in warehouses before finding employment in 'sales' without having to go for any retraining (Patrick interview, January 2015). However, there was consensus among



Coloureds that a notable difference with older generation Blacks is that the deskilled members of the community did not seek to attain British professional qualifications so as to be competitive on the labour market.

### *Asian Educational Attainment*

The statistical evidence in Table 6.1 also identified first and older generation Zimbabwean Asian immigrants as a community that also did not embrace education as an option for economic integration. Bhavesh, a Zimbabwean Asian maths teacher in Leicester, acknowledged how the invisibility of contemporary older Zimbabwean Asians in Britain's institutions of higher learning was engrained in the circumstances surrounding the migration of a community that had a pre-emigration socio-economic identity of being self-employed (Bhavesh interview, September 2013). Although it was undeniable that at independence there were a sizeable number of educated Asians in professional occupations or working in self-employment as medical doctors, accountants and lawyers, the slow-down of Zimbabwe's economy in the 1990s triggered an exodus of Asian professionals from Zimbabwe. Without official statistical evidence the Asian research participants identified Australia, Canada and the USA as the preferred destinations for Asian professionals leaving the country in the 1990s. Britain was therefore not a favoured destination by most professional Zimbabwean Asians who would have been inclined to adopt education as a means to economic integration had they experienced deskilling.

With Asian professionals dominating emigration within the community in the 1990s, it was not until the turn of the new millennium that the Zimbabwean Asian self-employed community of business owners adopted emigration following threats by liberation war veterans on their businesses. In 2002 the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association working together with the Black economic group, the Affirmative Action Group (AAG), threatened to seize 'Indian land and property' accusing them of being 'unpatriotic land looters' (Muzondidya 2007). Tim Butcher writing in the *Telegraph* revealed how 'the Liberation War Veterans Association' which had been actively involved in seizing White-owned farms warned Zimbabwean Asian business people that nothing would stop them from reclaiming commercial national interests from them if 'they do not stop looting the economy' (*Telegraph*, 25 April 2002). By migrating with a historic cultural

identity of self-employment or business ownership, Kasim admitted that post-millennium Zimbabwean Asian immigrants were not inclined to pursue higher education as a means of attaining economic integration. Instead, they were more interested in exploring ways of either becoming self-employed or joining Britain's labour market as employees with the hope of raising capital to reinvest in their Zimbabwean businesses (Kasim interview, November 2013).

### HISTORIC LEGACIES ON EMPLOYMENT

John Rex and Sally Tomlinson's argument that it is not how far immigrants enter employment but the nature of jobs they do that affirms employment (alongside education) as an essential indicator of Zimbabwean immigrants' economic integration (Rex and Tomlinson 1979). With employment one of the significant indicators of minority communities' economic integration, it was an expected outcome for homeland influences to play an integral part in determining the nature of employment multiracial Zimbabwean immigrants found themselves in. For example, migrating with an historically nurtured attitude of idolising middle-class status especially within the Black community meant that few were interested in choosing courses that would not lead to professional qualifications such as nursing and social work.

Although financial assistance and job opportunities persuaded most Zimbabweans to enrol as student nurses, the popularity of nursing could also not be divorced from the historically nurtured perceptions of the profession (McGregor 2007). The colonial era's demonisation of Africans' way of life, which included consultation of traditional healers and the use of herbal medicine, naturally started the process of enhancing the privileged position of Western-biased medical professions within the Black community. After independence the nursing profession continued to be considered a 'preventive, promotive, curative and rehabilitative' indispensable discipline with regard to people's health (Mapanga 2000). It was pre-emigration prestige of the nursing profession that made a significant number of Zimbabweans from all social classes and both genders feel comfortable to train as nurses as it did not carry the stigma that had been historically attached to those in the lower echelons of Zimbabwean society.

### *Zimbabwean Racial Bias in the Health Sector*

Britain's care industry, which emerged as the largest employment sector of Zimbabweans, over the last thirty years failed to escape the dynamics of pre-emigration racial prejudices and identities (McGregor 2007, 2012). This was because the care industry's absorption of Black Zimbabweans failed to be replicated within the Zimbabwean White, Coloured and Asian communities. The reasons why older members of Zimbabwe's minority communities were not motivated to seek employment in the health care industry were largely engrained in pre-emigration post-independence experiences.

As already established, prior to Zimbabwe's independence health delivery had been characterised by separate health facilities for Whites, Coloureds, Asians and Blacks (Auret 1990). Chapter 3 explored how democratisation of the health sector at independence failed to facilitate discontinuation of the racially segregated health system, resulting in the nursing profession ceasing to be a desirable alternative profession for Whites. As a result, it was little surprise that White Zimbabwean immigrants, who would have undergone post-colonial conditioning of associating the nursing profession with Blacks, would not be seeking employment in Britain's health sector.

Deciding not to work in the British care industry by first and older generation Coloureds when they arrived in Britain could also be understood in the context of pre-emigration influences. Although there was no consensus between Coloured research participants in explaining why Britain's care industry was shunned by most first and older generation Coloureds, two reasons were identified as plausible. The first one was related to Zimbabwe's post-colonial indigenisation policies and the second was related to the historical desire of preserving Coloured consciousness.

According to Esther, a retired Coloured teacher living in Leicester, the very fact of not finding Coloureds in the British health sector, whether as carers or nurses, was an inevitable consequence of a process that had started in post-colonial Zimbabwe. She identified the government's indigenisation policies of empowering Blacks as a major pre-emigration political event that could not be ignored when explaining why there were few Coloureds in British care work or nursing sectors. By embarking on an indigenous policy that failed to provide more nurse-training opportunities for Coloureds, nursing gradually ceased to be a profession in which

Coloureds were found (Esther interview, June 2013). It therefore followed that not seeking employment in Britain's care work sector was a continuation of a trend that had started in Zimbabwe.

Migrating with a consciousness of preserving the community identity was another alternative argument presented by ex-businessman Patrick when explaining why Coloureds had not been involved in Britain's care industry. He pointed out that for a community that had always been determined to preserve their Coloured identity, working conditions in the British health sector were perceived as carrying the potential of creating dysfunctional families (Patrick interview, January 2015). A history of being marginalised and being isolated by their Black or White extended families played an integral role in the development and preservation of Coloured consciousness with strong family support networks (Muzondidya 2004). The failure to establish family networks outside the Coloured community throughout the course of Zimbabwe's history had made it imperative that economic integration patterns in Britain should not infringe on the support network that had been historically provided by families. The long and unsociable working hours that characterised Britain's care industry had therefore failed to appeal to the Coloured community as it had the potential of weakening imported family or community support networks (McGregor 2007).

As for Asians' absence in the British care sector, there was a consensus among research participants that nursing had never been a professional choice most of the community's members. Sharif, one of the few Asians who took up employment as a care assistant, attributed this to a pre-emigration self-employment identity that had made formal employment an undesirable economic activity by most Zimbabwean Asians regardless of gender (Sharif interview, April 2017). Asians who worked in Zimbabwe's health sector prior to migration were usually doctors who in most instances had private surgeries and would employ Black nurses whilst family members did the administration work (Kasim interview, November 2013).

### SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Whilst it is undeniable that education can be a crucial component in the overall economic integration of immigrants since it allows access to better formal employment or life opportunities that bring about up social mobility, self-employment has also been identified as another

socio-economic status indicating immigrants' position in the host society's labour market (Castles 1984). This is because business ownership by immigrants had always been perceived as evidence that the receiving society is 'open and inclusive' to socio-economic improvements of immigrants and their movement to parity with the indigenous population (Phillimore in Howson and Sallah 2009). It was therefore little surprise that one of the most novel developments in Britain's post-war labour market was increasing prominence of 'ethnic minority self-employment' (Barrett et al. 1996). With self-employment or business ownership identified as important caveats in immigrants' economic integration processes it was inevitable for some members within the Zimbabwean immigrant community to seek and capitalise on opportunities that would allow them to exercise their entrepreneurial abilities by becoming self-employed.

Research has shown that Zimbabweans embraced entrepreneurship or self-employment as a means of engaging with Britain's economic structures (Mbida 2011; Domboka 2013; Pasura 2014). However, despite individuals in the community embracing entrepreneurship, it should be recognised that there was an apparent failure to establish a vibrant and recognisable diaspora entrepreneurial identity by being self-employed or owning businesses. Comparative analysis with other non-European immigrants such as Somalis, South Asians or Chinese exposed Zimbabweans as a community that struggled to establish its entrepreneurial credentials that could be gauged by the number of businesses (Metcalf et al. 1996; Ram et al. 2008; and Jenkins 1984).

Zimbabweans' failure to establish a visible and vibrant business community had been apparent in cities with a high Zimbabwean immigrant population such as Leicester. With a population of 3377 the 2011 census statistics showed Leicester as having the largest concentration of Zimbabweans in the East Midlands (*Leicester Mercury*, 5 July 2013). The failure to establish a recognisable business community did not compare favourably with the Somalis who, like the Zimbabweans, started arriving in the city in high numbers after 2000 (Zembe 2012: 26). Despite both groups being regarded as recent arrivals in the city, Somalis managed to build a strong business community in the St Matthew and Highfields areas of the city. In contrast, the only recognisable Zimbabwean retail business known by most Zimbabweans in the city in the mid-2000s had been the Pamuzinda grocery shop in the Highfields area. The reasons for this lack of a visible and vibrant diaspora business community were

inextricably linked with colonial and/or post-colonial experiences which differed between racial groups. However, despite lack of great success in carving out a diaspora business identity, of the four racial groups Blacks emerged to be the community which made the greatest attempts to adopt self-employment in economic integration processes.

### *Blacks*

The reasons behind the emergence of a self-employed Black community in Britain could not be divorced from post-independence homeland economic activities. Retrenchment of public and private sector workers including those in managerial roles following Zimbabwe's Economic Structural Economic Programme of the 1990s and the post-2000 collapse of the Zimbabwean economy had forced many retrenched workers to establish small businesses in the informal sector (Mbida 2011). Even those in employment who faced increasing job insecurity and decline in living standards were forced to set up informal businesses. Most of these informal traders were involved in cross-border trade or selling second-hand clothes (Gibbon 1995). These entrepreneurs, the 'first and most able to emigrate to Britain', have been identified as economic migrants following the political crisis and deterioration of the economy (Mbida 2011). Migrating with a mindset of self-employment made it an expected outcome for these Black, mostly professional, first-generation Zimbabweans to enter Britain's entrepreneurial space when they faced rejection in the British labour market.

Most of the businesses set up by Black Zimbabwean immigrants had been small enterprises. These included grocery stores mainly selling imported Zimbabwean products, pubs that had become a meeting place for Zimbabweans, courier services delivering parcels and packages to Zimbabwe, one-man van drivers, solicitors and hair salons with a predominantly Zimbabwean clientele (Mbida 2011; Pasura 2014). These were businesses that could be best described as not representing a route into significant up social mobility but instead economic integration that would ensure a survival mechanism for the majority. However, there were notable exceptions involving bigger enterprises. Examples include Mwanaka Fresh Farm Foods (white maize farming) and Mufaro's Family Foods which is a successful business manufacturing yoghurts and probiotic milk (Mbida 2011).

These attempts by Black Zimbabweans to embrace self-employment or establish businesses as alternative routes to economic integration did not translate into a recognisable community identity. The limited visibility of Black Zimbabwean diaspora businesses can be attributed to imported attitudes to education. As already established, colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe education policies had created a sense of meritocracy which indoctrinated most Black Zimbabweans to embrace educational attainment as the most plausible and realistic route to up social mobility. It was therefore little surprise that restoring the historic elevation accorded to educational attainment by most Black Zimbabwean immigrants in Britain would naturally trivialise self-employment or the motivation to establish businesses.

Besides the historic elevation of educational attainment, two other major events in Zimbabwe's history should also not be discarded when explaining why carving out a self-employed status for Black Zimbabweans had been less successful in Britain. The first was related to racist policies of the colonial era and the second to perceptions of post-colonial mismanagement of the country's economy by Blacks.

The colonial socio-economic racist policies that significantly curtailed entrepreneurial Africans' participation in major sectors of the economy—namely, mining, finance or manufacturing—subtly facilitated the construction of a mindset that Whites and not Africans were the custodians of Zimbabwe economic success, thus undermining confidence in Black-owned or managed businesses by other Black Zimbabweans. Throughout the 1980s, ambitious and entrepreneurial Blacks continued to be frustrated by the legacies of colonial structures. As a result, only 2% of Blacks participated in all sectors of the economy by 1993 (Muzondidya in Raftopolous and Mlambo 2009). With independence failing to radically reform the economic structures of the colonial state to facilitate greater Black participation in the economy, most Blacks were not desensitised from the colonial-constructed mindset of seeing themselves as employees and not employers. With this backdrop of economic restrictions or frustrations, most older generation Black Zimbabwean immigrants therefore migrated with no motivation or entrepreneurial experience to establish or run large corporate companies for a recognisable diaspora entrepreneurial identity to be constructed. Instead, most showed resilience in working in low-status employment that needed a high work ethic.

This explains why derogatory terms like ‘British bottom cleaners’ or ‘bum technicians’ had failed to deter Black Zimbabweans from carving out a visible presence for themselves in Britain’s care industry.<sup>1</sup> The tolerance and resilience of Zimbabweans from all social classes in taking low-status employment as they waited for education opportunities to climb the social and economic ladder could not have been solely made possible by the quest for economic integration to meet their transnational obligations and ambitions, but also the inherited high levels of tolerance and resilience developed in both colonial and post-colonial periods.

As demonstrated in Chapter 2, by virtue of occupying the lowest position in the colonial hierarchical structure of society, Blacks had to be tolerant and resilient in an economic system imbued by racial segregation that had created a pseudo meritocracy by reining those who were hard-working, submissive and law-abiding citizens. Even during the liberation struggle led by the Nationalist Movement, Blacks had to be resilient in an environment of violence and coercion. The advent of independence also failed to desensitise Zimbabweans from a culture of being tolerant or resilient in difficult socio-economic and political situations. This was largely because politics in independent Zimbabwe was no more than a continuation of repressive and authoritarian governance of the Rhodesian Front. The historically nurtured ability to be resilient in adverse situations became apparent during the demise of Zimbabwe’s economy from the 1990s. Lenny, a Zimbabwe-based businessman, said this was a time when members of the Black community tolerated ‘standing in the queue the whole night for a loaf of bread or a packet of sugar instead of confronting the political establishment’ (Lenny interview, July 2013).

It was this resilience and tolerance that was to be imported into the diaspora. Migrating as a community, which had always been conditioned to be compliant with authority, not only allowed Black Zimbabweans to have a mindset of tolerating working in low-status employment, but also of having a hard-work ethic for someone else. Research participants’ experiences demonstrated that tolerating low-status employment had been accepted as a temporary phase they had to go through as they waited to enrol for higher education and thereby attain academic or professional qualifications that would allow them to move up the social hierarchy.



While it is unquestionable that imperial racial discriminatory policies denied Africans the opportunity to acquire the relevant entrepreneurial experience or skills needed to establish reputable businesses that would have earned the trust of other Black Zimbabweans, failure to establish a vibrant and visible Black Zimbabwean diaspora business community could not be divorced from post-independence management of the economy. Black research participants provided an insight into the extent to which imported memories of corruption and poorly run state enterprises after independence had also assisted in stifling the entrepreneurial potential of Black Zimbabweans in Britain to establish businesses that would have been supported by fellow Blacks. Older generation research participants who were old enough to make comparisons between the colonial and post-colonial economies expressed how migrating with memories of post-colonial mismanagement of the country's economy and resources destroyed their trust in Black-owned diaspora businesses.

Although Black research participants acknowledged the socio-economic and political disadvantages associated with racial segregation, they were unanimous in agreeing that the colonial White administration had managed the economy better than the Black-led government of Mugabe. They appreciated that the government led by Ian Smith had managed to keep the country's economy running without hyperinflation, collapse of transport networks, breakdown of education or health delivery that characterised post-independent Zimbabwe. For research participants this was a commendable economic achievement since the Rhodesian government was not only under economic sanctions following UDI, but was also involved in military operations against the Nationalist Movement.

Panganayi summarised the shared appreciation of the White-managed colonial economy when he pointed out that

... our parents could still afford to buy meat, clothes ... with proper Christmas celebration. These are experiences that have been taken away from the young generation by politicians and business people with close links with the political establishment. Just look at how they have run down the Parastatals. Who would have imagined in 1980 that NRZ [National Railways of Zimbabwe] will be in this state ... how about Air Zimbabwe? All collapsed under Black management. Who would have imagined that within thirty years of independence there would be mass exodus out of Zimbabwe? (Panganayi interview, March 2013)

Panganayi highlighted the discourse of disillusionment within the Black diaspora community that had started to emerge in the 1990s after the euphoria of independence had died down. This was a community that had experienced the impact of fast-rising inflation and corruption, which Zimbabweans had not experienced before independence.

With annual growth averaging 3.4% in the early years of the 1980s, the newly independent Zimbabwe was not in large-scale economic distress, unlike many sub-Saharan African states (Addison and Laakso 2003). The rundown of the economy therefore helped to reinforce the argument that the Nationalist Movement's focus on removing White rule through armed struggle had led to little investment in development of a comprehensive ideology to effectively manage the sophisticated and efficient agriculture, mining and manufacturing sectors for the benefit of the impoverished black population (Herbst 1990). Blinded by the aim of seizing power, the nationalist leaders had not been groomed for political or economic administration and therefore were ill prepared to manage a diverse economy. For most in the diaspora the collapse of the economy was evidence that the new government had always been indebted to the expertise of the Whites to prevent a collapse of the inherited infrastructure and economy.

Comparative analysis of the economy during the colonial and post-colonial era aggravated shared sentiments against businesses owned by the Black Zimbabwean diaspora in Britain by other Black Zimbabweans. Just as was the case in Zimbabwe, Black-owned businesses became synonymous with corruption, poor management and extortion by overcharging, hence the reluctance to support them. All Black research participants articulated the consequence of imported distrust of Black Zimbabwean businesses when they pointed out that they would rather do business with a White Zimbabwean than a fellow Black Zimbabwean even when the two are competitors.

The confidence in White-owned businesses expressed by research participants was reflective of an African mindset that had been subtly constructed during the colonial era and failed to be erased in independent Zimbabwe because of mismanagement of the economy and corruption. After independence, the status quo of perceiving Whites as having been better managers of the Zimbabwean economy meant that most Blacks migrated with a negative attitude to Black-owned businesses—something that was replicated in the diaspora. This distrust in Black Zimbabwean companies in Britain had not been helped by reports of

criminal activities by some Zimbabwean businessman. For example, in 2012 police in Britain had to launch a fraud investigation into Crenna Investments, a shipping company owned by a Black Zimbabwean ([NewZimbabwe.com](http://NewZimbabwe.com)). The company had been paid thousands of pounds to ship goods to Zimbabwe, but the goods never reached the country.

A letter published in the online Zimbabwean-based newspaper, [NewZimbabwe.com](http://NewZimbabwe.com), by a Leicester shire-based businessman exposed the extent to which distrust had become a hindrance to the success of entrepreneurial Black Zimbabweans. The letter was intended to stir the consciousness of the Black Zimbabwean diaspora into believing that it was not right for Zimbabwean businesses to plead for support from their own Black community. In the article he wondered why 'people are still wasting valuable time travelling the earth, spending small fortunes on fuel to get exactly the same goods and services that are available locally from a Zimbabwean-owned supplier' ([NewZimbabwe.com](http://NewZimbabwe.com) 2010).

His frustration emanated from the fact that, with over ten Zimbabwean butcheries scattered across Britain, Zimbabweans were prepared to 'travel for hours to go and patronise a Briton who runs a butchery in Milton Keynes; ignoring excellent suppliers in their own home towns, many of whom are Zimbabweans, selling the same products' ([NewZimbabwe.com](http://NewZimbabwe.com)). He made comparisons with the Leicester Asian community that he perceived to be supportive of each other. However, with imported memories of poorly run Black-owned businesses the older members of the Zimbabwean Black community were unanimous in agreeing that it would take more than writing a letter to persuade them to support the businesses of their compatriots.

