1. Introduction

This chapter provides a brief history of Rhodesia as a white settler state. It introduces the Rhodesians, details early bonds developing between them and the territory and their nascent interest in pioneer history before saying something about what sorts of people they thought they were and the society they hoped to create. An account of the key legislative pillars that institutionalised racism and mapped the identities of white and black, settler and native, into the landscape follows. Then the process of data collection is discussed, as well as white engagement with Zimbabwe's public culture, for they have heard a lot about themselves in policy statements and political speeches significant in forming images of their place in the nation. Next, white inner space—the cultural dimensions of their domesticity that are productive of identity—is described before the gist of the main argument presented in the following chapters is outlined.

Establishing Rhodesia as a white homeland

The colonial era began in 1889 when Britain granted a Royal Charter to the British South Africa Company (BSAC) to administer and exploit country north of the Limpopo River. The territory, inhabited by the Ndebele and Mashona peoples, was given the name Rhodesia after the BSAC's founder, Cecil Rhodes. This early act of white dominance suggested an idea about the future envisaged for the place. A year later, after the company's Pioneer Column had arrived in Mashonaland, a vast tract of land was pegged as gold claims and farms by individual pioneers on the strength of promises made to them by Rhodes. The BSAC also took land for mining and agriculture on the basis of dubious concessions—made in exchange for guns, cash, liquor and so on—negotiated by its representatives with African leaders. A significant turning point in European settlement came after the 1903–04 goldmining slump convinced the company that financial success would depend on land and not, as previously thought, on mineral wealth. Consequently, a viable commercial farming sector became an imperative for any future stable settler society. The early 1900s saw the start of an 'agricultural revolution' as the variety of stock, seeds and farming methods expanded and improved and tobacco—soon to become the country's major export crop—was introduced. Once this more stable agricultural economy was established, Rhodesia had made the transition from a frontier to a settler society.

Bad feeling soon developed between the settlers and the BSAC such that in 1922 they voted not to become the fifth province of South Africa and to stay out of the Union. Rhodesia thus changed from company to direct settler rule and

administratively became, in 1923, the responsibility of the Dominions Office in Britain (later the Commonwealth Relations Office) rather than the Colonial Office. As a self-governing colony, Southern Rhodesia had its own parliament, civil service and security forces, all answerable to its settler society rather than to Whitehall. While Britain retained the right to intervene in legislative decisions made in Salisbury, particularly with regard to native affairs, it did not do so even when blatantly racist legislation was coming into force. The settlers hoped in the not too distant future to become an independent state within the British Commonwealth, to achieve a status similar to that enjoyed by Australia, New Zealand and Canada. Attracting large numbers of immigrants to fill the country's vast empty spaces was critical to the fruition of their designs. Kennedy (1987) describes in some detail efforts to find suitable settlers—especially those with commercial farming skills—in Britain and South Africa. These initiatives met with only limited success, however, and the majority of early settlers, whether from Britain or South Africa, were usually poor labouring migrants. By World War I, white immigration had all but dried up, and with the Depression, company and government immigration campaigns fell into disuse.

Notwithstanding such setbacks, some whites, even as early as 1903, began to claim that they belonged to the land on the grounds of having lived through the 1890s native uprising—or first *Chimurenga*—when about 10 per cent of the white population were killed.[1] Territorial battles and environmental hardships, as well as the beauty and challenge of a 'new land' and its peoples, all engendered strong emotional bonds, the 'unfolding' of feelings of 'love and loyalty' and 'identity', between the settlers and the country (Howman 1990:100). Within another generation, the Rhodesians began to exhibit interest and pride in their ancestry. They credited themselves with being a practical people, possessing a spirit of initiative and adventure. Historical societies celebrating the pioneer legacy sprang up,[2] memorialising the past and thereby contributing to a white telling of history that supported the settlers' politics of location. The National Archives, also promoting a genre of pioneering stories, opened its doors in 1935 (Gann 1965:315). The inherited prestige of a pioneer background passed to descendants, enabling them to locate themselves within the larger narrative of Rhodesia and its history. In these ways, the land, infused with meaning, began to represent home to the Europeans. This paramount concern shaped their relations with Britain and with the local African population, just as it had in other white settler societies (Weitzer 1990:26).

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1 Letters written by Edward George Howman between 1896 and 1903 relate the immediacy of this experience (Howman 1990). As a member of the Watt's Column, Howman was sent to relieve Mashonaland and keep the route to Umtali (Mutare) open during the first *Chimurenga*.

2 For example, in 1953, the Rhodesiana Society succeeded the Stanley Society of 1939 and, after independence, changed its name to the History Society of Zimbabwe. The society continues its tradition of publishing articles covering the early years of Rhodesia and the settler legacy in the journal *Heritage of Zimbabwe*.

Establishing the settler colony required the African population be harnessed to the project. The *Land Apportionment Act* of 1930,[3] while giving legal recognition to the freehold/native division already pertaining to the country, classified the colony into 'European', 'Native', 'Undetermined', 'Forest' and 'Unassigned' areas. The act conferred on Africans the right to buy land without competition in only 7 per cent of the country, designated African Land Purchase areas, while also preventing them from acquiring land in much of the rest deemed to be European—always the areas of greatest natural wealth and economic potential. By this means, the principles of racial separation and hierarchy—or Rhodesia's 'ethnic spatial fix' (Moore 2005:14)—were inscribed on the territory's geography. Tax burdens compelled African participation in the labour market at the same time as property and educational qualifications excluded them from the vote.

Mapping the urban landscape followed the geographical division of rural space. The Rhodesians generally thought of urban areas as European. By and large, Africans residing therein were perceived as migrant workers who would, at some time in the future, return to their native homes or reserves. Movement from their 'home districts' to the urban areas was regulated, invariably in a prohibitive manner, by the *Native Registration Act* (1936). Opportunities for black social advancement were further restricted by the creation of two occupational pyramids. Most notably, the *Industrial Conciliation Act* (1934) excluded Africans from the status of employees in wage and industrial negotiations. As white unions also controlled apprenticeships, Africans were confined to menial and unskilled jobs. In short, Africans were incorporated into Rhodesia only in ways that served white economic needs. Taken together, Rhodesian cartography and legal regulations contributed to the colonists' production of power/knowledge that upheld Rhodesia as a white homeland and facilitated the emergence of a white labour aristocracy that, according to Astrow (1983:9), stood 'shoulder to shoulder' with Rhodesia's bourgeoisie on every important occasion.