Without guaranteed support from their kith and kin, Black Zimbabweans' entrepreneurial potential in Britain would naturally be suppressed along two strands. First, it undermined the confidence of those in self-employment to expand their businesses; hence, the failure or reluctance to transform their businesses into vibrant and visible enterprises. Second, those contemplating entering self-employment had no extrinsic motivation to do so knowing that their community will not be a guaranteed market they can depend on. The result had been an inevitable slow increase of Black-owned Zimbabwean businesses in Britain to facilitate establishment of that business identity.

Regrettably, this shared distrust in Zimbabwean Black-owned businesses overshadowed the successes of other businesses that were notable exceptions as a result of entrepreneurial innovation. These include

Mwanaka Fresh Farm Foods (white maize farming); Mufaro's Family Foods, a successful business manufacturing yoghurts and probiotic milk; nursing care agencies such as Flame Lily Nursing Agency in Wolverhampton; colleges like Leicester Commercial College; solicitors like RBN in Coventry; and several agencies that ship vehicles to Zimbabwe and advertise in Zimbabwe's online newspapers (Mbida 2011; Pasura 2014).

### *Ethnicity and Self-Employment*

Entrepreneurialism or self-employment as an indicator of Black Zimbabwean economic integration clearly demonstrated the influence diverse historical experiences had on the integration processes of the Shona and Ndebele diaspora. This was apparent when a survey of Zimbabwean businesses in Leicester, Slough, Birmingham, Coventry, Wolverhampton and Leeds unravelled an inextricable link between ethnicity and entrepreneurial activities. There was an undeniable dominance of Shona-owned businesses in cities like Leicester where there was a strong Ndebele community. Without recognisable Ndebele-owned businesses in the city, Shona-owned businesses identified by both Shona and Ndebele research participants included the Pamuzinda grocery shop, Leicester Commercial College, Nursing Relief Agency and Coedma Freight.

The dominance of Shona businesses in the diaspora in the city prompted Mabuza, an Ndebele immigrant, to comment that 'the Ndebele can benefit from the Shona or those from Mashonaland in terms of businesses' (Mabuza interview, June 2013). However, Mabuza's comment served to undermine historical evidence by scholars on pre-colonial Zimbabwean history such as David Beach and Gerald Chikozho Mazarire, who depicted pre-colonial Ndebele as an entrepreneurial community involved in ivory hunting, trade and pastoral farming (Beach 1984; Mazarire in Raftopolous and Mlambo 2009). Since historians such as Beach and Mazarire acknowledge pre-colonial Ndebele entrepreneurialism, attempts should be made to understand contemporary ethnic representation within the Black Zimbabwean diaspora business community in light of colonial and post-colonial experiences. There are arguably three historical influences from these two phases of Zimbabwe's history that are responsible for curtailing entrepreneurship within the contemporary Ndebele community: Christian missionary

activities in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the failure of the Ndebele to relinquish the dream of re-establishing the Ndebele kingdom and the post-colonial *Gukurahundi* episode in Matabeleland.

The advent of White Christian missionaries undeniably brought about an environment in which the Ndebele lagged behind the majority Shona in producing individuals who would become part of the African business elite. As discussed in Chapter 2, the disparity in accessing Western education provided by Christian missionaries from the mid-nineteenth century into the first two decades of colonial rule allowed the majority Shona community to attain numeracy and literacy skills earlier than the Ndebele. This made it easier for the Shona to integrate more positively into the economic structures of the colonial state. This can clearly be demonstrated by the establishment of African churches and a diverse range of businesses which included grocery shops, market gardening, transport businesses using wagons and donkeys, bricklaying, carpentry and tailoring businesses (Wild 1992). The business flare of the Shona evident early on in the colonial era inevitably created perceptions that the Ndebele were less entrepreneurial than the Shona, perceptions that continued into the diaspora.

The assertion that the militaristic Ndebele failed to relinquish the idea of re-establishing their independent kingdom must be taken into account when seeking to understand why the Ndebele had been historically perceived to be less entrepreneurial than the Shona (Ndlovu-Gatheni 2008). By hanging on to the dream, White missionaries working together with the colonial administration set about economically alienating the Ndebele by halting education. It has been pointed out that missionary operations, which included the establishment of schools, were halted in the early 1890s, thus denying the Ndebele the skills necessary to economically integrate in an economy that was being modelled along Western capitalist structures (Zvobgo 1996).

Although Ndebele research participants in the study did not refute the role played by colonial experiences in undermining their entrepreneurship, they were however unanimous in identifying post-colonial economic marginalisation brought about by *Gukurahundi* as the most significant event that gave them little incentive to challenge Shona dominance in business. Since the Zimbabwean government was convinced the Ndebele were supporting the armed insurgency in Matabeleland, they felt justified in employing socio-economic marginalisation as a weapon to destroy Ndebele particularism.

Economic marginalisation summarised in the literature on *Gukurahundi* involved: translocating economic resources from Matabeleland to Mashonaland, closing Ndebele-owned businesses in rural areas, reserving key jobs in Matabeleland for Shona and depriving the Ndebele of equal opportunities with the Shona at Matabeleland institutions (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009). The government's deliberate policy of economic marginalisation had resigned the Ndebele to the reality that the majority Shona's dominance in businesses would continue in much the same way as in colonial Zimbabwe. For Ndebele research participants, economic marginalisation during *Gukurahundi* mirrored the colonial racist discourse in which Blacks were being denied opportunities to compete with Whites. The only difference this time was it was Black on Black. As a result, they had to resign themselves to the reality that the Shona dominance in businesses would not only be restricted to Shona provinces but extend into Matabeleland. In post-independence Zimbabwe, Shona entrepreneurial dominance in Matabeleland became the accepted norm following the gradual rise of Shona businesses, especially in Bulawayo, such as bus companies and supermarkets.

With a background of colonial and post-colonial marginalisation hardly any of the Ndebele community who arrived in Britain had history of being motivated to establish businesses, let alone challenge Shona businesses. The consequence of Ndebele lack of historic entrepreneurial identity was the adoption of economic integration patterns that would not be measured by how successful they establish diaspora businesses; neither were they interested in competing with the Shona diaspora entrepreneurial community. Instead, education—not self-employment or entrepreneurship—emerged to be the preferred integration process for most community's members. This was demonstrated when 72% of the Ndebele community could be shown to have either attained or were in the process of attaining a British qualification at the time of the interview.

### *Whites*

The 'circumstances of migration' in a country of origin are directly relevant to immigrants running businesses. This assertion resonated with the Zimbabwean White immigrant community (Mars and 1984). For a community consisting of members who had been sheltered by the status given them by their social class in both the colonial era and the first three

decades of the post-colonial period, it would have been little surprise to have recognisable White Zimbabwean-owned businesses in Britain. Pre-emigration family history of socio-economic privileges would have given White Zimbabweans the skills to become self-employed once their immigration status had been regularised.

However, White research participants were unanimous in acknowledging that most members of the community failed to replicate the business successes that had not only sustained Rhodesia during UDI despite the economic sanctions and nationalist-led armed struggle, but also economically sustained post-colonial Zimbabwe through their viable businesses and commercial farms. Robert, who used to own what he described as a 'successful computer business', attributed this lack of diaspora entrepreneurialism to homeland political events sanctioned by the government to redress colonial injustices (Robert interview, November 2013). He specifically identified the violent circumstances surrounding the emigration of most White Zimbabweans as the main reason why a significant number of Whites failed to replicate their entrepreneurial activities in Britain.

The term 'exile' has been defined as being 'resonant with ideas of forced emigration' imposed upon individuals or groups (Baumann in Knott and McLoughlin 2010). It could be used to describe the immigrant status of most post-millennium White Zimbabwean immigrants. Farm evictions and threats to their businesses had made a significant number of Whites flee Zimbabwe with little or no financial resources to set up businesses once they settled in Britain. With reference to his own experience and that of evicted White farmers, Robert explained how most Zimbabwean Whites had to start life in Britain 'from scratch with no bank account' as they had no utility bills to present as proof of residence; neither did they have British credit history to enable them to access bank loans to start a business (Robert interview, November 2013). He narrated how at the height of White farm invasions in 2001 he was forced to sell his computer business to a Black entrepreneur. This was after developing the conviction, like most Whites in a similar position, that life in Zimbabwe was becoming unsafe for Whites who had no connections with the political establishment. By selling his business, his aim was to use the proceeds from the sale to start a new life in Britain. However, as the political climate became increasingly hostile for Whites he was not able to pursue payment, thus forcing him to leave the country with 'nothing' from the sale of the business.

The research participants singled out ex-Zimbabwean White farmers to illustrate how the violent circumstances surrounding their emigration negatively impacted the diaspora and their entrepreneurship. A combination of being forced to migrate without the financial resources to invest in farming following the farm invasions and their inability to provide collateral to be able to borrow money from Britain's financial institutions, made it extremely difficult for White farmers to either lease or purchase a farm. Without access to financial capital the farmers failed to restart their careers, a situation that was affirmed by research participants when they said they did not know of a British farm owned or leased by a White Zimbabwean farmer.

The economic fortunes of White diaspora farmers were also inextricably linked with the (homeland) migration patterns of those who had been evicted. According to a study undertaken in 2009 the destinations of dispossessed farmers were as follows: 74.2% remained in Zimbabwe, Australia and New Zealand had 9.3%, South Africa 6%, SADC (Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia) 3.3% and Britain 2.9% (Sachikonye 2012). Since there is evidence of a notable increase in agricultural production in countries they settled, except for Britain, one has to conclude that those who migrated to Britain were either too old or demotivated (because of the pre-migration trauma of the farm evictions) to reengage in farming activities. Instead, Alison (whose family used to own a farm in colonial Zimbabwe until the 1980s) explained how a sizeable number of farmers contented themselves with putting their agricultural skills to good use either by working on British farms (some as labourers) or for companies selling farm products.

However, it would be misleading to conclude that there were no White Zimbabweans who were successful in setting up businesses in Britain. Robert's successful economic integration from the time he settled in Britain showed that there were some within the White Zimbabwean immigrant community who used their pre-emigration entrepreneurial expertise to establish viable businesses. Although Robert admitted that he was initially bitter about the circumstances surrounding his migration, he became part of a White Zimbabwean immigrant community which resolved that they will not allow the bitterness to deter them from identifying ways of integrating into Britain's economic structures. They wanted to send a message to Zimbabwe's political leadership that the country had lost resilient and entrepreneurial individuals who



would not have allowed the Zimbabwean economy to collapse as it did during the first decade of the 2000s.

He recalled how the challenge of losing his business ‘inspired him to find work opportunities which would allow him to utilise his imported entrepreneurial skills’ (Robert interview, November 2013). He was able to do this by working as a self-employed distributor of Kleeneze catalogue products in Milton Keynes. Although he admitted it was hard work as he was forced at times to travel long distances, he got satisfaction by knowing he was utilising his entrepreneurial skills to sell these products.

After working as a self-employed Kleeneze agent in Milton Keynes for several months, he was eventually employed by a telecommunications technology company. Using his experience in information technology (he once owned a computer business back in Zimbabwe), he was able to rise to the position of company director. This was after forming a business partnership with a White Briton to purchase controlling shares in the company. As a result of his business achievements, he had to admit his only regret was postponing emigration in the 1990s when he started realising that the gradual deterioration of Zimbabwe’s economy was increasingly being accompanied by political rhetoric against White economic dominance. He was convinced that had he migrated at that time he would have been better established within the Milton Keynes’ business community.

### *Coloureds*

The Coloured diaspora community also failed to escape pre-emigration experiences developed and nurtured in both the colonial and post-colonial eras. Although sustained marginalisation in both phases of Zimbabwe’s history had fostered the desire to make choices that promoted self-employment rather than pursuit of educational attainment, the pre-emigration self-employment identity that had characterised the lives of a significant number of Coloureds failed to be replicated in the diaspora. This was affirmed by fifty-eight-year-old ex-Zimbabwean Coloured businessman Patrick. He highlighted how in cities with a high concentration of Coloureds like Milton Keynes, most community members who were known to be self-employed entrepreneurs back in Zimbabwe failed to re-establish their pre-emigration self-employment identity.

As an ex-businessman, Patrick noted the failure of Coloureds to establish successful businesses could not be divorced from the community's identity of trivialising educational attainment. Placing educational attainment at the periphery of their lives meant that a significant number of Coloureds, who could have been self-employed prior to their emigration, would have attained undocumented technical skills through experience gained from 'on-the-job training' usually at companies owned by other Coloureds without studying for a professional qualification. Patrick identified skills such as motor mechanical, electrical and plumbing as very popular through 'on-the-job training', which allowed those who wanted to be self-employed to do so without any college or university.

Although 'on-the-job training' facilitated acquisition of the technical skills necessary to be self-employed as plumbers, electricians or motor mechanics, it was always highly likely that individuals with undocumented skills would always be vulnerable to limited economic success if they were to migrate. According to Essex-based Hughes, being self-employed in an 'unfamiliar business environment' without certified evidence of their skills was always going to be difficult since their clientele had always been to a large extent restricted to Zimbabwean Coloureds or individuals with close associations with the community (Hughes interview, November 2013).

Migrating with no written proof of professional qualifications was therefore why being self-employed could not be taken as an economic integration indicator for most first-generation Zimbabwean Coloureds since they were self-employed prior to migration. Despite wanting to re-establish their self-employment identity, Patrick explained how Britain's 'strict codes and standards' represented an environment in which former self-employed Coloureds found it difficult to operate. Using the example of plumbers, he pointed out how they experienced a reality check as they struggled to find work without a gas safety certificate (Patrick interview, January 2015). With their pre-emigration skills having been gained through on-the-job training there was no motivation to pursue further education so as to attain relevant qualifications. Instead, Patrick acknowledged how most decided to seek formal employment in those sectors of Britain's economy where they would be best able to utilise their imported skills, working as semi-skilled workers.

Many Coloured women who had a background of office work as receptionists, administration assistants or typists found work in offices as temporary agency staff, according to Patrick, whilst those who migrated

without professional qualifications found any jobs that were not physically demanding. Such jobs would include shop assistants, security personnel or providing childcare (mainly for working parents of the Coloured community).

Historic relations between Blacks and Coloureds should also not be ignored when explaining why entrepreneurial Coloureds became disillusioned in their attempts to establish diaspora businesses. The comments of Black research participants signalled that Coloureds had and will always be ‘others’ in the eyes of most Black Zimbabweans. They were deemed a ‘community without an identity’ and therefore there was no compulsion to interact with them. The colonial administration policy (discussed in Chapter 2) of placing Coloured children in residential homes after removing them from their African environment was behind the ‘them and us’ attitude between Blacks and Coloureds, which filtered through in the diaspora. With the wedge between the two communities continuing to exist in independent Zimbabwe following indigenisation policies, which had excluded Coloureds, support of each other’s entrepreneurial activities in the diaspora could not be guaranteed.

As a minority Zimbabwean diaspora community in which a history of close interactions with Blacks simply did not exist, it would have been natural for entrepreneurial Coloureds to accept there was little chance of guaranteeing support from the Black Zimbabwean diaspora community. The impact of not having a large clientele base was illustrated by Hughes when he pointed out that a few Coloureds who tried self-employment by starting courier or van removal services either struggled or their businesses were short lived. Without support from other Zimbabweans (especially Blacks) he admitted that this was inevitable as they were operating in an ‘unfamiliar business environment’ in which business success largely depended on community support (Hughes interview, November 2013).

### *Asians*

It would be misleading to conclude that homeland influences were the only determinants of economic integration by the multi-racial Zimbabwean immigrant community. As mentioned in the chapter’s introductory section, the indicators of economic integration of Asians were more complex as they could not be entirely understood outside the context of post-war South Asian immigration to Britain, whilst

homeland historical influences played a major role in determining the economic integration of Blacks, Whites and Coloureds,. This is because post-millennium immigration of Zimbabwean Asians had been preceded by notable post-war phases in Asians immigration from the Subcontinent and East Africa. The first post-war wave of Asian immigration took place immediately after World War Two when economic expansion in Britain resulted in the recruitment of labour from the Subcontinent (Desai 1963). East African Asians from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s, escaping Africanisation policies in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, represented another notable phase in Asian immigration (Brah in Ali et al. 2006).

Having carved out for themselves an identity of being entrepreneurial back in Zimbabwe, it was little surprise that Zimbabwean Asian immigrants replicated East African Asians who had managed to create a visible business presence in cities like Leicester in the 1970s (Marett 1989). Kasim, who owned a marketing company in Zimbabwe, points out however that many Zimbabwean Asians migrated after 2000, which turned out to be a hindrance for entrepreneurial Zimbabwean Asians because of being late arrivals in comparison with other Asians (Kasim interview, November 2013).

As a small community of late arrivals spread across Britain, there was little point in attempting to establish businesses in an environment where non-Zimbabwean Asian support could not be guaranteed, especially when they were seen to be competing with established Asian businesses owned by those from East Africa and the Subcontinent. The reasons for the reluctance to compete with established Asian businesses were historic. Contemporary Zimbabwean Asian immigrants found it easier to interact with South Asians from Southern African because of shared historical experiences and memories that could be traced back to historic kinship ties established by first-generation immigrants in Southern Africa which continued to be reinforced through marriages (Bhavesht interview, September 2013). The reluctance to compete with Asian businesses therefore affirmed the argument that Asian businesses tend to develop and succeed where close coethnic ties exist (Metcalf et al. 1996).

Without being able to restore the business identity they had in Zimbabwe a significant number of ex-Zimbabwean Asian entrepreneurs found themselves joining the working class as they sought employment in warehouses or factories. Kasim recalled how he had to swallow his

pride by starting at the ‘very bottom’ of the social ladder selling international phone cards outside a ‘corner shop’ of a friend before finding work as a warehouse operative (Kasim interview, November 2013). Sharif, who prior to emigration owned two retail shops in Chinhoyi (administrative capital of Mashonaland West), also reiterated the frustration he felt when he found himself working as a health care assistant (Sharif interview, April 2017). Such experiences of down social mobility were described by Kasim as triggering ‘feelings of jealousy’ to the established entrepreneurial class of non-Zimbabwean Asians, especially those from East Africa.

Being unable to engage in business activity, it was little surprise that none of the research participants knew of British-based businesses owned by Zimbabwean Asians. The only exceptions were Black research participants living in Leicester who knew of a Zimbabwean-owned Asian business operating in the city that was closely tied with the homeland business interests of the proprietor. Leicester-based Royal Comms, owned by a Zimbabwean Asian entrepreneur with business interests in both Britain and Zimbabwe, was one of the most successful money transfer agencies utilised by most Black Zimbabweans across Britain. The agency allowed him to raise invaluable foreign currency to reinvest in his Zimbabwean businesses. Maintaining business interests back home showed the extent to which some within the Asian business community were still determined to keep their business identity. The hope was to be able to generate enough income to keep their Zimbabwean businesses operational.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

By focussing on education and employment (formal and self-employment) the chapter has shown how economic integration of the first and older generation Zimbabwe diaspora community had been a consequence of memories, experiences and identities formed in both the colonial and post-colonial eras. Historical socialisation of elevating education attainment as a means of attaining middle-class status was influential in the economic integration of Black Zimbabweans, as most pursued professional and educational qualifications at a much higher level than any other Zimbabwean community. With a history of privileges in both the colonial and post-colonial era most older members of the White

community had migrated without having appreciated the need for higher educational qualifications as a means of moving up the social ladder. Economic integration for most older members had little need to embrace education.

Sustained marginalisation in both the colonial and post-colonial period created and consolidated the desire in subsequent generations to preserve Coloured consciousness, and to have control over their own destiny by making choices that trivialised self-development through education. This explains why most older Coloureds did not embrace education as a means to facilitate upward social mobility. The participation of older generation Coloureds in Britain's economic structures was therefore determined by the level of professional or educational qualifications and the desire to preserve Coloured consciousness.

Black research participants expressing confidence in White-owned businesses was reflective of an African mindset that had been subtly constructed during the colonial era and failed to be erased in independent Zimbabwe because of mismanagement of the economy and corruption. By continuing to perceive Whites as being better managers of the Zimbabwean economy, even after independence, it was little surprise that most Blacks migrated with a negative attitude towards Black-owned business. The imported mistrust of Black-owned business stifled the establishment of Black businesses since support from their own community could not be guaranteed.

As for Asians, the failure to adopt economic integration processes that would have allowed Zimbabwean Asians to carve out a visible presence for themselves in Britain was a result of two interrelated historical factors: their late arrival in Britain complemented by uneven dispersal of the community across Britain compared with other Asians (which discouraged them from competing with established Asians) and professional qualifications attained prior to emigration (which determined the nature of their employment).