Immediately after World War II, Southern Rhodesia again began to attract immigrants—predominantly from the United Kingdom and to a lesser extent from Mediterranean countries—most of whom were destined for Rhodesia's urban areas. The European population grew from 80 500 in 1945 to 219 000 in 1960 (Palmer 1977:242). The creation of the Central African Federation (1953–63) during this period, led and dominated by Southern Rhodesia, was a regional

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3   The *Land Apportionment Act* (1930), renamed the *Land Tenure Act* in 1969, was amended many times. In 1969, all previously unallocated land was removed and the country divided in half along racial lines, the white areas amounting to 44.95 million acres (18.19 million ha.) and the black to 44.94 million acres (18 million ha). African interests were deemed to be 'paramount' in African designated areas, as were white interests in the European areas (Murphree and Baker 1976:391). However, the best agricultural land always remained in white hands. The legislation's basic principles remained unchanged until 1977 when amendments introduced by the Rhodesian Front overturned the paramount interest of each racial group within their designated areas with regard to rural land, other than in the Tribal Trust Territories (*Parliamentary Debates,* 19 December 1978, col. 1799). The de-racialisation of urban areas followed soon after (Caute 1983:225).

attempt to keep political power in settler hands. For its duration the quest for Dominion status was shelved in order that the economic basis for a wider bid for independence was strengthened. Soon after the Federation's break-up, Britain conferred independence upon black-majority governments in less-developed Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The settlers of Southern Rhodesia believed independence to be their entitlement also.

In December 1962, the Rhodesian Front came to power in Southern Rhodesia and state politics shifted to the right. With a grant under settler rule not forthcoming, the Rhodesian Front in November 1965 made a unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) so as to wrest de facto autonomy from Britain and secure the country's future as a white homeland. Reckless though UDI might have appeared, Chennells (1989:124, 132) averred that it was not so much an arbitrary act as a logical step in view of the Rhodesians' perception of themselves as a distinct people that had been maturing for three-quarters of a century. The settler government, in what would soon become a Republic (1970) and be known simply as Rhodesia, then proceeded to assert its sense of colonial nationalism and to institutionalise white rule (Eddy and Schreuder 1988:7). The legislation described above had already established separate administrative structures and apportioned land according to race, thereby mapping the subject position of settler and native on to the landscape. Building on this, the Rhodesian Front set about extending European privilege, entrenching whites as the political, economic and social elite, creating an all pervasive 'apartheid by bye-law [sic] and convention' rather than by grand design, as in South Africa (Murphree and Baker 1976:378).

Prior to UDI, Rhodesia had remained strongly British in composition and outlook, and was envisioned by its settlers as a loyal white colony and an integral part of the British Empire. In the aftermath of the declaration, however, Rhodesia became internationally identified as a rogue state. The subsequent imposition of United Nations sanctions reconfigured the settlers as 'pariahs'. Britain, they now felt, had turned against them, rejecting and turning them into enemies. With the settlers' right to control the character and future of the country in dispute (Jess and Massey 1995:134), their vision of Rhodesia as a larger geographical space where whites belonged appeared less convincing. Perceptions of Rhodesia as a modern El Dorado, full of promise and opportunity, began to give way to a sense of theirs as a beleaguered country, for UDI put an end to any hope of a massive influx of immigrants from Europe. Rhodesian authorities turned their attention to finding settlers in other parts of Africa. Most came from South Africa and newly independent Zambia, with a few from Kenya. The European population peaked in the early 1970s at just under 250 000, or 5 per cent of the

total population. The greatest number of post-UDI immigrants arrived somewhat later from the former Portuguese colonies of Angola and more particularly Mozambique—both territories attaining independence in 1975.

UDI also coincided with the first episodes of counterinsurgency in the country. Attacks started in the early 1960s, with incidents in isolated white farming areas, and escalated into a sustained guerrilla offensive late in 1972.[4] Rhodesia's security forces confronted two nationalist armies—namely, the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) and the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA), the troops of Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo respectively. In March 1978, in a vain attempt to return to international legality, stay in control and direct unfolding events, the Rhodesian Front came to an internal settlement of the crisis with conservative black leaders. Elections brought Bishop Abel Muzorewa to head an interim government in April 1979, but did little to foster international recognition. With Mugabe and Nkomo excluded from contesting the election, the ground war in fact escalated, making 1978 and 1979 record years for European emigration (Wilkinson 1980:117) and severely testing the cohesiveness of Rhodesian society. Departure of the young and economically active damaged the country, in view of which alarmists questioned whether the economy of the future Zimbabwe could survive the loss of its professional and skilled white manpower. Critics derided the 'fainthearted'—namely, those leaving for fear of their person and property or fed up with the country's far-reaching conscription commitments and foreign currency restrictions. They were part of Rhodesia's 'hidden exodus', departing ostensibly 'on holiday', never to return.

In sum, establishing Rhodesia was a display of white dominance whereby the settlers located themselves at the heart of the nation—namely, the freehold areas of the countryside and towns, spaces in which the black majority enjoyed only tenuous rights. In this context, to be 'at home' was to be included on the grounds of kinship and race, to be the subject of the national discourse and to enjoy a sense of control and connectedness (Jackson 1995:154). Race was thus a spatial, legal and social marker of difference (Moore 2005:143). Nevertheless, calling Rhodesia home was not an unmediated experience, something reflected in one of the country's more striking features—namely, its throughput of people (Roberts 1978:61). While depicting Rhodesia as a frontier and themselves as pioneers and later settlers, many whites had not in fact stayed to build the white homeland. UDI remade their home as a place of stigma. Impending independence and the devolution of power to a black majority government provoked anxiety in white ranks over the future. With the cessation of hostilities, the question whether

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4   Zimbabwe's 1992 *War Veterans Compensation Act (Chapter 11, article 15)* came into effect in March 1995 and set the official war dates as 1 January 1962 to 29 February 1980 (*Parliamentary Debates,* 2 October 1997, col. 2157).

they could legitimately belong in light of Rhodesia's history of violence and unjust racial privilege was voiced. Would there be a place for them, or indeed for other minority groups—namely, Asians and coloureds—in the new country?