The different means of integration adopted by the diverse racial groups discussed in the chapter necessarily acknowledge the impact multiple paradigms of historical socialisation have had on social integration of the Zimbabwean diaspora. The next chapter will explore the extent to which social interactions of the post-independence multiracial Zimbabwean diaspora community in Britain can be inextricably linked to historical influences.

## NOTE

1. See JoAnn McGregor, 'Joining the BBC (British Bottom Cleaners): Zimbabwean Migrants and the UK Care Industry', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, vol. 33 (2007), pp. 801–824.

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## Zimbabweans Negotiating Social Interactions Within British Society, 1990s–2000s

### INTRODUCTION

An examination of West Indian integration in Britain unveils a post-war gradual shift of immigrant discourse away from earlier immigrant groups of European descent to non-European immigrants (Lucassen 2005). The arrival and permanent settlement of non-European immigrants mostly from the Caribbean, South East Asia and Africa with different social, cultural and physical characteristics from Europeans had added a new dimension to the dynamics of societal interactions by elevating ‘culture, political and identity’ differences (Brah 2006). With cultural and identity differences becoming increasingly influential in the construction of relations, stereotypes and prejudices naturally developed leading to doubts over whether the new non-European immigrants would successfully fit into Britain’s society. This was because the new arrivals were perceived by the British as being inferior to European immigrant communities which had dominated Britain’s immigration landscape in the nineteenth and in the first half of the twentieth century (Layton-Henry 1992).

These prejudicial perceptions facilitated the construction of an environment in which skin colour or racism emerged to be significant barriers to successful social interactions between the host society and the non-European immigrants. It was therefore not surprising that Lucassen captures the new phase in Britain’s immigration and integration dynamics by pointing out how the post-war influx of Black Caribbeans triggered violent and racist reactions in some British cities.

For example, he identifies the 1958 riots in Nottingham and Notting Hill as not only testifying to the rise in racial tensions in Britain, but also the influence of Right Wing anti-immigrant movements such as the National Front (Lucassen 2005).

The racial prejudices that accompanied the riots were not a surprising development since two thirds of Britain's White population had 'a low opinion of Black people or disapproved of them' (Fryer 1984). They were perceived as 'uncivilised, backward people inherently inferior to Europeans' (Fryer 1984: 374). It was therefore little surprise that post-war legislation and public policies resulted in new settlers finding themselves experiencing racial exclusion in their attempts to establish their communities whilst interacting with Britain's social structures (Solomos 2003). It was this development of prejudices and stereotypical views of non-European post-war immigrants that attracted academic interest exploring themes on social integration and assimilation. With changing racial demography, integration debates started to be driven by fear that were the new arrivals not fully incorporated they would exist as 'unassimilable segments' characterised by criminality or poverty, an environment that would inspire the creation of Right Wing anti-immigrant movements by native communities (Lucassen 2005).

However, most academic attention on the post-war experiences of non-European immigrants in Britain tends to skirt around discourses on the social integration of Africans who by the end of the twentieth century—as noted in the introductory chapter (Chapter 1)—had established themselves as a noticeable community. This chapter's examination of Zimbabwean immigrants will therefore complement the existing literature on how African immigrants have been constructing their social interaction patterns within the racially diverse British society.

It has been asserted that the nature of immigrant integration is influenced by socialisation in the countries of origin. This makes it imperative that any discussion on trajectories of Zimbabwean immigrants' participation in Britain's social spheres could not be done outside the context of pre-emigration or historic homeland experiences (Lucassen 2005). After having been socialised in British, social and cultural norms, analysis of historic socialisation provides scope in attempting to understand the social interaction processes of Zimbabweans. The chapter will engage intermarriage, language (incorporating way of life), religion and interaction with other communities to assess the impact of homeland influences on the interaction processes of Zimbabweans. Examination of these four

social interaction indicators will not only reveal diverse social integration experiences within the multiracial Zimbabwean diaspora community, but will also identify specific homeland influences that had an impact on social interaction.

### *Intermarriage: A Historical Legacy*

It is undeniable that increased levels of intermarriage can be a litmus test of high levels of social integration (Lucassen 2005). However, Zimbabwean Black research participants presented clear evidence of a diaspora community that was not keen when it first settled in Britain to embrace interracial relations. The reluctance of the diaspora in establishing close relations, especially with the White indigenous population, should be understood as the long-term consequence of the colonial racist discourse which was engrained in the hierarchical classification of the population. Racial categorisation of the population complemented by legislation such as the Immorality and Indecency Suppression Ordinance enacted in 1903 (discussed in Chapter 2) had successfully created effective imagined racial boundaries that were to be preserved by an absence of interracial sexual relations or marriages. Informal policing introduced to keep interracial relations to a minimum inadvertently facilitated the development of attitudes within Blacks that marrying a White was not a status symbol to be sought since it only exposed them to racist stereotypes and prejudices (Hughes 2010).

Although legislation that had criminalised interracial relations particularly between Blacks and Whites was repealed in the 1950s, the Native Marriages Act of 1950 still put barriers on interracial relations between Blacks and Whites throughout the colonial era.<sup>1</sup> Even post-colonial dismantling of colonial racial barriers especially in education failed to trigger a significant shift in the acceptance of mixed marriages. Whites continued to hold on to an important feature of racial etiquette that discouraged interracial familiarity by maintaining a social distance from Blacks so as not to threaten White traditions or solidarity. To ensure maintenance of a social distance, White schoolgirls had been raised by a community that taught them to loath ‘even the thought of contact with Black counterparts’ (Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009: xxii).

Twenty-six-year-old Jessica, who migrated to Britain in 2004 when she was fourteen years old, captured how young White girls were being conditioned to maintain a social distance that would discourage

interracial familiarity (Jessica interview, November 2013). Despite having friends across the racial divide in Zimbabwe's multiracial schools, she recalled how families would set boundaries to ensure intimate friendships with non-Whites should not extend to visiting each other in their respective homes, especially in African high-density residential areas. Neither were they expected to date non-White boys. In the absence of intimate friendships, Jessica admitted that most Whites of her generation had been subtly nurtured to despise interracial relations thus resulting in very few individuals of her generation crossing Zimbabwe's racial boundaries in relations or marriages.

It was this failure to create a post-colonial environment to encourage intermarriage that made it difficult for Blacks to erase the historically constructed racial discourse that Whites are inherently racist. Migrating from an environment that had advocated the concept of White racial purity discouraged a significant number of first-generation Black Zimbabwean immigrants from engaging in interracial marriages or relations. Because of the stigma attached to intermarriage, there was general scepticism of the genuineness of multiracial marriages by accusing those in such relations as doing it for immigration papers. The evidence of suppressed interracial relations was clear among the research participants. Of the seventeen Black Zimbabwean research participants who migrated when they were unmarried (statistics include the six individuals who arrived whilst at primary or secondary school and have grown up in Britain), only one acknowledged to have been in a mixed racial relationship with a White Briton.

Besides memories of racist discourse, historic values and traditions were also identified as emotive reasons which discouraged crossing of racial boundaries in relationships or marriage. Intermarriage is a mechanism that not only transmits ethnically specific cultural values and practices to the next generation, but also transforms ethnic and cultural distinctiveness through the birth of 'mixed race' children (Song 2009). It was the birth of mixed children that made most Africans reluctant to embrace interracial marriages or sexual activities. In the cultural imagination, this was a consequence of being nurtured by the view that mixed race children represent a cultural aberration within a collective context of being African. They were largely viewed as 'totemless elements' who could not fit into African families' identities. Totems—which could be an animal, plant or natural object (or representation of an object)—served as the 'emblem of a clan or family among a tribal or traditional

people ...' representing a mystical or ritual bond of unity within families or groups that needed to be preserved for social cohesion, an important tool for religious and cultural transmission (Makamure and Chiminge 2015). With the birth of mixed race children signalling such drastic cultural or social identity compromises, most older generation Black Zimbabwean parents had therefore migrated with attitudes of being less receptive to mixed race children by making clear that they will not encourage their children to be involved in interracial relations as a way of preserving family identity.

Further disapproval of mixed race children is evidenced by older generation Blacks also sharing the view held by White Zimbabweans that a significant number of Coloureds are untrustworthy characters with a propensity to be involved in criminality. This disdain towards Coloureds is evidenced by them being described as 'people of suspect origins, suspect intentions, and suspect practices' (Seirlis 2004). Prejudices and stereotype attitudes, especially within the Rhodesian army, would be popularised by such jokes as:

*What do you call two White men pushing a car?*

– *White power.*

*What do you call two Black men pushing a car?*

– *Black power.*

*What do you call two Coloured men pushing a car?*

– *Theft.*<sup>2</sup> (Seirlis 2004)

Inevitably, the insistence by some within the older generation to hold on to these imported prejudices, stereotypes, cultural or traditional attitudes and values that disregarded intermarriage gradually mutated into a source of cultural clashes with the younger generation growing up in Britain. This became apparent when a group interview session with the younger generation who were unmarried and below 30 years of age rejected the racialised beliefs regarding mixed race children alongside other traditional or cultural norms held by their parents that discouraged them from engaging in interracial relations. These young Zimbabwean adults were born after independence and as a result they were not old enough to have experienced historical social or political processes that would influence their social integration processes in the diaspora.

It was therefore little surprise there was universal agreement within the group that the imported historical social and cultural attitudes needed to be confronted as they were not compatible with reality, especially since none had plans to relocate back to Zimbabwe.

Kuda, a twenty-two-year-old university student in Leicester, summed up the frustration of young people when she pointed out how being socialised by Western values outside the home environment had made her generation perceive imported traditions on marriages upheld by their parents to be a hindrance to their social integration (Kuda group interview, March 2013). However, despite such sentiments, they acknowledged that the process of making their parents accept intermarriage would be slow, especially on traditional issues such as ‘bride price’ (money paid by the groom to parents of the bride) and the role of extended family in their married life. Nqobile went on to express how young people’s concerns were further compounded by the fact that their parents, as recent arrivals, would not have lived long enough in Britain to let go of these cultural practices related to marriage (Nqobile group interview, March 2013).

Interestingly, views shared by unmarried young people in their twenties were not shared by unmarried research participants in their thirties, who would have migrated when they were young adults. These were individuals who had lived long enough in Zimbabwe to appreciate the potential cultural conflicts that could arise when they crossed the racial boundary in marriage. As a result, they showed reluctance to cross the racial boundary citing cultural differences as the main reason. For example, thirty-six-year-old Sibona represented those who were only prepared to tolerate cultural difference as a last option were they not to find a Black Zimbabwean partner (Sibona interview, April 2015).

### *Westernisation of Cultural Adaptation*

Parallel with pre-emigration influences on intermarriage to gauge the social integration of Black Zimbabweans was cultural adaptation, which manifested itself in competency in the English language. Whilst migrants’ proficiency in the host society’s language could be perceived as an indicator of successful social integration, for Black Zimbabweans it unveiled the extent to which colonial influences negatively impacted the use of vernacular languages in their day-to-day conversations (Fennelly and Palasz 2003). As former subjects of the British, Black Zimbabweans did



not have to show proficiency in the English language before they settled in Britain; neither did they face the culture shock that would have made it difficult to socially integrate.

Africans' exposure to Westernisation started a process of subtle indoctrination and conditioning in which the European way of life was viewed as a benchmark of social status, a standard of civilisation. The consequence, as discussed in Chapter 2, was the creation of Africans who despised traditional values by elevating a European way of life. Even at independence the democratisation of education failed to dismantle colonial-nurtured perceptions that 'everything western is good and particularly everything native is inferior, even deemed inappropriate' (Ellis 1978: 1).

The experiences of Timothy demonstrated how the colonial discourse of racial purity, which exalted the Western lifestyle, impacted the post-independence emerging Black middle-class community. He was a teacher in the early 1990s at a private secondary school in Mashonaland West built after independence for predominantly White children who were being withdrawn from former Group A state schools as they became multiracial. They were joined by children from the emerging affluent Black elite whose parents perceived the schools as a symbol of status because the high tuition fees charged excluded most Blacks. As he was the only Black teacher, he recalled how Black parents would not shy away from expressing how his presence at the school was 'spoiling their kids and undermining their status' (Timothy interview, May 2013).

The diffusion of cultures in the colonial era, in which Blacks were indoctrinated to accept a European way of life as being superior, had naturally marked gradual elevation of the English language as a symbol of status among the Black community. This was affirmed by Panganayi who did not have the opportunity to attend a former White-only Group A school until 1988 when he was in sixth form; by then most White parents had withdrawn their children. Attending a Group A school was something Panganayi had always aspired to. He recalled how these aspirations had been nurtured by his parents who made him believe that English was superior to the indigenous languages. He wished to speak English with a White accent, a trend common among Blacks who were attending former White-only schools. The attempt to speak or act like Whites led to popularisation of the phrase 'nose brigade'. The 'nose brigade' phenomenon was a product of assumptions within urban Black youths that Whites have a nasalised way of speaking. The belief that a

European lifestyle was something to aspire to by some within the Black community started the construction of personal identities which were to influence social integration patterns in Britain.

The impact historic British socialisation had in diluting language as a traditional identity marker within the Black Zimbabwean immigrant community was well articulated by Ranger (2005) whilst describing the culture of Zimbabwean asylum seekers. He pointed out how Zimbabweans on arrival in Britain did not need instruction in British language, belief or culture. Instead, they felt 'at least part of the same universe of thought and culture with the British' (Ranger 2005). The inevitable consequence was the gradual decline of Shona or Ndebele as crucial identity markers within some Black Zimbabwean immigrants. Ranger's assertion was apparent in most research participants' homes where indigenous languages had been replaced by English, resulting in children being unable to converse in either Shona or Ndebele. Parents seemed comfortable speaking in English. Tarisai's parents went to the extent of defending their children's reluctance to speak Shona by arguing that 'they will never live in Zimbabwe, so why speak it?' (Tarisai interview, April 2013).

The use of English in the private space of home affirmed the extent to which historic socialisation had become an important indicator of cultural attachment, which is inextricably linked to colonial Westernisation. As a result, the suggestion that language provides a forum to bind communities together by attaching diasporic groups to homeland cultures or traditional values failed to resonate the with Black Zimbabwean diaspora community (Sahoo 2006). By putting language alongside religion as a crucial identity marker, the failure to speak in vernacular languages by children was confirmation of a gradual decline of one of the most significant identity markers of being a Zimbabwean (Edwards 2009). With vernacular languages restricted within and outside the home, it was little surprise that, in most of the houses visited, there was no visible expression of families' Zimbabwean identity or heritage. This could have been done by displaying pictures, artefacts or the Zimbabwean flag.

Undermining Zimbabwean identities linked with pre-emigration influences was not restricted to private homes, but extended into public spaces. Unlike most African nationals, Zimbabweans migrated without having designed a national dress. In the absence of national dress, Zimbabwean immigrants could not express a Zimbabwean identity in public spaces, which would have defined and distinguished them from

other African nationalities. Instead, when social functions such as weddings or church services required shaking off Western attire they had to adopt (especially women) West or Central African dress code. The most popular outfits were from Nigeria, Ghana, Zambia and Malawi. Unashamedly, Zimbabweans have embraced such attire from these countries as Zimbabwean national dress.

Without being able to show a distinct national identity in both public and private spaces to distinguish themselves from other African, the social integration process mutated into an assimilation process that has been defined as ‘... progressive adaptation (leading towards inclusion in the host society) whose final outcome should be the disappearance of cultural differences’ (Bolaffi 2003: 151). It was therefore little surprise that Black respondents were unanimous in the belief that, unless there is another wave of Zimbabwean immigration, most present generation Zimbabweans would be absorbed into Black British society within the next two decades.

### *Religious Identities: Home-Grown Churches*

Religion was another obvious social institution determining whether the predominantly Christian Zimbabwean immigrant community was successfully integrating into British society. However, the influence of religion in their social interactions could not be divorced from the shock Zimbabwean Christians experienced when they realised how contemporary Britain had become a secular society as evidenced by decline in Church attendances. For example, research participants living in Leicester could not hide their disappointment when they pointed out the demise of Christianity in the city by making a comparison with religions associated with South Asians, such as Islam, Sikhism and Hinduism. These religions had firmly and visibly established themselves in public spaces through their places of worship. In contrast, general decline in regular church attendance was resulting in Christianity disappearing in some areas within the city as some churches were closing and being put up for sale, like the one along St Saviours Road which shut in 2005 in the Asian-dominated Highfields area.<sup>3</sup>

Decline in church attendance by the indigenous population negated for most Zimbabweans the influence of British missionaries, which had led to establishment of a vibrant Christian community demarcated by denominational allegiances. As congregants of different denominations,

church attendance back in Zimbabwe had become an integral part of most Black Zimbabweans' lives—a family event that was not only about personal faith, but also for socialising and offering each other support. Upon arriving in Britain, there was the inevitable expectation that church attendance inextricably linked with pre-emigration denominational affiliations would continue to dominate their lives and interaction processes.

With colonialism having successfully introduced Christianity to Africans, denominational allegiances had become important to most Black Zimbabwean Christians. Upon arriving in Britain, it was therefore little surprise that denominational affiliations would provide a framework to gauge the social integration of Black Zimbabweans, especially those who attended traditional churches and home-grown African churches. The Zimbabwean diaspora Christian community had always been split between those who attended home-grown churches and those attending traditional churches.

Britain experienced a rapid expansion in Zimbabwean home-grown churches after 2000 by drawing large numbers from 'Pentecostal conventions' (McGregor 2009). However, it would be misleading to describe Zimbabwean home-grown churches as a religious monolithic community with similar identities. This is because Zimbabwean home-grown churches could be broken down into two main groups. The first group consisted of home-grown churches that were Pentecostally similar to some West African and American Black churches. Examples included Family of God, Forward in Faith Ministries International, African Apostolic Faith and Apostolic Faith Mission. Although these churches had predominantly Zimbabwean congregants, their association with West African churches and Black churches in the USA meant they also had a sizeable number of non-Zimbabweans, especially Black Africans. As a result, most services were conducted in English to cater for multicultural congregants. Tindo, a member of Forward in Faith Ministries International, attributed the ethnic diversity of the congregants to his church's successful social integration within Britain's multicultural Christian community (Tindo interview, December 2011).

The second group of home-grown churches consisted of those that had a strong Zimbabwean/African identity in their worship service and dress code but had no association with West African or American Black churches. Their origins can be traced back to the early 1920s when Black Zimbabwean African churches were established to counter traditional churches by fusing a Pentecostal and African style of worship in the

services. The continuous establishment of these African churches became an integral component of the Zimbabwean Christian landscape throughout Zimbabwe's colonial and post-colonial history, and into the diaspora. Examples of these churches in the diaspora included Johane Masowe Chishanu and Johane Marange. Unlike other home-grown churches with West African and American affiliation, their congregants were exclusively Zimbabwean and would hold services in vernacular languages and usually in the open. The successful integration of these Zimbabwean African churches could therefore be measured by the extent to which they could establish home-grown Zimbabwean churches without fear of victimisation or prejudices since their worshipping styles might be deemed to be alien to Western culture. This reaffirmed the assertion that religion can be a diasporic identity marker that helps to preserve individual awareness by attaching itself to culture and becoming identifiable with ethnicity (Sahoo 2006).

However, in 2013 residents on a Barnsley housing estate made a complaint about the noise. This showed that acceptance and tolerance of cultural differences in worship could be problematic. This was when the residents on the estate complained about the noise the Johanna Masowe Chishanu group made when they went to pray in woodlands as early as 5:30 a.m. prompting Yorkshire Housing to look for a compromise to suit both parties.<sup>4</sup>

With a predominantly Zimbabwean congregation, both communities of the home-grown Zimbabwean churches had transformed themselves into viable public spaces where Zimbabwean traditional values with a bias towards Christianity could be exclusively protected and nurtured. Most church services would incorporate issues on what was to be expected from both Zimbabwean parents and their children as they integrated into a multicultural and multifaith society. Maintaining a Christian-influenced Zimbabwean identity in a British culture that was becoming increasingly individualistic and secular had become a critical component Zimbabwean parents needed to preserve. Most parents felt as if they were trapped in a society that was making it impossible for parents to impart cultural norms to their children or create an environment that would allow them to take pride in their ethnicity (McGregor 2006). They had a negative assessment of Britain as a place to raise their children. This assessment stemmed from a number of issues: lack of discipline in schools, legislation restricting parental control, lack of respect, dress standards,

homosexuality, cohabiting, and overemphasis on sex in teenage culture and media (McGregor 2006).

There was also growing concern among Zimbabwean Christians that multiethnic traditional churches were lax on issues that were not compatible with Zimbabwean-accepted norms such as homosexuality and cohabiting of unmarried couples, which they saw as being widely tolerated by some prominent traditional churches such as the Anglican Church. Inevitably, this led to parental challenges as parents tried to find legal ways of enforcing traditional norms on their children who were growing up in a society that contradicted these norms. Home-grown Zimbabwean churches were therefore perceived by those who attended them as better equipped to offer support to Zimbabwean Christian parents who were struggling with the behaviour of their children as they adapted to British cultural values that ran counter to the Christian and cultural values of their Zimbabwean upbringing.

Tindo explained how most Zimbabwean churches provided an environment where young people could interact with Zimbabwean role models who had done well academically or professionally (Tindo interview, December 2011). By interacting with them, most Zimbabwean parents believed their children's self-confidence and self-esteem would be boosted as they realised that they could excel professionally or academically in a secular society without having to compromise their Zimbabwean-influenced Christian values.

Even in traditional churches, like the one attended by Selina and James along London Road in Leicester, fellowship groups exclusive to Zimbabweans were established. Selina and James' fellowship group, established in 2004, had modelled itself as an informal social gathering where vernacular language was used to remind congregants of their cultural values and identity (Selina and James interview, December 2011). Meeting every Friday evening in members' homes, they would engage in bible study while teaching or reminding their children of Zimbabwean cultural values which would allow them to maintain their identity in a British multicultural community.

Apart from establishing fellowship groups, Zimbabwean congregants in traditional churches, who wanted to maintain a Zimbabwean style of worship, also arranged to meet separately for services. As a community of Zimbabwean worshippers they felt they would be able to take part in vibrant and spontaneous services where preaching or singing would be in vernacular languages, usually accompanied by African drums and

tambourines—just the way it was done back home. For example, the Roman Catholic church organised mass services mainly in Shona conducted by a Zimbabwean-born priest sent by the Zimbabwean Bishops Conference to work as a chaplain for Catholics in Britain (Pasura 2014). In Leicester, Methodists also successfully established a Zimbabwean-led congregation which had been a platform for forging interactions with fellow coethnics while engaged in a vibrant Zimbabwean style of worship. Mathew affirmed the positive impact Zimbabwean Methodists had had by pointing out the way in which they maintained the visibility of the church which was in terminal decline because of poor attendance by the indigenous population.

### SOCIAL INTERACTIONS OF WHITES

Whilst pre-emigration influences on intermarriage, language and religion were clear means of assessing the social integration of Black Zimbabweans, the impact of homeland influences on social interactions of the White diaspora were more complex. With most having ancestral links to Britain, it would have been expected that shared heritage would have assisted in disentangling any barriers to successful social interactions. However, White research participants' experiences revealed how migrating with an historically nurtured sense of a collective identity, embedded in the belief that they were a nation, turned out to be a major hindrance when attempting to establish relations with the indigenous population.

The title of Ranka Primorac's essay 'Rhodesians Never Die? The Zimbabwean Crisis and the Revival of Rhodesian Discourse', in which he explores the narratives of twenty-first century displaced White Zimbabweans living in the diaspora, resonated with White Zimbabweans who would not let go of White Rhodesian identity markers as they attempted to establish social integration patterns in Britain (Primorac 2010). Elizabeth's experience in Cumbria highlighted the extent of the challenges posed by migrating with this strong White African identity when attempting to establish social interactions with the host community in areas with a predominantly White British population. When she settled in the county in 2002, 98.4% of the county's population was identified as being White British (Office of National Statistics Census 2001). With her distinct African identity, it was this overwhelming dominance

of the indigenous population which Elizabeth identified as triggering her apparent isolation from local society despite physical outward similarities.

She recalled how she would constantly be asked her country of origin since her accent gave away her Rhodesian/African identity (Elizabeth interview, November 2013). She interpreted constant questioning about her origins as a deliberate ploy to remind her that she was a foreigner. Being married to a Briton failed to bring about acceptance by indigenous community members. In the eyes of most local people her family would always be foreigners with restricted rights in accessing state benefits such as social housing. This became apparent when she was allocated a council house ahead of members of the local community who might have been on the waiting list before her. Although she did not experience violent or physical abuse when she moved into her council house, she still felt ostracised by her neighbours as there was no initiative to make her family feel welcome: 'not even a greeting on the street' (Elizabeth interview, November 2013).

She also narrated how both her fifteen-year-old daughter and twelve-year-old son felt bullied and ostracised by their schoolmates who would pretend not to understand their English accent. She described how her daughter would often be labelled 'a posh girl with an accent' for not wanting to be part of the teenage clubbing and drinking culture. Without much social interaction, her daughter suffered depression for two years after completing her GCSE exams in 2003, a situation she believed resulted in relations being strained between her daughter and the rest of the family for a while. However, her youngest daughter who migrated when she was eight years old did not face similar problems. Elizabeth attributed this to her young age which enabled her to pick up a British accent much faster than her siblings thus enabling her to establish friendship networks easier than her siblings.

However, it is important to note that the challenges of migrating with a strong Rhodesian identity faced by Elizabeth as she attempted to interact with her local community were not similar for all White Zimbabwean immigrants scattered across the country. Contrary to Elizabeth's experiences, Robert settled in Milton Keynes in 2002 when the town was becoming increasingly multiethnic according to 2001 and 2011 census statistics. In 2001, 13.2% of the town's population was identified as made up of ethnic minority communities, rising to 26.1% in the 2011 census (Office of National Statistics). Settling in an area which was



becoming racially diverse created the right environment for Robert to successfully integrate without being discriminated against. In the absence of obvious barriers to social interaction, it was therefore natural for him to join the Milton Keynes Rotary Club (Robert interview, November 2013). As a former member of the Zimbabwe Rotary Club where he had built up some expertise in charity work, he knew that his involvement with Milton Keynes' Rotary Club would allow him to do some charity work in the local area, thus paving the way for greater interaction with the local community.

Robert also expressed how his expertise was so well received in the Rotary Club that he became part of the club's management committee when he was elected to the post of treasurer at one time. However, he admitted that becoming an active member of the Milton Keynes community regrettably distracted him from establishing close relations with other White Zimbabwean immigrants in Britain. This was because he had not felt isolated as a result of getting involved in community activities through the Rotary Club and was able to forge ties with non-Zimbabwean communities. As a result he had rarely attended Rhodesian-organised events such as the July Braai.

### COLOURED

The social interactions of Zimbabwean Coloureds resonated with the argument that the identities of most 'Black people of mixed origins' were decisively influenced by the environment they grew up in (Small and Christian 2002). Prior to migration, most community members had successfully constructed an identity that was comfortable within the social realms of Zimbabwe, but there was little willingness to socialise outside their communities. Understanding how the Coloured diaspora interacted socially with the host society involved fully grasping the dynamics of homeland racial relations developed in both the colonial and post-colonial eras.

Older generation Zimbabwean Coloureds in Britain were second or third-generation products of the colonial racial classification of the population who migrated with a post-colonial history of marginalisation. Chapter 2 discussed how marginalisation in both colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe had created and consolidated the desire in subsequent generations to preserve Coloured consciousness by making choices that trivialised interaction with other communities. Older

members of the community had therefore migrated totally unaware of the advantages of forging close ties with those outside their community.

With pre-emigration cultural alignment with Whites or Blacks best described as a metaphoric experience as there were no meaningful interactions to bring closer ties, most of the older generation migrated with little motivation to forge relations with the host society. This is the reason why Pamela described Zimbabwean Coloureds as continuing to create 'enclaves' in Milton Keynes, despite the town becoming increasingly multiethnic (Pamela interview, October 2013) Pamela's assertion indicates how memories of past relations, based on the need to protect Coloured consciousness and identity, had superseded the need to cross racial boundaries when establishing social interactions.

Despite limited interaction between older generation Coloureds and the host society, there was much greater tolerance of interracial relations by the younger generation. Tolerance of interracial relations was acknowledged by Simon, who is in a relationship with a White British woman, and Esther whose son also crossed the racial divide. Pamela, who had been married to a White British man back in Zimbabwe, admitted that Coloureds' alignment with Whites during the colonial era had been instrumental in interracial relations being accepted when it involved a White partner. She singled out the colonial hierarchical classification of the population and the placement of Coloured children in exclusive residential homes for the formation of attitudes that viewed marrying a White person as a status symbol (Pamela interview, September 2013). With interracial relations suppressed in Zimbabwe, the long-term consequence of colonial policies was that most older Coloureds would not object when their children got involved with White British men or women (Pamela interview, October 2013).

## ASIANS

The social integration of Asians was also shaped by pre-emigration socialisation. Like other Zimbabweans, the most essential skill needed for integration was already possessed by Zimbabwean Asians: their ability to speak English. Long historical associations with British traditions had allowed Zimbabwean Asians to fall into the category of Asian communities described as 'secularised and westernised' (Luthra 1997). As recipients of British-inspired education in which they learned the English language, Zimbabwean Asians did not have to undergo radical cultural

adjustment to be able to interact with Britain's social or economic structures. Their historic association with British traditions contrasted with those from the Subcontinent the majority of whom arrived in Britain speaking very little English and therefore needed crash courses in English to socially or economically integrate (Desai 1963).

Intermarriage was a significant factor in gauging the social integration of Zimbabwean Asians. Prior to migration, this was a community that had managed to preserve their cultural distinctiveness and shunned intermarriage. The need to preserve historical traditional values was cited by Zimbabwean Asian research participants as the major reason why intermarriage had been discouraged in the diaspora. Twenty-two-year-old Kamal, who was in a relationship with a British-born non-Zimbabwean Asian, admitted that the only intermarriage most Zimbabwean Asian parents could accept was within another Asian community, especially one of the same caste or religion (Kamal interview, November 2013). As a Muslim, his choice of partner was influenced by his religion. Their faith ensured they had more things in common. The use of religion as a prerequisite to marriage had emerged to be an invaluable tool in preserving community identities within the Zimbabwean Asian community spread across the country.

Reliance on family support had resulted in Zimbabwean Asians being dispersed across Britain, settling in cities with a high concentration of Asians—cities where their families were already established. Major urban areas hosting post-millennium Zimbabwean Asian immigrants outside London included Leicester, Luton and Slough. Failure to live near each other meant failing to establish a recognisable community identity like that of Ugandan Asians settling in Leicester from the 1970s (Herbert 2008). Constructing identities to trigger interactions with other communities would therefore be based on commonalities with other Asians—namely, religion, caste and language.

Whilst Zimbabwean Hindu and Sikh communities used family ties, language or caste to forge interactions, Muslims on the other hand used their religion to assimilate. With a majority of Zimbabwean Asian Muslims being Sunnis, Kasim as a practising Sunni admitted there had been widespread assimilation into the Sunni community in cities like Leicester where there was a large concentration of Sunnis. The part played by religion in constructing diaspora identities affirmed the assertion that religious affiliation is an important component in the identity of minority groups (Stopes-Roe and Cochrane 1990).

However, it would be an oversimplification to conclude that assimilation solely depended on similarities of caste, religion or language. Historical experiences in the country of origin were also influential in assisting Zimbabwean Asians to identify Asian groupings they could interact with on a personal level. Bhavesh emphasised the importance of such experiences by highlighting how a significant number of post-millennium Zimbabwean Asians found it difficult to establish close relations with Asians from East Africa.

Unlike Zimbabwean Asians whose migration to Zimbabwe became noticeable at the turn of the twentieth century, documentation of the migration history of South Asians to East Africa revealed a rapid increase in the population from the mid-nineteenth century. For example, between 1880 and 1920 the population increased from 6000 to 54,000 (Oonk 2013). As a result, the East African Indian population was not only larger than that of Zimbabwe, but its members had also constructed a collective identity rooted in the history of East Africa. It was this collective identity that Bhavesh cited as the main hindrance to forging intimate relations with those from East Africa. Instead, contemporary Zimbabwean Asian immigrants found it easier to interact with Asians from the Southern African countries of Mozambique, Zambia and South Africa because of shared historical experiences and memories.

Such regional historic memories can be traced back to interpersonal ties of kinship and friendship established by first-generation immigrants in Southern Africa. The creation of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland and the Unilateral Declaration of Independence by Ian Smith in 1965 indirectly consolidated historic ties. With business opportunities stifled by the Rhodesian government, a significant number of Asians migrated to Zambia and Malawi when the two countries became independent in 1964. As a result, Zambia and Malawi had always had a larger Asian population than Zimbabwe, a situation exacerbated by Zimbabwe's early prevention of Indian immigration (Dotson and Dotson 1968). However, despite the regional disparity in population distribution, historic kinship ties continued to be reinforced by inter-marriage and business activities between the regional communities, interactions that did not cease in post-colonial Zimbabwe. It was therefore inevitable that such a kinship and friendship would be resuscitated in Britain.

Although the delayed exodus of Zimbabwean Asians could have been a deterrent to their economic integration (as evidenced in Chapter 6), Kasim claimed the delayed arrival of Zimbabwean Asians had a positive

impact on their ability to interact. Unlike East African Asians who were forced to migrate during the first decade of their countries' independence due to Africanisation policies, most contemporary Zimbabwean Asians had the opportunity of living for over thirty years in independent Zimbabwe before deciding to emigrate following deterioration of the economy. It was this relatively long period of living in independent Zimbabwe which Kasim believed gave them enough time to dismantle some of the remnants of colonialism of seeing themselves or their culture as being superior. The result according to Kasim was the attainment of social skills on how to mix and actively participate with non-Asian individuals including those who do not share their religious beliefs.

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The chapter's examination of Zimbabwean immigrants unveiled just how extensive pre-emigration socialisation had been in determining the nature of interactions with the social structures of the host society. By focussing on intermarriage, language, religion and relations with the indigenous population, the chapter closely assessed historic homeland influences that had been key determinants of the way in which multi-racial Zimbabweans integrated socially. A comparative study of Blacks, Whites, Coloureds and Asians revealed that social integration was experienced in different ways by each ethnic community.

Within a predominantly Zimbabwean Christian community, the ability of Zimbabweans to establish home-grown churches with a distinct style of worship was an indicator of successful social integration as it demonstrated British society's tolerance of imported cultures. Zimbabwean home-grown churches had firmly established themselves as part of the British Christian community, especially in cities where there was a large concentration of Black Zimbabweans. This led to preservation of styles of worship that had become identifiable with Zimbabwean Black African churches since the 1920s.

With mixed marriages becoming increasingly accepted in Britain, interracial relations would be a good test for social integration. However, since the first-generation Black Zimbabwean immigrants to Britain had grown up in an environment in which imagined racial boundaries created by colonial classification of the population had not been fully dismantled, racial prejudices and social or cultural differences became significant barriers to intermarriage with natives. A correlation between imported cultural influences on marriages and parents' memories of racial prejudices

among the Black and Asian immigrants had also not instigated a significant rise in marriages between their children and White Britons.

It is important to note that the British heritage of contemporary White Zimbabwean immigrants was gradually being lost. They had constructed a strong Rhodesian identity that made them conspicuously different from the indigenous population. It was this historically nurtured sense of a collective identity, embedded in the belief that they were a nation, which had been a major hindrance to older generation Zimbabwean Whites interacting with British society, especially in predominantly White British areas.

Being placed at the periphery of Zimbabwe's society had preserved a Coloured consciousness that had always trivialised any intimate interaction with those outside their community. It was therefore little surprise that older members of the community had migrated with no intention of forging close ties with other races. The social interactions of Zimbabwean Asians were influenced by commonalities with non-Zimbabwean Asians. Despite being a diverse community separated by religion, caste, language and historic family ties, they were nevertheless able to assimilate into other Asian communities that shared a similar identity. Assimilation not only undermined interactions with other Zimbabweans, but, more significantly, made the Zimbabwean Asian community invisible.

While pre-emigration exposure to Western civilisation would have deterred most first-generation Zimbabwean immigrants from dealing with problems related to language and religion as they went about social integration, the chapter established that imported identities and prejudices influenced positively and negatively two major aspects of social integration: intermarriage and interactions with non-Zimbabweans.

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## Rhodesian Discourse and Transnational Zimbabweans in Britain, 1970–1980

### INTRODUCTION

Zimbabwe's migration trends to Britain in the 1970s had been inextricably linked with Ian Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) on 11 November 1965 which led to intensification of the Nationalist Movement's armed struggle. The international community ostracised and reviled Rhodesia (following UDI), and political insecurity resulted in the country ceasing to be an attractive destination for European immigrants (as illustrated in Table 8.1). Table 8.1 shows a net White loss emigration of 42,873 between 1976 and 1979 compared with a net gain of 27,071 from 1970 to 1975.

Parallel with increased outmigration of Europeans from Rhodesia to Europe there was also a notable emigration of young mostly academically gifted Black Zimbabweans leaving the country to further their education in Britain. Their emigration was closely tied with efforts to counter the Rhodesian government's non-commitment to Blacks' education that had denied a disproportionate number of Africans the opportunity to go to the University College of Rhodesia.

The discriminatory consequence of the Education Act of 1966 (discussed in Chapter 2) became more apparent in the early 1970s when only 50% of African children who managed to complete primary school would go on to secondary school (Austin 1975). Of the 50% who managed to attend secondary school, a fixed 12.5% were allowed to do academic subjects whilst 37.5% had to make do with two years of vocational

**Table 8.1** Annual immigration and emigration of Rhodesian Whites 1970–1979

<i>Year</i>	<i>Immigrants</i>	<i>Emigrants</i>	<i>Net</i>
1970	12,227	5896	+6331
1971	14,743	5336	+9407
1972	13,966	5141	+8825
1973	9433	7751	+1682
1974	9649	9069	+580
1975	12,425	10,497	+1928
1976	7782	14,854	−7072
1977	5730	16,638	−10,908
1978	4360	18,069	−13,709
1979	3288	14,472	−11,184

Sources Brownell (2011), Mlambo (2010)

courses like carpentry, building or domestic science (Shizha and Kariwo 2011). After two years doing vocational courses, they were not allowed to proceed with secondary education. Of the 12.5% who were given the opportunity to do academic subjects, further screening resulted in less than 1% having the privilege of going to university (Shizha and Kariwo 2011). The colonial regime feared that if Africans were given a good-quality education similar to Whites, there would be competition for employment which would ultimately lead to the emergence of an impoverished White working class (Shizha and Kariwo 2011). Menial education was therefore given to Africans as a way of maintaining the racial-biased class stratification which placed Whites at the pinnacle of society.

To counter the colonial discriminatory education policy, the British Council, British government, Commonwealth Secretariat and international charitable non-governmental organisations started awarding scholarships to disadvantaged Africans who were academically able. These were individuals who had attained excellent results at either O or A-level and would have been identified as having the potential of excelling academically to attain skills that would be utilised in Black majority-ruled independent Zimbabwe. By the start of the 1970s, efforts by the British government and non-governmental organisations to assist disadvantaged students had resulted in nineteen British universities and polytechnics enrolling the recipients of full scholarships (*The Times*, October 1974).

A significant feature of the scholarship scheme was that it was not only restricted to those living in Zimbabwe but was also open to all Africans including political refugees residing outside Rhodesia, mainly

in Botswana and Zambia (McGregor 2017). These were mainly young men who had either been expelled from the University of Rhodesia for political activism or had fled the country to join the liberation struggle. Opening up the scholarship scheme inevitably resulted in the emergence of a diverse Black student community differentiated by ethnicity, social background or political affiliations.

A notable stage in British government's efforts to assist African students from Rhodesia was in the first week of October in 1974 when thirty students arrived in London. Their emigration had been made possible by the Ministry of Overseas Development working together with the Commonwealth Secretariat and voluntary agencies. The Ministry had arranged for British passports and full scholarship support. Voluntary agencies contributed in purchasing airline tickets. They were among 155 University of Rhodesia students who had been involved in demonstrations against racial discrimination in August 1973. About one-hundred of them were imprisoned and banned from going within 12 miles of Salisbury. Realising that their university careers in Rhodesia had ended, a sizeable number of them covertly made their way to Botswana where they were able to apply for Commonwealth scholarships.<sup>1</sup>

Distinctive features of the recipients of the scholarships as pointed out by the research participants were their young age and they were predominantly male. The demography was reflective of the transformation of gender roles from pre-colonial to colonial era. During the pre-colonial era there was no role competition between men and women since each had roles and functions that complemented each other (Auret 1990). However, colonisation initiated changes in the economy by ushering in new roles and statuses of women. Most women in rural areas were restricted to the domestic sphere, as men had to seek employment in mines or farms. This change of roles made most women dependent on men while those in urban areas made little or no economic contribution, thus making the family totally dependent upon the husband (Auret 1990).