Data collection

The following chapters address the decolonisation of settler identity, their search for a legitimate national identity within Zimbabwe's discourses of citizenship and indigeneity and their subtexts of belonging and homecoming. To capture the various sides to this issue, I adopted research practices 'attentive' to the range of available forms of knowledge (Gupta and Ferguson 1997b:37). Indeed, data collection proved full of chance encounters and unexpected opportunities. So, while some material came directly from ethnographic observation, much else pertaining to where Zimbabwe's borders of national personhood lay and how these were established and defended, came from other varied sources (Falk Moore 1993:4–5).

I found the State's nationalist discourse embodied in official texts—political speeches, parliamentary debates, policy documents and annual reports— inscribed in monuments and enacted during the gambit of national celebrations. As part of the public transcript (Scott 1990:2), these afforded material about the ruling elite's construction of the Zimbabwean nation and their understanding of vernacular membership therein. In addition, I scoured citizenship statutes and immigration regulations to unearth the thinking behind the recent introduction of amendments, and watched the development of these ideas as bills were debated and passed through the House. Indigenisation guidelines became available during fieldwork. A draft was circulated for discussion among policymakers in the public sector and guidelines were in the process of being agreed upon some seven years into the debate. The state-sponsored national land conference, convened in early 1998, provided another site where multiple representations of indigeneity were canvassed.

Archival sources provided some historical background to the nationalist position. I was able to access findings from various commissions of inquiry, annual reports from departments within Rhodesia's Ministry of Immigration and Tourism, as well as promotional pamphlets campaigning for settlers from the mid 1960s. Educational material and political commentary also shed light on earlier settler constructions of citizenship and indigeneity. Biographies written by settlers Phillippa Berlyn (1967) and Robert Tredgold (1968:13), who 'grew up with the country', and Doris Lessing (1994:160), who was aware that she had been 'part of an extraordinary time, the end of the British Empire in Africa', supplemented material from official Rhodesian records. Recently, a

younger generation of whites—such as Angus Shaw (1993) and Bruce Moore-King (1989)—has written specifically about the war years and the futility when they, as Rhodesian conscripts, were sent by their elders to 'resolve what my people had begun' with the Africans (Shaw 1993:vii). Their contributions are also included, for young and old did not always see the war and its aftermath in the same way.

The research also draws on my experiences (between 1992 and 1997) as a locally recruited member of staff at the University of Zimbabwe. These earlier years in the country confuse somewhat the tropes of entry and exit that construct distance and difference between the field and home and thereby 'authenticate' anthropological material (Gupta and Ferguson 1997b:12–13; Des Chene 1997:69–70). I had not, however, previously interacted closely with white Zimbabwean society and so set about gaining ethnographic knowledge of their world by involving myself in recreational and community activities. I attended prayer meetings and reconciliation services, art exhibitions and performances of plays written by fringe members of this community. I was invited to family celebrations, joined social and sporting events and took fishing holidays with people who became friends. I travelled the length and breadth of the country, staying at both productive and derelict farms, visited colonial monuments and graveyards, found myself caught up in demonstrations cutting the country's main rural thoroughfares and joined the 'stay-aways' and protests in town. I shopped, lined up in post offices and banks, frequented the local library and engaged in casual conversations while I undertook the usual activities that occupied middle-aged and middle-class white, as well as black, women. In this way, a picture emerged of the everyday and mundane ways whites attempted self-definition.

I also ensured I was part of the audience at migration seminars—each presentation filled to capacity with young, middle-class Zimbabweans from all races well before the advertised starting time. Some were held at venues in Harare's international hotels, others in the surrounding farming districts.[5] Here, consultants—almost all having some prior connection with the region—set themselves as insiders, their jokes playing on fears as well as suggesting familiarity with commonly held stereotypes. Would-be émigrés were advised, for example, not to mentally convert their savings into foreign currency because 'you have no money, you must start again'. And, once relocated, they were urged 'not to say they originated from Southern Africa for we're the bad boys of

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5   Some presentations were aimed specifically at attracting people to Australia, others to a range of English-speaking, Western countries. The audience was predominantly white at the former, with a lesser number of Asians and coloureds, while the latter were filled with Zimbabweans of all races.

apartheid; say you're Greek or Irish or whatever'. Perhaps with greater insight, audiences were also told 'you are immigrants, you will have to change to become one of the people of the country of your choice'.

Later in the day, two short-term non-governmental organisation (NGO) assignments offered the chance to pursue my interest in health and welfare matters and at the same time interact with Zimbabweans whose work and political viewpoints put them outside the white mainstream. In this capacity, I evaluated a restorative justice programme for the victims of torture and state-organised violence operating in Mashonaland Central Province. As a colleague and I drove the 'dust' roads, visiting rural clinics and isolated hospitals, 'overnighting' in the townships, I was able to get some sense of the Rhodesian war's meaning for people who lived in what were then called the Tribal Trust Lands. A second engagement brought the opportunity to assess the case management of sexually abused children presenting at one of Harare's general hospitals and, by incorporating indigenous knowledge, to broaden the otherwise Western-oriented medical and psychological intervention strategies. Here again I met Zimbabweans from all races joined by the will to reduce human suffering. While peripheral, both projects nonetheless furthered my knowledge of issues central to my research.

By entering social networks at these various points, I sought to capture a range of subject positions and contending voices from within the white community. At the same time, I hoped to identify families in which members had emigrated, for I was still under the sway of the conversation described in the Preface. I quickly discovered that emigration tales were commonplace and that few families had been left untouched by this issue. I was already aware that white Zimbabweans were generally sensitive to scrutiny and that outsiders' judgements made them feel secondary and defensive. I had met their brusque manners and blunt replies on the streets and in shops. Thus initially, I approached my project with some apprehension, adopting, I hoped, an open, non-judgemental attitude. While not everyone—most notably, younger men—was prepared to be associated with the research, about 30 white Zimbabwean households willingly participated in more focused interviews. Participant observation helped clarify and substantiate data gained through interview, allowing me, for instance, to experience the competitive exchanges between whites as they justified to each other decisions to emigrate or stay in the country. I was also party to tensions between family members, now middle-aged and back on holiday, regarding who had 'done best', as well as the resentment of younger siblings who, left behind, felt abandoned. Something I had not anticipated was that in about one-third of families interviewed, members had left only to return and re-establish a home in Zimbabwe some time later.