Male dominance in the scholarship scheme was also connected with cultural obstacles most girls faced in their attempts to progress with their education. With both African mission schools and government schools charging tuition fees, access to education ceased to be egalitarian (Shizha and Kariwo 2011). Some parents started to invest in the education of boys to secure what they believed would be a better or financially stable future for the family since girls would be married into another family. This placed limits on academically able girls to proceed with their education,

thus denying them the opportunity to be better placed to apply for scholarships to study abroad. The gender disparity to education access became apparent at independence when those identified as illiterate or semi-illiterate were predominantly women. They constituted over 65% of those aged fifteen and over, who had never been to school (Auret 1990).

Apart from recipients of the scholarships, there was also noticeable immigration of Zimbabwe's Coloureds, Asians and Whites. They were young Rhodesian-born men fleeing the inevitable forced enrolment for military service in response to increased Nationalist Movement military activity (Seirlis 2004). In 1976 the National Service Act prohibited White, Coloured and Asian men between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five from leaving the country before completing their first eighteen months phase of military service (Seirlis 2004). They were supposed to register with the military authorities and they could not leave the country without the permission of the army. Those who managed to sneak out of the country to avoid army service and arrived in Britain, with no right of entry as patrials, risked being deported back to Rhodesia. This was because the British Home Office did not consider refusal to serve in the Rhodesian army as sufficient reason to be granted a visa to enter Britain (*Guardian*, September 1979). As a result, there were notable deportations like that of Salim Desai, an eighteen-year-old Asian student. He was flown back to Rhodesia on 7 October 1976 after being detained in the detention centre at Heathrow for 48 days (*Guardian*, October 1976). The Home Office was not satisfied that he would leave Britain at the end of his two-year study course at Pembrige College of Electronics in Bayswater.

By 1978 all White, Coloured and Asian men between eighteen and thirty-eight were required to 'serve 190 days per year' in the military (Muzondidya cited in Seirlis 2004). It was this forced participation in military service that triggered emigration, which naturally favoured those who could use the ancestral or dual nationality route. However, without financial sponsorship, most of those who travelled were either from affluent or had family networks that could financially sponsor the journey.

A combination of Britain's efforts to assist Black African students and the protracted political instability that had been exacerbated by the armed struggle for independence naturally led to a steep rise in the multiracial Rhodesian immigrant community in the 1970s; the influx was classified as students, visitors on short-stay visas, political refugees,

family reunions or those with dual nationality. This increase was captured by 1981 census statistics which indicated that between 1971 and 1981 Zimbabwean-born residents in Britain increased by 109% from 7000 to 15,000 (Office of National Statistics).

The legal status of such a diverse group of immigrants was inextricably linked with non-recognition of Rhodesian passports by the British government after UDI. While most Whites had the privilege of entering Britain as citizens or patrials, non-Whites occupied the 'grey' area of imperial subjects as Rhodesian passports 'did not confer the right of entry to Britain' without a visa (McGregor 2017). Visas could only be applied for at the British Embassy in South Africa, which added further complexity to the emigration process since non-White Rhodesians found it difficult to travel to South Africa to arrange their passports and visas personally. As a result, a significant number of them, especially Asians, took the risk of migrating to Britain via Switzerland, the only European country that accepted Rhodesian passports (*Guardian*, September 2016).

Since Blacks were the sole beneficiaries of scholarships, grants and bursaries, it was inevitable that African Rhodesian students emerged to be the most visible immigrant community since those without financial support from Rhodesia's minority communities found it difficult to fund long-distance emigration. As this chapter will establish, the steady growth of the multiracial Zimbabwean community in Britain in the 1970s failed to escape the impact of homeland influences that had been based on prejudices and allegiances embedded in the hierarchical classification of the population. Starting with Blacks, it will explore how homeland influences affected their diaspora experiences as they constructed their identities and interactions. These research participants were ordinary members of the student community who at the time of migration did not hold any official position in the National Movement. At independence they either remained in Britain or chose to return home as ordinary citizens who were not part of the political establishment.

### BLACK STUDENT COMMUNITY

Following non-recognition of the Rhodesian passport by the British government, the scholarship scheme took on greater importance in assisting African students to emigrate to Britain. For example, the Intergovernmental Scholarship Schemes administered by the

Commonwealth Scholarship Commission and the British Council provided assistance in visa applications (Garling 1979).<sup>2</sup> Successful candidates were issued with form IS112 which allowed them temporary admission into Britain.

The impact of the scholarship scheme was immediate as approximately 1000 Black students left the country between 1969 and 1974 (*The Times* 1974). These 1000 mainly male beneficiaries of the scholarship programme were part of an extraordinarily large group of 60,000 Zimbabwean Blacks who qualified for further education but were denied by colonial discriminatory education policies (*The Times*, September 1975). With fewer than 2% of the applicants being successful because of tough competition, there was an inevitable surge of individuals arriving as independent applicants with no financial sponsorship. They would have been offered places to study at several British educational institutions. Their arrival meant that access to British institutions was not only restricted to the recipients of scholarships but also to those who had not been granted scholarships. The influx of students arriving without any financial sponsorship came to a head in 1975 when, in less than a year, of the 1500 students arriving from Zimbabwe only 200 had been awarded scholarships (*The Times*, October 1975).

Without any financial support, a significant number of the prospective students would find themselves destitute if they were unable to access state welfare benefits. Having inadequate funds to support themselves was an inevitability directly linked to the colonial discriminatory policies that had made it difficult for most African families to engage in viable commercial farming or other economic activities which would have enabled them to financially support their children in the diaspora. To ensure students arriving with no scholarships or grants were protected from inevitable destitution the British government had to act. At an average cost of £1000 per student a year the government agreed to finance studies and maintain the students (*The Times*, October 1975).

In addition to financial assistance the government implemented measures to facilitate access to a steady income by removing visa restrictions that would have prevented the students from seeking employment (*The Times*, October 1975). The relaxation of visa rules allowed prospective students like Edison who had arrived in 1978 without a scholarship to find employment to enable them to pay tuition fees whilst earning money to meet their living expenses. Edison acknowledged that had it not for relaxation of visa rules, he would not have been able to

fulfil his ambition of studying economics at Aberdeen University as his family back in Zimbabwe would not have been able to finance his studies (Edison interview, January 2013).

### *Transient Black Student Community*

This growing contingent of African students did not see themselves as political refugees or economic immigrants but as transient immigrants who would relocate back to an independent Zimbabwe. For most students who had been aided in visa application by scholarship schemes, going back to Zimbabwe was inevitable. This was because the schemes contained a clause committing the students to return home on completion of their studies. The clause was therefore perceived as a deliberate attempt to deny them immigration status which would have made it difficult to send them back to Zimbabwe.

Despite the different circumstances that had opened up opportunities to study in Britain regarding access to scholarships and grants, Jacob, who migrated in 1972 without a scholarship, explained how most of them were united by a consciousness that they were only in Britain for educational purposes while looking forward to Zimbabwe's independence (Jacob interview, January 2013). Educational opportunities to study in Britain had been embraced as a route to professional roles and qualifications that would not only be invaluable in rebuilding independent Zimbabwe, but also grant elite status which the racist discourse of Rhodesia denied them. The discriminatory nature of the colonial education system had made them keen to gain qualifications in high-status professions such as medical doctors, accountants, lawyers, engineers or architects, which were overwhelmingly dominated by Whites.

Envisaging an exodus of White professionals at independence, it was therefore not surprising according to Zivanayi, who had migrated in 1978 as a civil engineering student, that a significant number of the students enrolled in university courses or programmes in which Black Zimbabweans back home were underrepresented (Zivanayi interview, January 2013). He identified the most popular courses as those in medicine and health, economics, finance, accounting, business and engineering. These courses were associated with specialised or highly skilled professions that the diaspora student community knew would be invaluable in ensuring Zimbabwe's socio-economic structures or infrastructure would not collapse if the anticipated flight of White professionals took



place. The British government also unwittingly encouraged the uptake of courses associated with highly skilled professions. Priority for grants would be given to students proposing to take courses that would equip them with skills to contribute to post-independence Zimbabwe.

### *Black Students' Social Networking*

The enrolment of students in the 1970s by various educational institutions dotted all over Britain resulted in dispersal of the student population across the country with London having the largest population. Zivanayi recalled how London had emerged as the 'receiving centre' and temporary destination for most new arrivals who were arriving without student visas or scholarships. The Zimbabwean community in the city would host the new arrivals by providing free accommodation while giving them advice on how to process their immigration status before relocating to universities or polytechnics that had offered them places (Zivanayi interview, January 2013).

The influx of African students spread across Britain's education institutions even brought about formation of the National Union of Zimbabwean Students (NUZS). This was a national organisation tasked with unifying students by coordinating support networks and social events. One major function of the NUZS, according to Edison, was to offer support to students who were arriving with inadequate funds to meet their daily living expenses, especially those who had no access to scholarships or grants and needed extra cash (Edison interview, January 2013). The support networks established through the NUZS were invaluable sources of support for those with no financial sponsorship in providing temporary accommodation and assisting new arrivals with advice on where and how to gain employment.

The sudden influx into Britain of hundreds of Black Rhodesian students without grants was an attempt by leaders of the NUSZ to make the British government fulfil its promise to educate Black Zimbabweans. At a press conference on 25 September 1975, Herbert Musikavanhu of the UK branch of the NUSZ made it clear that they will continue advising and encouraging students in Rhodesia to come to Britain to force the British government to increase the number of grants. The NUSZ was disappointed that of the 1500 who had arrived in Britain only 200 had been granted government scholarships.<sup>3</sup>

The function of support networks was not solely to provide financial or employment advice to the new arrivals. They also helped organise social events such as parties, which would go on all night. They would play Zimbabwean music while feasting on Zimbabwean food. Edison described the parties as the most significant social events where they would socialise whilst giving each other advice and reminiscing on past experiences (Edison interview, January 2013). Socialising as a community gave them homeland comfort by alleviating traumatic experiences of indifferent surroundings they find themselves in which often culminated in homesickness.

In the absence of a proximate extended family the diaspora student network and the NUZS had created a transnational extended student family providing social, material and financial support to its members in times of need. One of the students who arrived in 1975 without financial assistance or a grant was Cecil Savanhu, aged 26. He had been offered a place at the Polytechnic of Central London to study for a BA in Social Sciences. Without financial sponsorship, his friends had been providing help with accommodation and living expenses. The assistance Black Rhodesians offered each other was not restricted by ethnic allegiances that had become the source of homeland communal tensions within the African community.

Sixty-two-year-old Jacob, who initially migrated to Britain in 1973, explained how individuals from both the Shona and Ndebele communities would interact well in these social gatherings or events despite the Shona being the majority (Jacob interview, January 2013). The students had realised resuscitating historic ethnic tensions would be a futile exercise which would only serve to weaken the Zimbabwean student community whose members needed each other for moral and financial support as they looked forward to returning to an independent Zimbabwe that would mirror the positive Shona–Ndebele relations they had forged in Britain.

For Black diaspora students, the political situation back home had created a consequential sameness that would not tolerate historic ethnic Shona–Ndebele tensions. Zivanayi explained how the Zimbabwean African student community shared a common binding feature embedded in the circumstances that had led to their emigration (Zivanayi interview, January 2013). They viewed themselves as a community that had been denied opportunities to attain higher education qualifications because of

the oppressive nature of the colonial education system. It was therefore inevitable that the construction of their identity and interactions would be reflective of the memories of injustices Black Africans were experiencing under colonial administration back home. Shared pre-emigration memories of migrating with these memories of colonial injustices stimulated a consciousness of the need to construct a non-tribal Zimbabwean community engaged in collective diaspora political activism to complement the liberation struggle back home to remove minority rule.

### POLITICAL ACTIVISM

Political activism categorised the Black diaspora student community into two groups whose virtual boundaries were not rigid since members could move from one category to another. The first group consisted of individuals who were actively involved in pre-emigration political activism at some level. They could have been ex-political detainees, activists expelled from the University College of Rhodesia for protesting against minority rule or young men who would have left the country to join the liberation struggle (McGregor 2017). Apart from organising political activism, some of them assumed leadership roles within the diaspora branches of either ZAPU or ZANU. In post-independence Zimbabwe a significant number of them became leading members in Zimbabwe's corporate institutions and political establishment. Notable examples included Simba Makoni, who went on to become the youngest minister in the new government of independent Zimbabwe as Deputy Minister of Agriculture (he was also the ZANU representative in Europe from his humble student accommodation in Leicester); Bernard Chidzero, who was Zimbabwe's first Finance Minister; Lawrence Vambe, who went on to establish the Zimbabwe-British Society in 1980 (Vambe worked tirelessly with Nicholas Samkange in lobbying the Commonwealth and through journalism and public speaking in denouncing the Rhodesian regime); and Chen Chimutengwende, who after independence became an active ZANU PF official holding down a ministerial post (McGregor 2017).

The second group was associated with ordinary individuals who had no formal role in diaspora politics or student union leadership. They could be classified as politically dormant ordinary Zimbabweans who participated in diaspora politics when they were called upon to do so. Being classified as politically dormant did not therefore mean or

suggest they were apolitical. They were always committed to Zimbabwe's independence since their involvement in protest marches or demonstrations was always guaranteed. After the protests they would retreat to their daily lives waiting to be called upon to engage in diaspora politics. Most members of this group were also active in the social space by organising parties or hosting new arrivals in their homes. After independence, most of them chose not to be leading figures in Zimbabwe's public life despite successes in their respective professions.

By the mid-1970s this community of Zimbabwean students, spurred on by the principle of 'no independence no majority rule', were becoming increasingly outspoken in denouncing the Rhodesian government's institutionalised codified racism whilst being equally critical of Britain's failure for not taking a tougher line against Ian Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence. The students were particularly angry with the British government's dismissal of Black nationalists' demands to remove Smith's illegal government via a military invasion by opting for economic sanctions to get Smith to reverse UDI. This option, at least as far as the students were concerned, was a failure because of Rhodesia government's determination to militarily engage the Nationalist Movement. It was therefore little surprise the students felt betrayed and outraged by the approach of both Labour and Conservative governments to the rebellious Rhodesian government 'appeasing it as kith and kin', while purporting to be supporting a trajectory towards Black majority rule (McGregor 2017).

Britain's perceived timid response to the Rhodesian government was used by the NUZS leadership to justify their support of the nationalist-led armed struggle back home. For Zimbabwe's diaspora student body, Britain's refusal to reverse UDI through use of military force legitimised the nationalist-led armed struggle as the only viable means of liberating Zimbabwe. The students like the nationalists back home had realised that Zimbabwe's destiny echoed in their demands for 'One man one vote: Freedom now, now, now!' could not be achieved by negotiations alone (Nkomo 2013). They recognised that overthrowing the Rhodesian government would be a daunting task because the Whites had not only ventured into viable businesses in mining, farming and manufacturing, but had also overseen the development of a prosperous modern state which they would not let go of easily. Therefore, for the students it was imperative to put military pressure on Smith.

Driven by a policy of non-alignment with any nationalist party or ethnic community, the NUZS viewed itself as another front in the struggle for Zimbabwe's liberation. There was acceptance by most students that the hardship they faced away from home, especially by those without grants was a 'necessary sacrifice for themselves and for their country' (*The Times*, 26 September 1975). Most of them had accepted that the challenges they faced away from home were an unavoidable part of attaining the invaluable skills they would need in managing the country's economic, political and social structures when independence was achieved. They recognised that their dream of relocating back to an independent Zimbabwe would only be a reality if they complemented the efforts of the nationalists back home by engaging in diaspora political activism. The concept of viewing themselves as a nationalist movement abroad would fit into the grand narrative of being coparticipants in the liberation struggle while exposing the British for failing to aggressively reverse UDI and seeking accommodation for majority rule in Zimbabwe.

To support and raise public awareness of Zimbabwe's struggle for independence, Edison pointed out how students working together with the NUZS organised fundraising activities, rallies, protests and demonstrations. Such events would take place in Central London, especially Africa House, African Centre in Covenant Garden, Marlborough Arms in Gower Street (nicknamed the Zimbabwean pub), Trafalgar Square, Bloomsbury and King's Cross. They were all identified as hives of Zimbabwean student nationalist political activism. Edison explained how coaches would be hired from different cities across Britain to get protesters to London where the protest marches and fundraising activities were usually held (Edison interview, January 2013). Describing one of the NUZS-organised journeys to protest marches in London in which he was a participant Edison said:

Travelling by coach from Aberdeen where I was doing my economics degree we will be chanting slogans and singing revolutionary songs praising ZANU such as *ZANU chete ndiyo ichatonga* ('ZANU alone will rule Zimbabwe'). On arrival in London we would congregate with other Zimbabweans and sympathisers at Marble Arch. From there we would march along Oxford Street on to Regent Street, singing and denouncing Ian Smith. We would finally assemble at Trafalgar Square where we would be addressed.

Edison's narration of the demonstration subtly revealed the ethnic demographics of Zimbabwe's student population of the 1970s. Singing Shona songs which praised Shona-dominated ZANU indicated that Shona students not only outnumbered those from the Ndebele community, but also supporters of the Ndebele-dominated ZAPU. However, despite ethnic demographics and overwhelming support of ZANU, Edison expressed that there were cordial political relations between Shona and Ndebele students. He justified his claim by pointing out that most Ndebele students would join in the singing of Shona revolutionary songs when they were either demonstrating or travelling to protest marches.

The political activism of Zimbabwean student showed the extent to which they had become part of an already established community of African students mainly from West Africa whose number had been steadily rising since the turn of the twentieth century (Adi 1994). As a result, the political activism of Zimbabweans was not restricted within the Zimbabwean student body. Instead, its genesis grew out of African diaspora political activity whose origin could be traced back to the twentieth-century rise of a pan-Africanist ideology that forced a global sense of unity against the imposition of Whites on the African continent (Ackah in Christian 2002). For example, the West African Students' Union, in existence since the 1920s, had become so well known that by the 1950s it was playing a major role in mobilising support for African interests (Williams 2015). Other participants in pan-Africanist diaspora organisations of the 1950s and 1960s involved in high-profile anti-colonial campaigns included the Africa Bureau and the Movement for Colonial Freedom formed in 1952 and 1954, respectively. The British Anti-Apartheid Movement, formed in April 1960 in London, was also set up to publicise the immorality of apartheid in South Africa (Williams 2015).

With these diaspora-based organisations publicising the plight of Africans still under colonial rule, most Zimbabwean students became active participants in political meetings organised to share pan-Africanist views on how Africa should be liberated. They could relate to pan-Africanist ideology which stressed the importance of African history and the redistribution of natural resources such as land in countries like Zimbabwe (Williams 2015). Through these meetings the Zimbabwean student community could forge close ties with several groups and individuals campaigning for total liberation of Africa such as the Anti-Apartheid Movement. The interaction of Zimbabwean students with

solidarity organisations and their participation in pan-Africanism allowed them to establish a sense of unity with people from all the over the world who were united by the belief of dismantling colonial systems in Africa. Zimbabwean students had become part of a post-war new generation of African students whose political activism was ‘strongly influenced by growing nationalist movements within the colonies’ (Adi 1994: 107).

Besides British-based pan-Africanist organisations, the Zimbabwean student diaspora anti-colonial nationalist movement also received sympathetic support from British-based embassies supporting liberation, especially those from African, Scandinavian, Asian and Eastern European countries. They also received support from Southern African Liberation Movements such as the South African National Congress (ANC), South African Pan African Congress (PAC) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) (McGregor 2017). These diaspora solidarity organisations played a pivotal role in adding relevance to Zimbabwean student political activism by not only giving moral support but also making financial contributions and assisting in organising public protests and appearances. Relations with solidarity organisations were encapsulated by the slogan ‘No independence Before Majority Rule’.

British Universities, catering for students from all over the Commonwealth, became spaces for the development of ideas to help African liberation struggles and politics. Students found themselves free to discuss African nationalism and pan-Africanism. African societies at most universities became effective associations providing platforms for African students to debate endlessly and excitedly about the future of post-colonial Africa exploring ‘ideas on what liberation would mean for Africa as a whole, placing particular emphasis on the countries that were still under colonial domination, such as Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe’ (Chung 2006: 66).

For Zimbabwean students, British universities became a cauldron of political ideas, a liberating experience providing them the opportunity to discuss political issues on Africa’s political destiny with other African intellectuals without fear of persecution or suspicion, as was the case back home. They would complement political debates by also participating in Africa Day celebrations held each year on 25 May. The annual event became one of the significant focal events that brought African students together celebrating the diversity of their continent by cooking different African dishes and dancing to different types of African music. Student political activism at universities therefore represented a significant

domain of unity and friendship not only among Zimbabweans but also with other Africans and non-Africans who supported African nationalism.

In explaining the significance of socialisation within and outside the Zimbabwean student community Edison said:

Those already settled in Britain welcomed newcomers regardless of ethnicity. They showed us around places such as the Africa Centre in London where we had the opportunity of meeting other Africans. It was at these meetings where a pan-African identity which superseded tribal issues was promoted ... The tragedies of colonial rule had made us realise we needed each other for moral support if our life in Britain was to be bearable ... People could travel from all over Britain to attend a party or function. (Edison interview, January 2013)

However, student diaspora political activism had to endure pro-Rhodesia crusades organised by the Anglo-Rhodesian Society, the League of Empire Loyalists and the National Front (Vambe quoted by McGregor 2017). These were organisations which deemed the nationalist parties spearheading the liberation struggle back home as communist terrorists and therefore should not be given political prominence. Their propaganda was inextricably linked to Cold War attempts to demonise communism while extolling the virtues of capitalism and democracy. They hoped to create fear within the capitalist political establishment of the West by pointing out that the major sponsors of the liberation struggle were the communist states of China and the Soviet Union (Nkomo 2013). To counter the propaganda of pro-Rhodesian groups the students intensified their efforts in raising public awareness of the liberation struggle back home. By lobbying the Commonwealth Relations Office, engaging in public speaking, radio or television interviews and public protests, they did their best to expose these pro-Rhodesian groups as fascists and racists determined to frustrate majority rule in Africa.

### *Black Students' Social Interactions*

The gender imbalance within the Zimbabwean Black community, in which males were the significant majority, had an impact on interracial or ethnic relations. In a community in which males exceeded females, relations with non-Zimbabweans of the opposite sex were inevitable. A sizeable number of Zimbabwean men married or were in relationships



not only with middle-class Afro-Caribbeans, but also with White British women (McGregor 2017). However, the research participants were unanimous in highlighting a general awareness of the dangers posed by getting into serious relations with non-Zimbabweans since it would pose them a moral dilemma on whether to stay or relocate back home to a post-colonial Zimbabwe, especially if the relationship resulted in marriage or the birth of children.

However, the Black Zimbabwean student community did have complex relations with Black British men and women of Caribbean descent despite the support they occasionally received from those who shared a pan-Africanist perspective. It would have been a natural expectation for the Zimbabwean Black student community to support the British Black Caribbean community in their fight against racism to reciprocate the support they received in their struggle for Zimbabwe's independence. Regrettably, it turned out that most Zimbabweans did not actively get involved in supporting the Black British fight against post-war racism that had become entrenched in British society following the rapid post-war transformation of the British population as a result of the influx of non-Europeans.

What started as recruitment drive of foreign labour from the Caribbean during the post-war economic boom mutated into a phenomenon challenging Britain's ability to manage a population that was becoming increasingly racially diverse. This was because the new arrivals were seen as problematic because of their different 'skin colour and social and cultural characteristics' that were alien to Europeans (Lucassen 2005). This massive and ongoing invasion of Blacks inevitably resulted in racial prejudices, discrimination or negative stereotypes that evolved into racial conflicts and discrimination in the labour, housing and marriage market.

Solomos' analysis of post-war legislation and public policies in *Race and Racism in Britain* captured the racial exclusion non-White communities experienced when interacting with Britain's economic and social structures (Solomos 2003). However, despite Zimbabwean Black students not being immune to the racial discrimination faced by the Black British community, they were still not motivated to get actively involved in fighting racism in Britain. The Zimbabwean students identified two reasons for this lack of involvement: first, it was related to not having the desire to be British or settle permanently in Britain and, second, they did not want to be distracted by British racial issues in their quest to fight

for political liberation back home. They had suffered racial segregation back home and therefore experiencing racism in Britain was what most expected when they arrived.

Cultural differences, prejudices and negative stereotypes were also identified by the research participants as being influential in determining the nature of relations between Zimbabwean students and Black British men and women of Caribbean heritage. A significant number of Zimbabwean students were aware of cultural differences from Blacks of Caribbean heritage, which triggered prejudicial attitudes that determined the nature of relations between the two communities. Zimbabweans perceived Black British men and women, especially the younger generation, as trivialising the importance of education while others disapproved of their lifestyle, such as the smoking of cannabis. This prejudicial and negative attitude can be attributed to pre-emigration influences since most students were not only beneficiaries of Christian missionary sponsorship but also had been educated at Christian mission schools where that sort of behaviour was despised (McGregor 2017). Because of such prejudices towards those of Caribbean heritage, the closest personal friendships among Zimbabwean students were usually with fellow Africans they believed shared the same ethos, especially regarding educational attainment.

### *Independence and Relocation*

The unwavering attachment to Zimbabwe, driven by the belief and hope of returning to an independent Zimbabwe, became a reality on 18 April 1980 when Zimbabwe became independent. However, Black research participants said it would be naive to conclude that all Black Zimbabwean students relocated back to Zimbabwe when the country attained independence. Edison and Zivanayi were part of a sizeable number of Zimbabweans who found themselves settling permanently in Britain despite having harboured ambitions of going back home after completion of their studies. Three reasons were singled out as major deterrents to relocating back to Zimbabwe. The first related to fears of political insecurity caused by the Matabeleland civil conflict and threats by South Africa. The second related to the rapid economic decline during the early years of independence that most in the Zimbabwean diaspora had not anticipated. The third was associated with the rising level of corruption within the Zimbabwean Black elite and political establishment.

The military's indiscriminate and violent response, which targetted civilians during the civil conflict (*Gukurahundi*) in the 1980s, made Black Zimbabweans like Edison who had remained in Britain question the genuineness of Mugabe's reconciliation speech on 4 March 1980. The atrocities committed on the Ndebele by the army, interpreted as Black-on-Black violence, created the perception that Mugabe's speech was only aimed at Whites—not the other communities (Edison interview, January 2013). It was the level of violence that Edison identified as the major factor making a significant number of Black Zimbabwean students who remained behind postpone plans to go back home. With civil wars in the neighbouring states of Mozambique and Angola, there was growing fear that Zimbabwe might be heading in the same direction, especially if no peaceful resolution came about to end the Matabeleland insurgency. A considerable number of those who cited the *Gukurahundi* conflict as the reason for not going back after independence were from Matabeleland. This was a decision that had been reinforced by the fact that most had lost a relative in the conflict (McGregor 2010).

Uncertainty about the political or security stability of the newly independent state was not helped by threats posed by the South African Defence Forces (SADF). Peter Stiff's *Cry Zimbabwe: Independence—Twenty Years On* reveals how the SADF was not only supporting dissidents in Matabeleland but was also involved in several bombings targetting both Zimbabweans and South African National Congress activists based in Zimbabwe (Stiff 2000). There were four notable examples of how South Africa tried to destabilise the newly independent state. The first was carrying out a series of explosions at Inkomo Military Barracks, some 46 km north of Harare on the night of 16/17 August 1981 (the barracks were used for the storage of weapons and ammunition). The second was in Harare on 16 April 1981 when an innocent Zimbabwean civilian, Juliet Chivari, was killed while picking up an abandoned radio whose interior had been filled with explosives which detonated when she switched it on. The third and fourth were associated with wanting to disrupt the operations of the ANC in Zimbabwe: on 31 July 1981 Joe Gqabi, ANC chief representative and operational chief of its military wing, was assassinated by South African operatives; and in May 1986 the ANC's main offices in Harare were bombed and one of the safe houses razed to the ground.

These South African acts of terror during the early years of independence, which were extensively covered in the British media, naturally created fear within the Black Zimbabwean community still living in Britain.

There were growing perceptions that the South African government would not allow a politically stable Zimbabwe, especially one that supported a South African nationalist movement. It was therefore little surprise that this external threat led to shelving of plans to relocate back home. The military incursions perpetrated by South Africa to destabilise Zimbabwe had raised concerns for their safety.

The gradual decline of the economy during the first decade of independence, which resulted in slow employment growth, further affected the confidence to relocate back home. A GDP growth rate of 1.3% could not create enough jobs for the 3.3% average growth in population, nor could it keep pace with the approximately 100,000 school leavers by 1985 (Muzondidya in Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009). The consequence of economic decline of the 1980s became apparent in 1991 when average growth fell from 4 to 0.4% (Muzondidya in Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2009). It was little surprise then that the decision to live permanently in Britain was the only sensible option for Zimbabwean students to have a better quality of life—something they believed could no longer be guaranteed in Zimbabwe. For newly married Zivanayi, not relocating back home was the only sensible option in providing his British-born children with opportunities that could no longer be guaranteed in Zimbabwe because of the decline in the economy (Zivanayi interview, January 2013).

Reports of corruption in the political establishment and the reluctance to root out corrupt individuals intensified the fears of the diaspora community, who were becoming increasingly concerned about the self-destructive economic route Zimbabwe was following. The diaspora community, which remained after independence, was becoming increasingly disillusioned by the nature of contradictory governance back home, which they had not envisaged as a student body in the 1970s. ZANU PF had gained power with a mandate to implement socialist reforms. The political desire to implement a welfare state was reinforced by Friedrich Shava, the party's chief whip when he said '... the people must be reassured that the government did not intend to go back on its commitment to socialism ...' (*Herald*, 1 August 1980). However, it soon became apparent that such talk was becoming inherently contradictory as impoverished Black peasants and workers, who had been promised redress of socio-economic injustices, started to witness a gradual rise of an elite Black middle class and corrupt ruling elite. The political leaders took advantage of the failure of the masses (still mesmerised by the euphoria of independence) to question the overnight wealth of political leaders

who a few years earlier were fighting in the bush. It was not long before the masses felt alienated from the ruling elite and started to question the benefits of the armed struggle.

To illustrate the level of corruption at such an early stage of independence, Edison talked about 'Willowgate', a scandal that occurred in 1988 when senior politicians and government officials were given preference treatment to buy cars at the Willowvale Car Assembly Plant in Harare at discounted prices. However, instead of keeping them as official cars they sold them on at inflated prices (Herbst 1990). For the diaspora community in the 1980s the scandal was an opportunity for the government to demonstrate its determination to deal with corruption. Unfortunately, the government abjectly failed by showing its inability to deal with corruption within the elite political class. This was compounded after an inquiry headed by Judge President Willson Sandura in 1989 in which many of the implicated did not face prosecution. Those who were found guilty in the scandal lost their government posts, only to have them reinstated after a few years in different departments.

Apart from Willowgate, there was much further evidence of corruption within the political establishment and the government (Hlatywayo and Mukono 2014). Within a decade of independence there had been reports 'of multiple farm ownership by some high ranking government officials under the Land Reform Programme, criminal abuse of office by public prosecutors and police officials and ghost workers in the civil service government' (Hlatywayo and Mukono 2014). For the diaspora community the Zimbabwean government's credibility had been dented by its failure to exhibit the political will to ensure transparency and public accountability that would ensure the equitable distribution of resources. The highly critical weekly community newspaper *Moto* captured Zimbabweans' lament towards corruption in its editorial:

Corruption is eating away at our society and will ultimately destroy it. One only needs to listen to conversations in buses, pubs, workplaces and other social gatherings. Everyone is talking about corruption, not corruption by the *povo* or small man, but corruption by the big chefs [*sic*] and people know it is happening.<sup>4</sup>

To sum up disappointment in the way in which Zimbabwe's economic, social and political environment had deteriorated in the 1980s, Edison revealed how for most of them going back to Zimbabwe ceased to be an attractive option because

... Zimbabwe was fast becoming another disappointing case just like in neighbouring Mozambique which was being ravaged by civil war and collapsed economy. The violence on the Ndebele by the army made us conclude that the reconciliation policy was only to appease Whites and not Blacks.

However, despite the decision to stay permanently in Britain, their love of Zimbabwe which they brought with them in the 1970s when they first arrived in Britain remained strong. Zivanayi remembered how, in the early 1980s, when the euphoria of independence was still high, the diaspora community that had remained would meet at the embassy in London to celebrate Zimbabwe's Independence (Zivanayi interview, January 2013). As for Edison, he resolved not to apply for British citizenship by naturalisation despite being eligible, a decision he demonstrated by continuing with the indefinite stay immigration status of his Zimbabwean passport. His resolve never to become a British citizen was a consolation for not fulfilling his aim of relocating back after completion of his studies in 1981 (Edison interview, January 2013).

### *Comparison with Contemporary Black Immigrants*

The unwavering attachment to Zimbabwe driven by the belief and hope of returning to an independent Zimbabwe was singled out by Edison as the most significant factor distinguishing the 1970s' Black student community from most contemporary Black Zimbabwean immigrants (Edison interview, January 2013). Driven by the hope that they would relocate to an independent Zimbabwe someday, most 1970s' Black students felt little motivation to seek social and economic integration in Britain, despite this granting them permanent residence immigration status.

In contrast, a significant number of post-independence Black Zimbabweans, who were either political refugees or economic immigrants, had experienced the neo-colonial monumental demise of Zimbabwe's economy and political environment. They had arrived in Britain believing there was no chance that Zimbabwe's economic or political problems could be solved. For them Britain had become a haven from Zimbabwe's neo-colonial socio-economic and political problems. It was little surprise then that they opted to conceal their identities by avoiding associating with other Zimbabweans or by identifying themselves as South Africans. They felt so alienated from Zimbabwe that they had little interest in celebrating national events such as Independence Day.

The means by which post-independence contemporary Black Zimbabweans integrated also reflected the pessimism they had in Zimbabwe by adopting social and integration processes that would not only facilitate upward social mobility but also permanent residence or naturalisation of citizenship. For example, Shami, who came as a student nurse in 1999 and had been working as a mental health nurse since 2003, purchased a house when she became a naturalised British citizen in 2008 (Shami interview, December 2011). By purchasing the house, she had made a public statement of her intention to adopt Leicester as her permanent home, a decision which could be interpreted as a significant step towards full integration into British society and a rejection of any plans to relocate back to Zimbabwe.

The zeal to sign up to British social and economic systems was partly the reason why a sizeable number of contemporary Zimbabwean immigrants felt little shame in denouncing Zimbabwe by pursuing political asylum cases that were false, as pointed out by the research participants. By making false political claims they were perceived by the 1970s' student community to be selfish individuals who were disregarding the negative impact it would have on ordinary Zimbabweans back home. It was little surprise then that Edison blamed the falsehood perpetrated by some political asylum seekers for contributing to the rapid decline of Zimbabwe's economy in the 2000s. He described how Zimbabwe's bad publicity was intrinsically linked with what political asylum seekers were saying as they consolidated or supported their applications. It was this bad publicity which he believed not only justified the imposition of economic sanctions, but also drove away foreign investors and tourists.

While publicity of the racist discourse back home galvanised the 1970s' Black community to unite under the pan-Africanist ideology, the same could not be said of post-independence Black Zimbabweans, especially those who migrated in the early 2000s. Humiliation at the representation of Zimbabwe in the media, especially the violent evictions of White farmers and the hyperinflation that had forced some Zimbabweans to temporarily forge new identities by disowning their own.

## COLOURED

Coloured emigration during colonial rule was very low compared with other Zimbabwean minority communities. Lack of financial resources and difficulties in proving dual nationality were major reasons why

most Coloureds found it difficult to escape colonial marginalisation or enforced participation in military service (Seirlis 2004). Although most Coloureds would have had British paternal heritage, proving it was difficult. This was because of colonial era's intolerance towards interracial relationships had resulted in few Coloureds getting married to British Whites or getting official documentation to prove their British ancestral ties. Those who had the documentation to prove their ancestral heritage often lacked the funds to finance their emigration. The colonial regime's policy of creating a Coloured community as a buffer zone between Whites and Blacks meant that most Coloureds failed to establish relations with either Black or White families. As a result, despite being able to prove their British heritage, they had not established family ties with the White side of their families who could have sponsored their emigration.

Sixty-year-old Anita's circumstances demonstrate the difficulties Coloured children faced in tracing their British paternal heritage (Anita interview, July 2013). Her British-born father committed suicide before she was born to avoid the shame of being exposed as having sexual relations with her mother who was an uneducated farm labourer. Suicide had seemed the only option for her father who could not deal with the stigma of having an affair with a Black girl or with the expected punishment of being called up for military service.

What Anita's father did demonstrated the perils faced by White men attracted to African women; such men could not officialise the relationship because of pressure from those who wanted to maintain racial purity. Most White fathers often failed to acknowledge or support their Coloured children as they wanted to keep their interracial relations secret (Pape 1990). This explains why, as early as 1930, of the 1138 Coloured children born from White fathers only 379 were acknowledged and supported, 139 were acknowledged but not provided for, 297 were known but not acknowledged and the rest did not know their father (Pape 1990). It was little surprise then that mixed race children like Anita found it impossible to use ancestral heritage as a way to migrate to Britain as they had no access to documentation to prove it.

With a sizeable number of Coloureds finding it difficult to prove their ancestral heritage or to finance emigration, those who were able to leave Rhodesia were often women married to White British males (Esther interview, June 2013). In most cases, their husbands would have faced persecution for crossing the racial divide. Pamela found herself in such a position when she and her English husband were forced to emigrate in



1973 (Pamela interview, October 2013). The decision to emigrate was in response to her husband's sustained discrimination by the White community. Despite her husband being an engineer, she explained how he was unable to find employment in a country in which Whites were in control of the major structures of the economy. In addition to the frustration of her husband not finding employment, as a mixed race couple they also could not buy or rent a house in Whites-only or Coloureds-only areas because of the rigid racial boundaries which demarcated urban residential suburbs. With her husband unemployed and facing the prospect of not living together as a married couple their situation had become so untenable that emigration became the only plausible option to save their marriage.

Once settled in Britain, along with others in a similar position she and her husband had a hand in triggering chain migration by financially sponsoring family members to migrate. The outcome was emergence of a small Coloured immigrant community which was joined by political activists fighting racial discrimination (especially of Coloureds) back home. However, chain migration failed to trigger high levels of Coloured immigration and the community remained small and not as visible or vibrant as the Black student community.

Although a small diaspora community, there was nevertheless a determination to preserve Coloured consciousness and identities that had defined them during the colonial and post-colonial phases of Zimbabwe's history. Under the leadership of Joseph Culverwell, they achieved this by creating their own support network, which rarely interacted or sought assistance from other Zimbabwean immigrant communities on immigration issues or employment opportunities. Joseph Culverwell was the leader of a small group of political activists who had been made a prohibited immigrant in Rhodesia for fighting racial policies. The role Culverwell played within the Coloured community was so significant that visiting him, as pointed out by Esther, was a ritual expected to be carried out by every Coloured arriving in Britain (Esther interview, June 2013).

Creating an exclusive Coloured network was natural for a community whose history had been punctuated by policies aimed at creating a separate identity. Pamela acknowledged that a significant number of Coloureds in Britain during the colonial era were first-generation Coloureds who had been placed in residential homes where a Coloured

consciousness was stimulated that trivialised interactions with other Zimbabweans. With colonial racial categorisation of the population reinforcing their identities and prejudices toward other Zimbabwean communities, they had arrived in Britain with little motivation to interact with Zimbabweans outside their own community despite being aware of their presence.

## WHITES

Many Whites who emigrated in the 1970s were young men in their mid-teens escaping conscription into the Rhodesian army (Brownell 2008; Seirlis 2004). Avoiding compulsory military service by young White men had become endemic in the 1970s. For example, in 1973 half of 3000 young men eligible for military service evaded conscription (Brownell 2008). In 1978 only 570 reported for duty out of a minimum requirement of 1046 (Brownell 2008). However, it would be misleading to conclude that White emigration was only due to the liberation war or the refusal to do military service. There was also a political initiative to alter White migration patterns by the British and American governments. The British government engendered White emigration as a means of hastening the collapse of Ian Smith's regime by making a concerted effort to 'buy' young skilled White Rhodesians to leave Rhodesia (Brownell 2008). It hoped wide-scale emigration of skilled Whites would deny the Rhodesian government manpower, financial or moral support thus forcing Ian Smith to negotiate a political settlement.