We usually met over several sessions at informants' homes and, in one or two instances, at their office or place of business—all significant sites for self-definition and the construction of a collective white identity. Here, I let the conversation flow freely, taking a self-styled shorthand developed as a student and during an earlier career as a mental health practitioner. I recorded historicised accounts of individual and family journeys, white thoughts about citizenship and conceptions of home, as well as their reading of official statements regarding reconciliation, indigenisation and the Zimbabwean diaspora. Although not entirely comfortable with my being employed at the University of Zimbabwe—dubbed 'the Kremlin on the hill'—most welcomed the chance to talk or, in some instances, to 'get the message out' and be heard by a wider Western audience. Some 'enjoyed' the interviews or found the material covered 'interesting'. For others, it proved a cathartic experience, 'a relief' as they engaged with the process. Once, in a slightly hostile fashion, I was quizzed about life in Australia, my thoughts on South-East Asian immigration, multiculturalism and the welfare state—questions that I endeavoured to answer in detail. A few respondents proved offhand or short in reply to my questions—something reflected in an unevenness to quotations in the body of the text. Engagement in community affairs also led me to several members of the white community with privileged knowledge of reconciliation and immigration matters, individuals whom I also approached for more structured interviews.

Many whites I noted held attitudes towards the United Kingdom that were, at best, ambivalent. Elders among them, having escaped dreary postwar Britain for the adventure and vigour of Rhodesia, claimed to 'despise' successive socialist UK governments and described Britain as 'a crowded country of little people and little buildings' and 'a nation which is done for'. Others, born either in Rhodesia or various other British colonies in Africa, also spoke of holding 'no feelings' or 'no nice feelings' towards Britain, the country that 'let us down'. This was not a land to which they wanted to return or a place they would willingly call home. Australia on the other hand was perceived as a place of future possibility, 'the country most like Zimbabwe in climate, language, sport and food', and more often than not, the destination of first choice. Perth, in particular, was seen as 'psychologically and economically closer to Zimbabwe than anywhere else in the world', one person proffering: 'the nationals are settlers like we are, we understand each other.' Yet while Australia was described as 'a golden opportunity' and 'a heavenly chance', the country was simultaneously feared as a decadent, unchristian place where children 'go off the rails', its citizens made 'lazy' and 'soft' by the State's social welfare system.

In keeping with their Australian counterparts, most white Zimbabweans were town dwellers, living predominately in the two main cities of Harare

and Bulawayo.[6] A small but economically and politically significant number associated with the commercial farming sector resided in the countryside and are represented in the following chapters by several farmers and farm managers. Typically, white urbanites were business, professional and trades people, while a few were influential in manufacturing and mining.[7] Some had significant interests in the private sector. One research participant was the owner-manager of a medium-size import/export business, another a director of several companies, a third the retail manager of a family owned furniture store, and a few more were self-employed in a professional capacity. Generally, however, most were small players in the urban economy and many were employees. The latter included bookkeepers, secretaries, computer programmers, a headmaster and various other kinds of teachers, a pilot for a cargo company and a lowly executive with an indigenous merchant bank. One man was searching for work, another trying to set up a bakery with his wife, whose trade as an informal importer of cheese from South Africa was becoming less and less financially viable with the fall in the Zimbabwean dollar. Also in keeping with this ageing population—of which about half were economically inactive—a significant number of informants were retired or mothers who did not wish to work.[8] Zimbabweans of European descent were not therefore a monolithic group but were divided along class and, as later chapters indicate, also ethnic lines. That whites were conspicuous in the retail and trade sectors gave Harare a very different feel to other African capitals, such as the cities of Kenya and Malawi (previously Nyasaland) where I had resided and worked during the 1980s. The number of European settlers in these countries declined sharply after independence. The few who remain are now vastly outnumbered by a more recent group of foreigners—namely, expatriates.

Knowledge

Early on, the issue of evidence, or how white Zimbabweans 'knew' what they claimed to know, caught my attention. Questions arose out of an apparent ideological closure surrounding some areas of my research. Informants spoke as if with one voice, in spite of the distinction they made between themselves as liberals or conservatives. Liberals were, for example, particularly keen to draw my attention to their more progressive attitudes, although I found their views not greatly different from others'. Both groups were politically to the right of centre and a far cry from the radical missionary voice of individuals

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6   Tables 1.12 and 1.13 of the 1992 Census indicate that 64 889 whites were urban dwellers while 17 908 lived in the rural areas, giving a total of 82 797. Note that these figures reflect the total white population and thus include non-citizens who are permanent or short-term residents.

7   See Appendix Table 3.

8   See Appendix Table 3 and Figure 1.

such as Brian MacGarry (1994a, 1994b). In view of this, I was interested in the information sources whites drew on when forming or justifying their opinions, for, by and large, most had little direct experience of state events, described in later chapters, where the ruling party endeavoured to constitute its form of national identity. Nor did they commonly access policy documents or legislation relevant to themselves as a minority and in which the government set out the formal terms of their incorporation.

Instead, informants gleaned some sense of their perception in the wider Zimbabwean society by way of daily, informal interactions with members of the black majority, as well as through contact with lower-level state officials. Bureaucratic practices surrounding passports, identity cards, residence permits, business licences and so forth, in addition to classifications imposed by public enumerators, assigned identities and substantiated for informants the State's limits of national belonging (Wilson and Donnan 1998:24). Here Foucault's (1982:212) work on power and modes of objectification proved useful to understanding how whites were 'attached' to their colonial identity, how in effect they were shaped by imposed 'truths' that others must recognise of them, as well as be recognised by the subjects themselves. In instances described in later chapters, white appellants, resisting subjectification, have resorted to Zimbabwe's courts to challenge the principles state regulatory instruments have been built on—principles that through their administration are further developed and elaborated.

More importantly though, whites formed images of their place in the nation through their engagement with public culture. The role of the media in apprehending one's self in the world, and the ideas about simultaneity that these sources contribute to 'thinking the nation', is well documented.[9] In Zimbabwe, media representations of white subjectivity were instrumental in advising minorities of their status in society, their shortcomings and governmental expectations of them. As one informant put it, 'the President speaks to us through the press', for the country's leaders were otherwise inaccessible and remote public figures. Consequently, the populace generally knew Mugabe and his Ministers—many former comrades in arms who have held one government post after another since independence—by their political pronouncements. These received extensive coverage to all corners of the country in the government's mouthpieces, *The Herald*, *The Sunday Mail* and ZBC TV1, where editorial comment invariably defended the ruling party's line. Whites and disaffected middle-class blacks avidly read another paper, the *Zimbabwe Independent*. This weekly, first appearing in 1996, assigned itself the task of vigilantly exposing corruption and

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9   See, for example, Anderson 1990; Kemper 1993; Spitulnik 1993; Gupta 1995.

misrule on behalf of the public.[10] It also reported sympathetically on business and farming interests, couched argument in terms of economic rationality and practicality and provided a focus galvanising white opinion in Zimbabwe and abroad, with a Rhodesian web site carrying a link to each edition. Informants drew my attention to particular articles, discussed coverage among themselves and welcomed 'the new openness because we've been whispering for years'.

While media coverage of Zimbabwe's political discourse 'brings knowledge of others to mind', creating images of who is like us, who belongs and who does not (Bowman 1994:140–1), reading or listening to political discourse does not mechanically interpellate the reader/listener within the subject positions produced. Audiences might not recognise themselves or dispute the regimes of truth that, in Zimbabwe, 'compel' whites 'in certain ways' and not others (Sylvester 2000:252). Furthermore, within public culture, other sites drew otherwise invisible whites and blacks into the national arena (Hall et al. 1978:121). Here, in letters to the editor, memoriam columns, feature articles, talkback radio and current affairs programmes, opportunities existed for them to air their views, defend their interests and anxiously discuss and refute their mode of representation. These struggles about 'who we are' proved an integral part of Zimbabwe's decolonisation process. Extracts from contributors are to be found in the following chapters, although in private opinions might be less compromising. Importantly, for present purposes, the extent to which white Zimbabweans recognised a number of common concerns set them apart and defined them as a community, distinct from black Zimbabweans and the expatriate community.

An acrimonious relationship developed between Zimbabwe's two media camps. While Raftopoulos (1992:60) nominated the press as one of Zimbabwe's sites of democratic debate and public participation, the government doubted the 'independence' of the independent press, stigmatising it as 'Rhodesian', 'unpatriotic' and as such destructive to national unity. Media claims and counterclaims were fuelled and supported by the use of questionable statistics. Figures cited could be wildly divergent.[11] If the experience of government statisticians, town councils and social scientists was anything to go by,

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10   Another paper, *The Financial Gazette,* provided some political comment, although primarily it was a rather dry business newspaper without widespread popular appeal. After I had left Zimbabwe, the *Daily News* appeared on the streets.

11   There were, for instance, no agreed figures for the contribution of various sectors to gross domestic product (GDP) or other important social indices such as the budget deficit as a proportion of GDP, unemployment and inflation levels. Nor was there consensus about how statistics should be constructed. Arguments arose over which goods should be included in the outdated consumer price index (CPI) basket and the appropriate formula for calculating the fall in the Zimbabwean dollar. The Central Statistics Office in particular complained that the information it needed was simply not forthcoming, prompting the suggestion that a media campaign be undertaken to educate the public about the importance of providing data to officials (*Parliamentary Debates*, 9 October 1996, col. 2374).

Zimbabweans were generally not prepared to supply information needed for the constitution of accurate quantitative indicators. To extract data on the age composition, education and economic activities of the white population from the 1992 Census proved a task unto itself, despite generous cooperation from the Central Statistics Office. Thus, overall quantitative evidence tends to be fragmentary, should be treated critically and placed within material drawn from other sources.

The dialogue of mutual mistrust and insecurity, often strident in tone, is reproduced here as it was spoken in Zimbabwe, where it was the nature of political discourse that the ruling ZANU PF party's dominating presence and uncompromising language (De Waal 1990:43) overpowered a more accommodating black *sotto voce*. Perforce, Sylvester (1995:406) describes ZANU PF as 'a monolith', 'an icon' set on narrating 'the best tale about the past' as it sets out 'the proper relationship' between the people and the party.[12] Responding to this, white informants commonly drew a clear distinction between the State's leaders, who purportedly represented the nation, and the people who made up the nation (Gandhi 1998:119). In effect, they separated the State's antagonistic discourse from their relations with the ubiquitous man on the street.

While Falk Moore (1993:2) points out there are 'seldom simple answers to questions about the meaning and consequences of political statements', they do give some indication as to the individuals or parties who expect to set the terms of the debate (Peck 1992:78). The title 'Father of the Nation' credits Mugabe—with his portrait hanging in almost every public place—with personifying the nation. As repositories of wisdom, he and other senior government officials expected respect rather than to be critically questioned. The importance of political oratory is enhanced when, as in Zimbabwe, few clear policy documents exist on many key issues. In point of fact, 'policy' was not infrequently a collection of ad hoc and, at times, contradictory statements made by leaders to sit well with a particular audience.[13] The policy of reconciliation was, for instance, spelt out over the course of a number of Mugabe's speeches detailed in the next chapter. While research was in progress, whites were preoccupied

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12   Various scholars have analysed the contribution of oratory to political leadership, pointing to its coercive codes. According to Bloch (1975:9), political speech is a means by which control is exerted, where speakers and listeners are tied in a highly structured, hierarchical situation that permits only a one-way relationship. Cohen (1994:50), however, argues that 'the rules of rhetoric as cultural products are nothing without their actualisation in the mouths of creative individuals'. Certainly in Zimbabwe, party figures harangue audiences in a manner not dissimilar to that adopted by Samburu elders, described by Spencer (1965:140–2), who relentlessly berate the young and female members of society, accusing them of gross irresponsibility and lack of respect and collectively shaming them for individual breaches of conduct.