Given the invaluable contribution of skilled Whites to the country's economic success, the Rhodesian government reduced White emigration by introducing a variety of restrictions. These included dramatically reducing the amount of money emigrants could take out of the country, restricting the foreign travel of young men and limiting foreign schooling (Brownell 2008). These restrictions could only be circumvented by Whites who had dual nationality, close ancestral ties or family networks that could guarantee support upon arriving in Britain. With a pre-emigration history of being placed at the top of the hierarchical ladder of the colonial classification, most of them had been desensitised from seeing the need to interact with other Zimbabwean diaspora communities. Instead, they assimilated into the indigenous community. The upshot was total disappearance of White Rhodesians as a community in Britain in the 1970s.

There were also individuals within the White diaspora community who had been deported by the Rhodesian government for supporting Nationalist Movement demands for majority rule. They had been given prohibited immigrant status because of their involvement in campaigns against the Rhodesian government. A notable anti-Rhodesia campaigner to be expelled was Arthur Guy Clutton-Brock. He settled in Southern Rhodesia with his wife in 1949 and was one of the co-founders of Cold Comfort Farm, a multiracial co-operative on the outskirts of Harare (Ranger 2013). The farm was declared unlawful in 1971 and he was subsequently expelled from Rhodesia. He was the first White person to be declared a Zimbabwean national hero when he died in 1995 (Ranger 2013).

### ASIANS

While most Whites who migrated had dual nationality or ancestral ties with Britain, most Asians used historic family social networks to migrate on visitor visas. Although the foundations of migration from South Asia to Britain were laid down before World War Two with the arrival of seamen, it was the post-war rapid growth of British Asian society that facilitated the establishment of migrant networks utilised by Zimbabwean Asians (Kannan 1978). The Indian community in Britain naturally triggered chain migration through networking with kith and kin in Zimbabwe since most Zimbabwean Asians were of Indian origin (Dotson and Dotson 1968). Reliance on family networks already settled in Britain resulted in 1970s' Zimbabwean Asians being dotted across the country without establishing a visible presence. This was in direct contrast with Ugandan Asians who had managed to establish a recognisable community in Leicester in the early 1970s (Herbert 2008; Marett 1989).

Bhavesh, who migrated in 1973, revealed how migrant networks provided by extended family members played a fundamental role in facilitating the smooth transition of mostly young men arriving on visitor visas into life in Britain. Family members would offer accommodation and assist the new arrivals to find colleges to enrol in so as to regularise their immigration status from being visitors to students with permission to work. Attaining a student visa had been realised as the most viable option to guarantee a longer stay in Britain whilst legally seeking employment.

However, Bhavesh pointed out that, despite assistance from family members, migrating on a visitor visa was risky as there was always the

chance of being denied entry into Britain (Bhavesh interview, September 2013). To minimise the threat of deportation a sizeable number of Asians, as noted in the introductory section of this chapter, had to migrate via Switzerland where they had the option of staying for several days or weeks before proceeding to Britain. They believed arriving from a European country would allow them to be perceived as tourists who were on a tour of Europe, thus diminishing the chances of being denied entry into the country.

Bhavesh, who was in his mid-teens when he migrated, was one of those who had to stay briefly in a third country before proceeding to Britain. He made a stopover in Switzerland for a couple of weeks where he had relatives who offered him temporary accommodation. Without the privilege of accessing British scholarships, as had been granted to Black Africans, he had to follow the example of other Asians by enrolling at a higher education institution to obtain a student visa. He enrolled at Hatfield Polytechnic north of London where he could simultaneously study for a business qualification whilst being employed as a casual worker in shops or factories. He admitted that lack of supervision by the Home Office enabled him to exceed the stipulated twenty hours he was permitted to work as a foreign student.

### *Rhodesian Minority Diaspora Political Activism*

It would seem natural for Asians and Coloureds to actively support African-led political activism since they had migrated with memories of Zimbabwe's discriminatory racial policies. However, there was universal agreement among the participants that there was no significant participation by either community in Zimbabwe's diaspora politics of the 1970s. This was not something Black students worried about since the communities had little involvement in the nationalist armed struggle back home.

Lack of participation in political activism was reflective of the politics back home which had been tailored along the colonial hierarchical categorisation of the population that had created imagined racial boundaries that were rarely crossed. For example, Black students were aware that Coloureds had created political groups to fight for the rights of their own community outside the realms of the Nationalist Movement. A notable example was the National Association of Coloured Persons (NACP) established in 1968 in an attempt to unite Coloureds and align them with moderate nationalism (Seirlis 2004).

The lack of motivation to join the Black diaspora community in protests against colonial rule cannot solely be attributed to racial boundaries embedded in the hierarchical categorisation of the population back home. The research participants revealed how it was also inextricably linked with the different circumstances that led to emigration. Abdi, an Asian who migrated in the mid-1970s, spoke of how Coloureds and Asians felt discriminated against as they were not eligible to apply for scholarships or grants accessible to Blacks; neither were they beneficiaries of relaxed student visa rules which would have allowed them to work unlimited hours a week like Black students who had no scholarships (Abdi interview, June 2013). As a result, the Asian and Coloured communities felt they had different aims and attitudes from those of Black African students, a position which did not motivate them to be coparticipants in political activism with Black students. Instead, they they decided they had to look after themselves, especially since they were not eligible to apply for scholarships or grants that were exclusively accessible to blacks.

However, there were notable exceptions within the White immigrant community who joined Black-led diaspora political activism. One of those was Judith Todd, daughter of Garfield Todd, the last liberal prime Minister of Zimbabwe. She became a prominent activist against the racist Rhodesian government in the early 1960s. She was expelled from the University of Rhodesia in 1964 after being arrested and fined for leading demonstrations outside the Rhodesian parliament. She was forced to migrate to London after being declared a prohibited immigrant and while in exile she continued with her campaign against UDI, helping to establish the Zimbabwe Project Trust to help political refugees. In 1980 she relocated back to Zimbabwe where she continued campaigning for human rights.

### *Independence and Relocation of Minorities*

Whilst most Blacks were returning home to rebuild a new non-racial Zimbabwe a significant number of Asians and Coloureds chose to adopt a more cautious wait-and-see attitude. Conscious of their privileged position over Blacks in colonial Zimbabwe, Abdi pointed out that it was inevitable for both Coloureds and Asians to be wary of Zimbabwean independence as they were not sure what that would mean for them. Their anxiety over how they would be treated in a post-colonial

Zimbabwe was further heightened when they were not represented at the Lancaster House negotiations which had led to Zimbabwe's independence. It was only after Mugabe's maiden reconciliation speech of March 1980 that Coloureds and Asians felt encouraged to relocate back to Zimbabwe. However, Abdi admitted that the impact of the reconciliation speech was not totally positive within the Asian immigrant community (Abdi interview, June 2013). This was because there were a significant number within the Asian community who embraced the reconciliation speech with a fair degree of scepticism.

The cautious approach could be justified, according to Abdi, by the Africanisation of East Africa, which had led Zimbabwean Asians to mistrust African governments. Such mistrust was reinforced by the fact that Zimbabwe's Asian immigration of the 1970s had coincided with the arrival of expelled Asians from East Africa (Marett 1989). It was only after 1981, when Asians, encouraged by what they perceived as non-interference with Asian businesses by the government, started migrating back to Zimbabwe in greater numbers. Guarantees of safety of Asian businesses encouraged a significant number of those who relocated to continue with the entrepreneurial identity of Zimbabwean Asians by establishing businesses on arrival. For example, Bhavesh, who relocated in 1988 and settled in the Midlands city of Gweru, did not use his British-attained teaching qualification to find work in Zimbabwean schools; instead, he established an engineering company in the city.

On the contrary, the Coloureds who relocated back to Zimbabwe in 1980 like Esther migrated with a genuine belief that their mixed heritage would facilitate economic or political empowerment in a Black-led government. They assumed they would not face obstacles in seeking employment in both the public and private sectors. It was little surprise then that, on arrival in Zimbabwe, Esther took advantage of a shortage of teachers following the democratisation of education by seeking employment in a former Whites-only Group A school in Harare.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The chapter established how circumstances surrounding colonial migration allowed the emergence of a Zimbabwean community that was racially diverse. With scholarships being the most popular route used by those migrating to Britain the racial demography of the growing Zimbabwean immigrant community was dominated by Blacks who were

the sole beneficiaries of British scholarships. The disproportionate racial representation of the colonial immigrant population allowed imported memories of colonial injustices to create an environment which restricted interracial interactions between immigrant communities that shared different pre-emigration experiences. A lack of interracial interactions was not only reflective of the interpersonal relations constructed under the racial classification of Zimbabwe's population, but also of the diverse circumstances which led to emigration.

The community of Black Zimbabwean students during the colonial era saw itself as transient immigrants who would relocate back to an independent Zimbabwe. The excitement and enthusiasm of an independent Zimbabwe resulted in the emergence of a politicised Zimbabwean student community that would play a notable role in Zimbabwe's struggle for liberation. Political activism was a unifying force within the Black student community whose members would have migrated with a history of ethnic allegiances. However, a notable feature of student activism was the lack of participation of Zimbabwe's minority communities. The lack of motivation to join the Black-led militant diaspora Nationalist Movement in protests against minority rule was embedded in the hierarchical categorisation of the population back home and the different circumstances that led to emigration. This was a natural response for a community whose history had been punctuated by policies aimed at creating separate racial boundaries that were not to be crossed.

The consequences of differences and the perceived unfairness in the nature of migration between Blacks, Coloureds and Asians became apparent when Zimbabwe attained its independence in 1980. While a significant number of Blacks decided to migrate back home to Zimbabwe to rebuild a new non-racial nation state, other communities decided to adopt a wait-and-see attitude. After ninety years of minority rule and a protracted violent armed struggle for liberation, there was a need for certainty when it came to racial reconciliation. As a result, those minority communities who had enjoyed varied levels of socio-economic privileges over the Black majority delayed relocation.

Although Zimbabwe's independence had ushered in a new beginning, the newly independent country was about to experience new forms of economic and political challenges in building the new nation state during the first decade of independence. The four challenges that stood out were the civil conflict in Matabeleland between 1983 and 1987 (*Gukurahundi*), gradual decline of the economy, rise in corruption along

with the indifferent response of the government in dealing with it and threats posed by the South African Apartheid government. For the student diaspora community of the 1970s, such challenges foreshadowed the deterioration of Zimbabwe's political and economic climate soon after independence, which would result in a sizeable number deciding to settle permanently in Britain.

## NOTES

1. *The Times*, 'How Britain Aids Africans from Rhodesia', 5 October 1974, p. 7.
2. *The Human Rights Handbook: A Guide to British and American International Human Rights Organisations* compiled by Marguerite Garling for the Writers and Scholars Educational Trust, 1979.
3. *The Times*, 'Rhodesian Influx Is a Challenge to Government', 26 September 1975, p. 4.
4. Quoted in Hlatywayo and Mukono, 'Corruption in Zimbabwe, the Causes', *International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies*, vol. 2 (2014), pp. 266–271.

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## CHAPTER 9

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# Summary and Conclusions

The legacies of the past as significant components in producing and shaping collective or individual identities of diaspora communities resonated with multiracial Zimbabweans. The book's comparative study of Zimbabwean immigrants in Britain illustrated why they should be viewed as a product of ethno-racial identities and prejudices developed and nurtured during the phases of Zimbabwe's history. Through an analysis of personal interviews, participant observation, and secondary and primary sources, the book identified and engaged historical experiences that had been instrumental in not only constructing relations between Zimbabwean immigrant communities, but also their economic and social integration processes. The quest to recognise historic legacies on Zimbabwean immigrants' interactions and integration processes necessitated writing Chapters 2 and 3, which deal with the construction of ethno-racial identities in the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial phases of Zimbabwe's history.

Since belonging to a community is encapsulated in the consciousness of social boundaries as pointed out by Graham Day, it would have been misleading for the book to have examined Zimbabwean diaspora communities as uniform, static or rigid (Day 2006). With contemporary literature on Zimbabwean communities in Britain tending to create perceptions that Zimbabwean immigrants are a monolithic community of Blacks, the book's examination of intercommunity relations between Blacks, Whites, Coloureds and Asians took the veil off Zimbabwean immigrants fragmented by historic racial and ethnic allegiances and prejudices.

## BLACKS

While it is undeniable that colonial Zimbabwe was beset with a series of political and economic policies which set in motion salient racist discourses that inevitably facilitated the construction of racially divided diaspora communities, the book also unveiled a Black diaspora community imbued with historic communal tensions and prejudices. Although Zimbabwean scholars like Sabelo Gatsheni-Ndlovu recognised how the 1830s' arrival of the Ndebele in Zimbabwe marked the beginning of tensions with the Shona, it was the arrival of Whites that would consolidate ethnic particularism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008). Chapter 2 established three developments linked to the arrival of Whites as being significant contributory factors to the consolidation of ethnic prejudices or particularism within the African community: first, Christian missionary activities that led to disparities in establishing mission schools between Mashonaland and Matabeleland thus allowing the Shona to have a head-start in acquiring numeracy and literacy skills to integrate into colonial capitalist economic systems; second, colonisation in the 1890s that saw Mashonaland—not Matabeleland—being colonised first which ultimately developed and consolidated Ndebele prejudices of seeing themselves as being superior to the Shona; and, third, the creation of ethnic-named regions that legitimised ethnic distinctions within the African community.

Upon attaining independence on 18 April 1980 the new Zimbabwe had therefore inherited a society not only polarised by racial prejudices, but also with ethnic tensions and allegiances within the Black community that needed to be tactfully addressed in building a new nation state. However, as evidenced in Chapter 3, the post-colonial government failed to invoke nation-building initiatives to conceal the fractures of ethnicity within the Black community. With ethno-nationalism continuing to dominate nationalist politics, any initiatives to deal with historic ethnic tension were severely undermined with the outbreak of *Gukurahundi* in 1982. The government's response to the insurgence inflamed ethnic tensions as the Ndebele found themselves not only being marginalised, but also going through a period of indiscriminate and disproportionate persecution by Shona security forces.

Without pre-emigration desensitisation of how to deal with historic ethnic tensions there was no paradigm shift within the Black diaspora community to unite. Memories of atrocities committed by security forces on the Ndebele during the *Gukurahundi* period (which some within the

Shona community trivialised) became a major deterrent to uniting Black Zimbabwean immigrants. With the atrocities of *Gukurahundi* becoming an integral component of Ndebele history, ethnic particularism continued to be reinforced in Britain through restricted interaction with the Shona.

Apart from ethnicity, relations within the Black Zimbabwean immigrant community had also been immersed in suspicion, augmented by profound distrust and jealousy of each other. The source of diaspora jealousy, suspicions and mistrust was entrenched in both the colonial and post-colonial phases of Zimbabwe's history. During the armed struggle for independence, there were instances in which personal rivalries or jealousy would result in Blacks falsely labelling each other as collaborators with the colonial state. With death being the ultimate punishment for such accusations, there were a significant number of innocent victims, hence the mistrust. After independence, intolerance to political opposition that reinforced mistrust and suspicion resulted in a significant number of first-generation Black Zimbabweans migrating with memories of Black-on-Black acts of violence.

A holistic understanding of the debates surrounding the Black Zimbabwean diaspora community could not have been fully appreciated without a comparative analysis of the 1970s and post-colonial immigrants in Britain. Despite emigration taking places in different periods, the construction of relations could not be immune from shared historic commonalities. Whilst most contemporary Black Zimbabwean immigrants arrived with experiences and memories that were devoid of any nation-building initiatives, shared colonial subjugation stimulated a consciousness of sameness that superseded any historic ethnic tensions within most Blacks who arrived in the 1970s. The determination to return to an independent Zimbabwe had forged a united identity in political activism to remove colonial injustices. This was because Black students in the 1970s viewed themselves as victims of colonial racial policies and not political refugees or economic immigrants like post-independence contemporary immigrants.

Chapter 6 was also able to develop an argument showing how dynamics in the economic integration of Zimbabweans had been a complex process determined by variables of historical memories or experiences. The historically nurtured inclination to pursue education played a pivotal role in economic integration of the contemporary Black Zimbabwean diaspora community in Britain. Education facilitated rapid movement up

the social ladder of most members. The chapter's examination of historical influences on businesses of the Black Zimbabwean diaspora demonstrated the extent to which homeland influences, developed in both the colonial and post-colonial phases of Zimbabwe's history, negatively impacted entrepreneurialism in Britain.

## WHITES

The establishment of colonial racial boundaries that could not be transgressed set in motion socialisation processes that would not conceal the development of racial prejudices that were to extend to independent Zimbabwe. As evidenced in Chapter 3, scholars on Zimbabwe Karen Alexander, David Hughes and James Muzondidya point out how a majority of Whites after independence continued to exhibit racial prejudices in several ways. These included continuing to segregate themselves from Blacks (especially residential segregation by not wanting to reside in suburbs that had been designated for Blacks during the colonial era); not wanting to economically empower Blacks, especially in farming; not making efforts to learn indigenous languages or live in areas that were once reserved for Blacks during the colonial era; and not attending national events like Independence Day celebrations. It was this failure to dismantle racial prejudices by not positively engaging with nation-building initiatives in post-colonial Zimbabwe that would be a hindrance in establishing interracial relationships in the diaspora.

After having gone through the trauma of nationalist guerrilla attacks during Zimbabwe's armed struggle from the late 1960s to the late 1970s and the violent eviction from their farms at the turn of the new millennium, most older generation Whites emigrated with perceptions that most Black Zimbabweans, especially within the Nationalist Movement, had never accepted White Zimbabweans as citizens of Zimbabwe. It was therefore an expected outcome for most older generation Whites, especially those with a farming background, not to forge diaspora associations with Blacks. Memories of colonial historical experiences and the violent nature of post-colonial emigration had instead been instrumental in developing a strong support network within the White diaspora community that excluded other Zimbabweans.

A historically nurtured sense of collective identity embedded in the belief that they were a nation established itself as a major hindrance to how Zimbabwean Whites constructed interactions with other

communities. The exclusive nature of events like July Braai advertised as a Rhodesian event using Rhodesian symbols such as the Rhodesian flag and Coat of Arms demonstrated how older generation members of the White community had imported the Rhodesian national identity. The Rhodesian identity had therefore not only been a hindrance to the establishment of cordial relations with non-White Zimbabweans, but also the development of strong social interactions with the host society, especially in areas which were not racially diverse.

Pursuit or upgrading of educational or professional qualifications, which had become a necessity for most Blacks to attain upward social mobility, was not reciprocated by most older generation Whites. Instead, their economic integration was driven by the consciousness that the violent circumstances surrounding their emigration had made their children innocent victims. With a majority of them over forty-five years of age and experiencing financial challenges when they first arrived, they perceived as selfish and foolish the pursuit of personal gains of academic attainment at the expense of providing the best quality of life for their children who had been robbed of a financially stable future.

Most older Whites had also migrated without having experienced social or economic marginalisation that would have encouraged them to attain higher educational qualifications as a means of moving up the social hierarchy. By having occupied the pinnacle of Zimbabwe's socio-economic structures both in the colonial and post-colonial eras, they had been able to move up economic structures without having to put much emphasis on the attainment of higher academic or professional qualifications.

## COLOURED

The interactions of Zimbabwean Coloureds with other Zimbabwean communities in Britain had been a consequence of Coloured consciousness stimulated during the colonial era and reinforced by the Lancaster House Constitution negotiations which had facilitated Zimbabwe's independence. Without official representation of either Coloureds or Asians, the negotiations had unwittingly endorsed bipolarisation of Zimbabwe's multicultural society. Whilst the colonial era had clearly demarcated population categories in which the absence of a post-independence conduit to unite all Zimbabweans placed the Coloureds in a vulnerable position, the older generation of Coloureds therefore emigrated with no

motivation or reason to interact with other Zimbabweans as they had been made to feel invisible in the realms of Zimbabwe's economic and social structures. Instead, they established exclusive diaspora support networks to assist their own community members, especially new arrivals or those who were left behind in Zimbabwe.