13   President Mugabe shares with the former Congolese leader Patrice Lumumba the tendency to 'blow hot and cold' depending on his listeners, and particularly with respect to the colonial legacy (Sartre 2001:158–9). While accused of inconsistency, both men were the products of the colonial system and its mission education. Opposing conceptions therefore 'coexist' within these leaders and 'translate the profound contradictions of what can only be called (their) class' (Sartre 2001).

with how to make sense of political statements linked to the introduction of a policy of indigenisation outlined in Chapter 6. Where some believed these utterances could be dismissed as little more than 'hot air', others argued that while 'actions were critical, words could be ignored'. The suggestion was also made that politicians were trying to 'outdo each other in their radicalism, just for public consumption'. In private, it was said that political brokers could be counted on to be 'sensible, hard-headed businesspeople'. Still, the inability to 'reliably penetrate' the party's official transcript (Scott 1990:67) engendered confusion, uncertainty and rumour mongering.

Indeed, these were restive years. Where, initially, many whites dismissed the import of the indigenisation discourse, its reality was becoming apparent in events from 1997—evident in, among other things, increasing numbers of farm, business and courtroom invasions. Matchaba-Hove of Zimrights observes that 'mobocracy', where unruly mobs are sanctioned to harass and disrupt, is a legacy of ZANU PF rule.[14] Whites, with some bravado, referred to this practice as 'rent-a-riot', for it was recognised that these were not spontaneous demonstrations but orchestrated and paid for from above. The urgency of what was euphemistically dubbed 'the wealth grab'—holding out the promise of black prosperity and economic opportunities perhaps never to come again—heightened Harare's atmosphere of ferment. Political crises (strikes, stay-aways, price or food riots, coup rumours and Congo war cover-ups) and corruption allegations fell one upon the next. I lived within a few streets of the university, and not uncommonly the sour odour of tear gas hung in the evening air. Thus the research took place against a background of increasing strain, insecurity and repression for all Zimbabweans; a colleague graphically described the ever more visible and brazen presence of the State's security police as 'those men in suits and dark glasses, laughing like hyenas on street corners'.

To know what was happening within the country, many whites—aware that governments before and since independence have practised media censorship and disinformation—said 'one must also look outside'. Mass communications have encouraged them—now spread across the world—to keep in touch in ways that were inconceivable until recently. During crises, I observed a spate of overseas phone calls as friends and relatives shared information gathered from the BBC and CNN and rang to inquire about what was happening on the ground. Rhodesian web sites also kept readers informed of the whereabouts of friends and reunions, and generally encouraged former Rhodesians to see themselves as exiles and 'people the world would like to forget'. Every so often, the government let its anger with the activities of these 'long distance nationalists'

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14   Matchaba-Hove, *Zimbabwe Independent,* 14 November 1997, p. 1.

(Anderson 1992:12), over whom it had little control, be known. 'Their meddling in politics from afar,' reflected one person, 'does nothing to make life here easier for us local whites.'

Expatriates, in the country on short-term contracts with embassies, aid organisations or multinationals, represented another important cleavage in Zimbabwean society. When I arrived in Zimbabwe at the end of 1990, this was the category to which I as an 'expat wife' belonged. In a few instances, our presence was welcomed, with one local white extolling 'the benefits of cross-fertilisation, for we were like clones, you could tell us a mile off. We wore the same clothes, held the same ideas and fought the same war.' To this particular person, expatriates represented 'the influx of new people coming to us, bringing new ideas and standards, opening new horizons'. To many others, however, expatriates were seen to be no more than 'two or three-year wonders', and accused of being ineffectual, ignorant of local conditions and 'not caring' for Africa. On the domestic front, expatriates were criticised for upsetting the established order, 'ruining it for us' by paying too high rents, wages and so forth. This antagonism stemmed from a variety of factors, not least expatriate access to hard currency, their influx after 1980 in response to majority rule, diplomatic social exclusiveness and to the fact that as temporary residents they would all ultimately depart. That my positioning shifted somewhat in the eyes of black and white Zimbabweans was reflected in questions directed my way. Where local whites initially asked, 'How long are you here for?', this later became 'Are you staying?' or 'Have you bought a house yet?' Middle-class blacks, confusing the transition from temporary to permit resident, inquired 'Are you applying for citizenship?' While such loaded questions, reflecting my unusually long stay in the country, were difficult to answer, they suggested some movement in the eyes of the questioner beyond the status of short-term expatriate contract worker.

But what of my research topic itself? I had toyed with ideas more to do with the courses I was teaching at the time. One in particular looked promising. Sitting in the city's magistrates' court, my interest was piqued by arguments linking customary bride-wealth and modern-day maintenance payments. I was, however, also aware that some members of Zimbabwe's educated elite were uneasy about Westerners 'stealing our heritage' or 'profiting from our cultural knowledge'. Their disapproval reflects the fact that to be the subject of metropolitan ethnography is to reproduce colonial relations.[15] 'Natives', brought into being by anthropologists as well as settler administrations, are today not necessarily enthusiastic about finding themselves the object of Western, anthropological research. Moreover, given the country's development agenda, the subjects of research—often poor or marginalised sections of Zimbabwe's society—expect the end result to be to their benefit. They therefore

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15   See, for example, During 1987:44; Asad 1991:314–15; Kuper 1994:544–7; Tuhiwai Smith 1999:39, 42.

question when the promised 'help' for their 'problems' due on account of their participation in purportedly useful projects will be forthcoming. In view of these issues, a foreign anthropologist's choice of topic is a political decision set against the inescapability of Western privilege.

Given anthropology's colonial antecedents, East and Central African universities usually subsume and teach anthropology in conjunction with other social sciences or, in some instances, do not offer undergraduate courses at all. The former situation pertained in Zimbabwe, where disciplinary boundaries were not jealously guarded to the extent that they were in Western academies. In addition, local scholars were somewhat sceptical of inexperienced Western students coming briefly to study 'the exotic', depending on local assistants for language translation and in some instances to get the line of their research right. Their cynicism extended to First World academics, who, passing through and perhaps hoping to please their hosts, spoke in radical idioms. These are not new issues for anthropology.[16] Sally Falk Moore (1994:75–86) expresses eloquently the demands of African intellectuals to speak for themselves and claim a share of the scholarly action. Generally, however, the academic literature fails to spell out steps anthropologists might adopt—having recognised that a problem exists—beyond gestures aimed at establishing some token of reciprocity or alternatively registering their dislike of the nationalist or racist overtones of nativist protest (Kuper 1994:547). More productively, Gupta and Ferguson (1997b:23–4) point out that African academics are 'looking for new and less colonial modes of engagement'—a desire that must be set against decades of independence that have failed to bring political, economic or intellectual self-determination.[17] They suggest that to practise decolonisation means 'doing away with the distancing and exoticism of the conventional anthropological "field"' (Gupta and Ferguson 1997b:38) in favour of foregrounding ways in which researchers are socially and historically linked with their area of research.

Cognisant of these sensibilities, I found colonial settlers accepted as a fruitful topic for investigation by my Zimbabwean colleagues, who anticipated difficulty accessing white society themselves. Much had already been written about Rhodesian short-sightedness, their folly and authorship of their own misfortunes.[18] Historians Bhebe and Ranger (1995:2), however, note with some concern that, while material is available on military matters, very little is known about white Rhodesian society, its ideology or the effects of the war on white civilians. Nor, might I venture, has urban white society received sustained

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16   See, for example, Asad 1973:15–19; Ahmed 1973; Mandaza 1988; Said 1989; Stocking 1991:3–6; Sanjek 1993.
17   See, for example, Loomba 1994:305; Tuhiwai Smith 1999:20.
18   See, for example, Hills 1981; Hudson 1981.

scholarly attention in the post-colonial period. As more than a decade had elapsed since the black majority took over the reigns of power, it seemed opportune to examine what political independence meant to the former colonisers.

After my years away at the University of Zimbabwe and elsewhere, it came as something of a shock to return to an orthodox anthropology department, with its talk of 'going to the field' to study people in small-scale communities, who were very different to the usually Western anthropologist. In light of this, I felt Australian colleagues considered Zimbabwe's white community not worthy of academic attention. On the one hand, my work among informants from the same racial and language group appeared as something akin to doing anthropology 'at home'. On the other hand, colleagues—perhaps taking a moral high ground—appeared unable to concede familiarity, to countenance a common heritage as European invaders, colonists, settlers and migrants. That Rhodesia was tainted by association with South Africa didn't help. Mamdani (1997a:7, 27) warns, however, of the analytical dangers inherent in South African 'exceptionalism', of taking its apartheid regime as intrinsically different to British 'indirect rule' and French colonial 'association', which he perceives as having taken on the character of prejudice. In much the same way, Hansen (1992:12) finds recent feminist writing on colonialism unsatisfactory to the extent that scholarship dwells too long on infamous and eccentric colonial actors in idealised settings. Recognising this academic prejudice did not in itself make writing any easier. Many were the times I packed my material up in cardboard boxes ready for storage only to unpack it weeks, sometimes months, later. The problem was more than the sinking feeling of pleasing no-one and betraying friendships that others had documented. Tracking back and forward between diverse but compelling arguments held strongly by people from various positions proved wearisome. Simply put, good and bad, moral and immoral did not in every instance line up seamlessly with race and history. Reading late in the day Dembour's (2000) recollections of Belgium's colonialism in Congo—an era that officially ended half a century ago—made me more keenly aware of the widely held stereotypes and the poverty of memory in imperial homelands, as well as the distaste felt towards this part of their histories. Collegian uneasiness with my area of research perhaps suggested a deeper-felt Western ambivalence than could be explained as left-liberal anger at colonialism that was supported by their own governments (Thomas 1994:1–2). Possibly it also masks more troubling issues to do with legitimacy in New World settler societies.

Inner space

The following chapters describe a very public and at times heated debate between Zimbabwe's political and intellectual elite and the country's white

community. At this point it might therefore be worth saying something about whites' inner space, the cultural dimensions of their domesticity and how their lives were lived in the privacy of their homes during the 1990s.

Harare, where the bulk of research took place, is a city terminologically divided into what are called high and low-density suburbs. During the Rhodesian era, these were racially delineated, with whites domiciled to the north of the central business district. Harare still bears this colonial imprint, although in the low-density suburbs the population mix has changed. The majority of whites resided here, in streets lined with flowering trees: jacaranda, bauhinia, flamboyant and cassia. Their neighbours or landlords were as often as not middle-class blacks. Relations between the two were typically quiet, amicable but distant. Houses were in the main older Rhodesian brick bungalows, serviced with electricity and water, many with security bars across windows and doors in order to discourage petty theft. A shortfall of cement and other materials meant little building took place during the 1980s, contributing to a housing shortage. Homes constructed more recently by members of the black ruling elite were larger, more imposing and multi-garaged. Senior diplomats also tenanted other grand mansions with guards posted at the gates. One could also come across an original low-slung colonial home in the earliest settled suburbs, often dilapidated with timber badly in need of paint, or an African style of house, several mud-brick *rondavels* (circular huts) joined together under a thatched roof. This light and cool alternative was, however, more commonly associated with accommodation provided at tourist resorts. There were also pockets of white poverty, particularly in older, inner-city tenement areas where rented flats or rooms were spartanly furnished. Some of the white poor were former Rhodesian civil servants, whose pensions, not index linked, were worthless. Other old or infirm people depended on church feeding programmes and practical help from service organisations to survive.

White class stratification became all the more apparent as Zimbabwe's economy opened up in response to the government's 1991 Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP). Trade liberalisation ended 25 years of restricted choice, limited quality and shortages of goods occasioned by UDI sanctions, the liberation war and the post-independence government's earlier socialist intentions. On the streets, Renault R5 and Datsun 120Y cars, several decades old and belching smoke, were regularly seen in 1990. As the decade progressed, however, new Mercedes, BMWs and four-wheel-drive vehicles appeared, as well as a plethora of smaller 'as-new' Japanese models, with the practical, all-purpose *backie* (utility) ever popular among younger whites. A mass of new or previously unavailable goods also arrived in the market. At home, those who could afford it renovated. Formica benchtops, linoleum tiles, dated raffia and crocheted lampshades were all discarded in favour of more modern equivalents.