The Coloured diaspora community (just as was the case in Zimbabwe) continued to demonstrate their disdain for the Black community (driven by attitudes of superiority) by not encouraging intermarriage with the Black community, and by resisting being described as Blacks. Although it is undeniable that the Coloured consciousness contributed to strong resistance to marry Blacks, Chapter 2 also established how colonial residential foster homes in which Coloureds were being conditioned to align with Whites by adopting English names and being required to speak English led to an acceptance of relationships between Coloureds and Whites. However, despite the conditioned alignment to Whites, imported memories of historical racial prejudices stifled intermarriage between Coloureds and White Zimbabweans.

Experiences of sustained marginalisation in both the colonial and post-colonial period created and consolidated the desire in subsequent generations to preserve Coloured consciousness and to have control over their own destiny by making choices that trivialised self-development through education. There was therefore general contentedness within the community to deal with marginalisation by acquiring technical skills as electricians, motor mechanics or plumbers which would allow them to be self-employed tradesmen. With the advent of independence failing to eradicate attitudes of trivialising education following the government's inability to correct racial inequalities in education by providing more schools and training opportunities to the Coloured community, a significant number of Coloureds migrated with no history of having been motivated to excel academically. As a result, it was an expected outcome that very few older generation Coloured immigrants adopted integration processes which would involve pursuit of better educational or professional qualifications.

## ASIANS

Zimbabwean Asians migrated from an environment in which their group cultural mindedness had denied them the opportunity to develop the collective will power necessary to interact with other Zimbabweans. The



reasons Zimbabwean Asians rigidly stuck to the development of group mindedness were historic cultural commonalities not shared by non-Asian Zimbabweans. By not having shared historical or cultural commonalities with non-Asians, Zimbabwean Asian immigrants arrived in Britain as a community which had managed to isolate themselves from cultural contamination. It was therefore a natural response that interactions of the Zimbabwean Asians diaspora were determined by shared commonalities with other South Asian communities already settled in Britain. The ultimate consequence had been assimilation into Asian communities with the same cultural, language, caste or religious identity markers, a process which has made the Zimbabwean Asian community virtually invisible.

Whilst historical memories constructed in Zimbabwe were instrumental in the economic integration of Black, Whites and Coloureds, the same could not be said about Asians. Britain's historical post-war migration trends instead influenced the economic integration patterns of Asians. Contemporary Zimbabwean Asians' migration to Britain had been preceded by post-war Asian immigration from the Subcontinent and East Africa from the 1950s. As a result, they could not resuscitate their business identity because they perceived it a futile attempt to compete with established Asian businesses with no guarantees of support. As a small community of late arrivals scattered across Britain compared with other South Asians, the invisibility of Zimbabwean Asians was exacerbated by their failure to resuscitate their business identity.

The attitude of Black Zimbabweans towards other Africans failed to escape historic influences. By focussing on colonial legacies the research also put forward a relatively unexplored alternative argument on how socialisation during the colonial and post-colonial era influenced the construction of Zimbabweans' relations with other Africans. Zimbabwe's prolonged period under colonial rule influenced the construction of identities that facilitated the emergence of the belief that Zimbabweans in the diaspora were better than other Subsaharan Africans. Their prejudicial thoughts were mainly reflected in their dominance in educational institutions, in the nursing profession and speaking English with a better accent which could be more easily understood by the British. Such attitudes were reflective of those that had developed during the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland when Zimbabweans experienced an influx of African immigrant workers mainly from Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique. This was a period, as established in Chapter 2, in which

Black Zimbabweans had constructed their own social hierarchy that had placed the non-indigenous population from neighbouring states below them in the colonial state race hierarchy. They would reinforce their superiority over non-indigenous Blacks with derogatory words or phrases.

In conclusion, whilst it is undeniable that racial and ethnic prejudices developed during Zimbabwe's history led to the construction of separate insular communities which rarely interacted, the contribution of post-colonial events cannot be omitted when examining why Zimbabweans migrated with no unifying national identity. Although most Zimbabwean immigrants in Britain are still comfortable to introduce themselves to new acquaintances as Zimbabweans, their identity with Zimbabwe is mainly based on cherished environmental memories of their homeland. These include physical features (climate and tourist attractions) and social features (food, drinks and family connections).

Zimbabwe's post-colonial reconciliation policy did not adequately address how races and ethnic communities were going to construct their daily interactions. Was it to be restricted to sports interaction, learning indigenous languages by all Zimbabweans or Whites being seen living in high-density residential areas? Without any clear defined process in reconciling the nation, it was left for different communities to interpret reconciliation. In the absence of a defined policy on what Zimbabwe's reconciliation should entail, there was not only a lack of a framework to evaluate the process, but more significantly communities continued to coexist with minimal race interactions in the diaspora.

Memories of post-colonial political tragedies and the collapse of socio-economic structures (which forced most to emigrate) made a significant number of Zimbabweans in the diaspora ashamed of being associated with a contemporary brand of Zimbabwe under Mugabe's leadership. For most Zimbabwean immigrants the image of Zimbabwe has been tainted and soiled by corruption, farm invasions, undemocratic tendencies manifested in the violent suppression of political opposition, infrastructure collapse and economic disaster. With such an image, Zimbabweans in the diaspora have found no reason to organise or celebrate national events such as Independence Day or Heroes Day.

The socio-economic identities of the Zimbabwean diaspora community have been a product of multifaceted but interconnected processes of ethnic divisions (which can be traced back to pre-colonial times), the divisive and racist policies of colonial times, ethnic identities within

the Nationalist Movement and the post-colonial government's failure to nation-build in which historic racial and ethnic diversity and tensions ought to have been managed. Migrating without experiencing state-building initiatives has naturally created a fragmented Zimbabwean community that is split along ethnic or racial lines.

With historic identities continuing to be an integral part of their lives, the Zimbabwean diaspora community exists as an imagined nation that still needs to conquer the effects of imported ethnic and racial differences and tensions that have characterised Zimbabwe's two historical interludes: colonial and post-colonial. The national diaspora identity, described by Montserrat Guibernau as a 'collective sentiment based upon the belief of belonging to the same nation', failed to resonate with Zimbabweans in Britain (Guibernau 2007: 11). Migrating with no common history, kinship, language or national dress had meant that a unified Zimbabwean immigrant community failed to emerge.

Zimbabwean contemporary immigrants arrived with identities, prejudices and memories that were devoid of any nation building. Migrating without experiencing coherent and inclusive political initiatives allowed the book to demonstrate how the construction of Zimbabwean diaspora communities could not only be understood as contemporary outcomes of colonialism, but also as consequences of tragic failures by post-colonial governments to construct a radical nation-building agenda. With Jan Penrose describing a nation as a social construction with common tangible characteristics such as language, cultural practices or religion, the Zimbabwean diaspora community demarcated by ethnic and racial differences provided an illustration of social dissolution embedded in the post-colonial failure to create a national identity (Penrose in Jackson and Penrose 1993). Instead, historical experiences and memories emerged to be frameworks undermining the development of feelings of wanting to establish a united diaspora community. As the book has shown, the only unifying consciousness of being part of a Zimbabwean diaspora community was encapsulated in the sharing of territorial boundaries of the country of origin.

Exploring the dynamics of the Zimbabwean diaspora community exposed how both the Nationalist Movement and the post-colonial government failed to implement a nation-building project needed to create a national identity for a country that had been polarised along ethnic racial lines. A history of unresolved conflicts should have necessitated the setting up of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to deal with

what happened during the colonial era, the armed struggle for liberation and *Gukurahundi*. Without giving closure to these events, older generation Zimbabweans migrated as products of unresolved ethnic or racial conflicts that had been developed and nurtured throughout the phases of Zimbabwe's history. In the absence of shared historic socio-economic or cultural commonalities within the Zimbabwean diaspora communities demarcated by race, the book tackled the key question: Are Zimbabweans in Britain an imagined community?

Migrating without a collective national identity gave respective communities leeway to use historic memories to interpret what it means to be Zimbabwean. In the absence of shared historic experiences, Zimbabweans in the diaspora have emerged to be a community that fits well within the terminology of an imagined community—imagined because, in the absence of shared historic cultural, economic or political experiences, most members have never tried to interact with other Zimbabweans of different race or ethnicity despite knowing of their existence. Awareness of their presence has allowed them to develop an image of communion in their minds that has failed to evolve into practical interactions as a community of Zimbabweans living in Britain.

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## *Interviews and Research Participant Details*

### *Blacks*

Brenda: Interviewed on 23 October 2014 in Luton. She is a Zimbabwean-trained nurse who migrated in 2001. At the time of the interview she was working as a community nurse.

Collins: Interviewed on 6 February 2013 in Leicester. He is a Zimbabwean journalist who migrated in 2002. At the time of the interview he was studying for a Doctorate at De Montfort University.

Daniel: Interviewed on 10 November 2013 in Leicester. He is a Zimbabwean-trained teacher who migrated in 1999 as a mental health student nurse at Thames Valley University. At the time of the interview he was working in Leicester.

David: Interviewed on 13 January 2013 in Leicester. He migrated in 2001 on a visitor visa before deciding to change his immigration status by applying for political asylum. He graduated in 2010 with a BSc degree in Computer Science from Leicester University and an MSc in Information Technology from De Montfort University. At the time of the interview, he was working as a tutor at a college in Leicester.

Edison (in his sixties): Interviewed on 17 January 2013 in London. He is a Zimbabwean who migrated during the colonial era in 1977. He first settled in London before moving to Aberdeen to study economics.

Gutu (in his sixties): Interviewed on 24 July 2013 in Harare, Zimbabwe. He was an ex-policeman who worked for both the Rhodesian and Zimbabwean police.

Hains: Interviewed on 10 March 2013 in Luton. He migrated and settled in Luton in 1999 as a student. At the time of the interview he was working in one of Britain's major banks.

Happison: Interviewed on 23 January 2013 in Derby. He first migrated in 2000, settling in London before moving to Leicester where he lived until 2006. At the time of the interview he had settled permanently in Derby working as a youth worker.

Irene: Interviewed on 28 April 2015 in Leicester. She had migrated in 2003 to join her husband who had arrived a year earlier as a political asylum seeker. At the time of the interview she had completed a degree in early child development.

Isy: Interviewed on 10 March 2013 in Kent. He migrated as a student to study accountancy in 2000. He first settled in Luton and at the time of the interview he was working as an accountant in London.

Jabulani: Interviewed on 18 February 2013 in Leicester. He is a political refugee who migrated in 2003. Prior to emigration he was a policeman. At the time of the interview he had graduated as a lawyer from De Montfort University.

Jacob: Interviewed on 23 January 2013 in Derby. He first came to Britain in 1973 as a student after being offered a grant to study. In 1981 he relocated back to Zimbabwe until 2002 when he decided to migrate back to Britain.

John: Interviewed on 24 March 2013 in Slough. He migrated in 2002 after having lived briefly in London from 1980 to 1981 when he was 9 years old.

Jonah: Interviewed on 28 February 2013 in Leicester. He migrated as a political asylum seeker in the early 2000s. At the time of the interview he was writing a book on his life story.

Junior (university student): Interviewed as part of a group on 3 March 2013 in Northampton.

Kuda (university student): Interviewed as part of a group on 3 March 2013 in Chesterfield.

Kudzi: Interviewed on 1 April 2013 in Bradford. She migrated in October 2002 as a political asylum seeker. At the time of the interview she was a radiography student.

Lenny: Interviewed on 28 July 2013 in Harare, Zimbabwe. He is a Zimbabwean businessperson. He was a political refugee in Botswana from 1979 to 1982.

Linda: Interviewed on 1 September 2013 in Leicester. She migrated in July 2000 when she was in her forties as a political asylum seeker. At the time of the interview she was studying for a law degree.

Lydia: Interviewed on 4 September 2017 in Leicester. She migrated in 2000 as a mental health student nurse. She qualified in September 2003. At the time of the interview she was working as a mental health nurse.

Mabuza: Interviewed on 9 May 2013 in Leicester. He migrated in March 2003 using the political asylum route. He first settled in Derby with family members before moving to Leicester. At the time of the interview he was studying animal husbandry at Northampton University.

- Mary: Interviewed on 13 October 2013 in Cambridge. She first migrated in 1976 after being invited by her sister to come and do her A-levels in Britain. In 1982 she relocated back to Zimbabwe, only to come back again in the 2000s.
- Marvelous (university student): Interviewed as part of a group on 3 March 2013 in Nottingham.
- Mathew: Interviewed on 3 February 2013. He migrated in 2002 and first settled in Stevenage before moving to Leicester in 2009. He studied psychology at the University of Leicester. At the time of the interview he was studying for an MSc in psychology.
- Memory: Interviewed on 27 November 2013 in Leicester. She migrated in 1999 for a student nurse interview. She started her nursing course at De Montfort University in January 2000 and qualified in 2003. At the time of the interview she worked as a nurse in Leicester.
- Natalie: Interviewed on 18 October 2014 in High Wycombe. She has dual Ndebele–Shona heritage. At the time of the interview she was a student at De Montfort University in Leicester.
- Nqobile (university student): Interviewed as part of a group on 3 March 2013 in Leicester.
- Nyasha: Interviewed on 8 April 2013 in Leicester. She first migrated on a visitor visa in 2001 and settled in Harlow before moving to Leicester in 2010. At the time of the interview she was awaiting the outcome of a political refugee status application.
- Panganayi: Interviewed on 24 March 2013. He migrated in March 2001 and settled in Reading. At the time of the interview he was working as a telecoms engineer.
- Paurosi: Interview on 2 July 2013 at Chinhoyi, Zimbabwe. He was a war veteran of the Zimbabwe liberation struggle. He was one of the first cadres of ZANLA guerrillas to be trained in Ghana in 1966.
- Ralph: Interviewed on 13 May 2013 in Leicester. He migrated as a political asylum seeker in 2005 when he was in his late twenties. At the time of the interview he was still awaiting the outcome of his appeal for political refugee status.
- Selina and James (a married couple): Interviewed on 27 December 2011 in Leicester. They migrated with their young children in 2001 as political asylum seekers. James was a Zimbabwean-trained accountant who was experienced when he arrived. At the time of the interview they both worked at one of Britain's major supermarket warehouses.
- Shami: Interviewed on 19 December 2011 in Leicester. She migrated in 1999 after being invited to student nurse interviews. She qualified as a mental health nurse at De Montfort University in 2003.
- Sharai: Interviewed on 14 March 2013 in Leicester. She is a Zimbabwean-qualified nurse. She migrated in 2002 and first settled in Leicestershire where she did a nurse adaptation course. At the time of the interview she was working as a nurse in Leicester.

- Sibo: Interviewed on 19 April 2015. She migrated in the 2000s when she was in her late twenties and settled in Liverpool. On arrival, she applied for political refugee status. At the time of the interview she had enrolled to study mental health nursing at De Montfort University.
- Solomon (university student): Interviewed as part of a group on 3 March 2013 in Birmingham.
- Taku: Interviewed on 21 March 2013 in Surrey. He migrated as a student to study accountancy in 1999. At the time of the interview he was working as an accountant in London. He is also a graduate of the University of Zimbabwe.
- Tarisai: Interviewed on 2 April 2013 in Derby. She migrated in August 2001 as a political asylum seeker. She first settled in Luton where she lived until 2006 before moving to Derby.
- Themba: Interviewed on 17 November 2013 in Leicester. He migrated in 2005 to join his wife. At the time of the interview he was fifty-two years old working for a multinational company.
- Timothy: Interviewed on 10 May 2013 in Leicester. He is a Zimbabwean academic who migrated in 2000 as an MBA student at De Montfort University.
- Tindo: Interviewed on 28 December 2011 in Leicester. He is a qualified mechanical engineer after gaining his qualification at Leicester University. At the time of the interview, he was seeking employment.
- Zanele: Interviewed on 2 March 2013 in Leicester. She is a Zimbabwean-trained teacher who migrated in 2002 as a political asylum seeker. At the time of the interview she was in her late thirties and had decided to change careers by training as a social worker.
- Zivanayi (in his sixties): Interviewed on 17 January 2013. He migrated in 1978 as a recipient of a grant from the British Council. At the time of the interview he resided in Essex whilst working in London.

### *Whites*

- Alison (in her sixties): Interviewed on 15 November 2013 in London. She migrated in 1999. Prior to migrating to Britain, she had left newly independent Zimbabwe for South Africa in 1981.
- Elizabeth: Interviewed on 6 November 2013 in Cumbria. She migrated with her British-born husband in 2004. At the time of the interview she had qualified as a social worker and was searching for employment.
- Gareth: Interviewed on 28 November 2013 in Surrey. He migrated in the mid-2000s from Cyprus when he was in his sixties. He left Zimbabwe in 1978 to work in the Swaziland police force.
- Jessica: Interviewed on 26 November 2013 in Lincoln. She migrated as a fifteen-year-old in 2004. At the time of the interview she had completed a degree in arts and design.



- Kenneth: Interviewed on 9 January 2014 in London. He migrated in 2001 as an eighteen-year-old. At the time of the interview he was a design and technology teacher.
- Martins: Interviewed on 17 January 2013 in London. He migrated in 1990 as a nineteen-year-old teenager. At the time of the interview he was working as an automotive mechanic in London.
- Robert: Interviewed on 13 November 2013 in Milton Keynes. He settled in Britain in 2002 when he was fifty-four years old. At the time of the interview he had established a vibrant business.
- Terry: Interviewed on 14 November 2013 in Cumbria. He migrated in 2004 as a twelve year old. At the time of the interview he was at college studying to be a motor mechanic.

### *Coloureds*

- Anita (in her sixties): Interviewed on 26 July 2013 in Chinhoyi, Zimbabwe. Her mother who was a farm labourer and her father a married British farmer. Her father committed suicide to avoid the shame of being ostracised by other Whites for having an affair with an uneducated farm worker.
- Ellen: Interviewed on 7 March 2013 in Cardiff. She first migrated to Britain in the 1960s with her nationalist Black husband. In 1971 they relocated to Tanzania to work in ZANU's publicity department until Zimbabwe's independence in 1980. She resettled in Britain in the early 2000s. At the time of the interview she had published a book on the struggles of the liberation struggle.
- Esther: Interviewed on 10 June 2013 in Leicester. She first migrated in 1974 with her British husband. In 1980 they relocated back to Zimbabwe. In 2000 she decided to move back to Britain because of Zimbabwe's economic and political uncertainty. She was one of the few Coloureds to enrol at the University of Rhodesia in the 1970s and had gone on to train as a teacher. At the time of the interview she had retired from teaching.
- Hughes (in his forties): Interviewed on 4 November 2013 in Grays, Essex. He migrated in November 2001 to join his wife.
- Pamela: Interviewed on 13 October 2013 in Cambridge. She migrated in 1973 with her British husband. After migrating she settled in Essex before going on to Cambridge.
- Patrick (in his fifties): Interviewed on 20 January 2015 in Northampton. He is an ex-Zimbabwean Coloured businessperson who migrated in the 2000s following the rapid decline of Zimbabwe's economy.
- Simon: Interviewed on 17 September 2013. He migrated in 1996 after completing his A-levels. His father was White British. At the time of the interview he had settled in London.

### *Asians*

- Abdi: Interviewed on 17 June 2013 in Leicester. He migrated in the 1970s, fleeing forced conscription in the Rhodesian army. At the time of the interview he had naturalised as a British subject.
- Bella: Interviewed on 1 August 2013 in Harare, Zimbabwe. She was born in 1955 and was one of few Asians to enrol at the University of Rhodesia from 1975 to 1978.
- Bhavesb: Interviewed on 1 September 2013 in Leicester. He first migrated in 1975 before relocating back to Zimbabwe in 1988. He returned to Britain in 2003 following the rapid deterioration of the Zimbabwean economy.
- Kamal: Interviewed on 4 November 2013 in Leicester. He migrated in 2002 with his family. At the time of the interview he was studying maths as a mature student in his twenties at university.
- Kasim: Interviewed on 4 November 2013 in Leicester. He migrated in 2002. Prior to emigrating, he ran a marketing business in Harare, Zimbabwe.
- Sharif: Interviewed on 4 April 2017 in Leicester. He migrated in 2006 and was joined by his wife and family in 2007. Prior to emigration, he owned two retail shops in Chinhoyi, the provincial capital of Mashonaland West Province. At the time of the interview he was working as a care assistant.

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