Imported ceramic tiles and timber replaced older stone or polished concrete floors. Parquet, lifting in places, was overlaid with ever-popular carpet. Local cottons, sewn into curtains, pelmets, bedspreads and cushions, added a splash of colour to walls, which were painted in pastel shades and hung with European prints. A few African artefacts were about—a basket or some item of woodwork—but little more. Thus, where some homes appeared functional, almost barren, others I visited were furnished comfortably in a sophisticated Western style.

White Zimbabweans were hospitable to each other, regularly extending invitations for a drink or meal, entertaining for the most part informally—men in open-necked shirts, shorts or long pants, women in cotton frocks or tie-dyed and wrap-around skirts. Typically, social events began with the man of the house serving drinks from the 'home bar'—beer or spirits, the latter locally produced by African Distillers, or perhaps a glass of wine once trade opened up with South Africa after majority rule in 1994. Where possible, the bar, complete with necessary accoutrements, cane chairs or bar stools, was located in a separate room, otherwise it squeezed into the front hall, verandah or thereabouts. Sporting memorabilia, a team photograph or a trophy or two, maybe a fish caught and mounted some time in the past decorated this centre of convivial activity. Later guests were served European foods, roasts, casseroles or perhaps local freshwater or saltwater fish from South Africa or Namibia. Alternatively, a *braai* (barbecue) was prepared outside around the recently relined glitter-stone pool. In this setting, the host and hostess relaxed with others of their own kind, for these were generally all-white gatherings at which people held similar values and beliefs.

Guests took the opportunity to catch up on what others had been up to, shared news of friends in common, the whereabouts and progress of children and so forth. Most hoped their offspring would attend, at least for secondary education, a private school, some established during the Rhodesian era along ethnic lines, now taking pupils from across the board. At the same time, there were good 'A-grade' government schools patronised by whites. Students intent on pursuing tertiary studies would, in all likelihood, need to apply for the release of foreign currency to meet tuition costs outside the country, usually in South Africa. Places at local institutions were limited and competition was steep. Parents recognised and worried that this option could well close in the future, as South Africa addressed its own need for widespread black education. Otherwise a white-collar job or a supervisory position could usually be found by word of mouth, by networking within this 'bonded' community. 'Know-how' was ranked highly and was considered by some to be just if not more important than 'paper' qualifications, as well as the ability to take on responsibility at a young age.

Commodity prices were another point of general discussion—in particular the interest shown by overseas buyers at Zimbabwe's tobacco auctions—as were the rains, for these things affected the lives of everyone, city and country folk alike. Talk also turned to rising prices and shortages of basic commodities—maize meal, bread, milk, cooking oil—as the 1990s progressed, and to the heady heights of inflation and the falling value of the local currency. Other topics were routinely avoided. International affairs and local politics were not often discussed in any depth except in the small number of better-educated, liberal households. Elsewhere only frustrated comments concerning government ineptitude were aired. The country's civil war was almost never brought up beyond a chance remark describing teenage years spent manning canteens, making cups of tea for the boys just back from a sortie during the 'bush war', or a passing question clarifying regiments served. Only later, in 1998, watching security helicopter gun-ships patrolling Harare's streets from the air, did I hear about the fear felt in Rhodesian playgrounds when helicopters carrying body bags flew over Salisbury, and of mothers too afraid to voice their anxiety because that was called 'rocking the boat'. Female memories such as these were described as 'just like yesterday' and 'still too raw' to express or confide more freely.

Domestic help played an important role in making this pleasant, sociable lifestyle possible. Usually, there was one worker in and one outside, but the number depended on family size and the presence of young children. Outside staff deferred to those inside. Female domestic workers, known as maids, wore crisp cotton uniforms with *doek* (headscarf), a new style released each year, anxiously awaited and available in town at the Farmers Co-op, later known as Town and Country. Male staffers were also uniformed, usually in white or beige, while gardeners were outfitted in brightly coloured blue, green or orange overalls and gumboots. Domestic workers were expected to carry out their tasks according to European standards of punctuality, hygiene and order—skills that in my experience they acquired at mission schools, from previous urban employers or as workers on white commercial farms. Most lived on the property and within the compound's walls that enclosed the main residence and staff quarters, the latter structure distinct from the main house. Employers were generally hesitant to intrude upon an employee's private space. Conversely, house workers knew intimately the ins and outs, likes and dislikes of their employers' domestic domain. While their movement and that of goods—phones, irons, umbrellas and buckets—back and forth across the racial divide blurred somewhat the spatial division of living areas, these domestic arrangements rehearsed white authority and dominance. They were in effect productive of white identity. The presence of domestic help freed fathers, as heads of households and primary breadwinners, to enjoy leisure activities on weekends. Mothers had time to ferry children between school and other activities, pursue business or sporting interests and shop. Most preferred to purchase goods locally or at

large suburban shopping complexes such as Avondale, Borrowdale Village or Westgate, making only a minimum number of trips to the city centre, deterred by parking problems and car thefts. Alternatively, housewives would drive to the outer city limits, where Jaggers—the city's first bulk warehouse, which sold everything imaginable—opened its doors to the public in the mid 1990s.

The sun shone most days in Harare in a brilliantly blue sky. The rainy season's tropical downpours passed quickly. This climate lent itself to a casual outdoors life. Sport was a major leisure activity and it was generally considered important to acquit oneself well on a sports field. Results were analysed in detail; the angle of a tennis, cricket or squash shot, the vagaries of a particular golf hole and the bait used on a fishing trip were all part of reproducing whites as an aesthetic community (Werbner 1997:240). After Saturday's sporting fixtures, many whites went out on Sunday for a meal, perhaps at a friend's home or to enjoy *piri piri* (hot and spicy) chicken at a restaurant run by Portuguese émigrés from Mozambique. Alternatively, the venue was a sports club where children could play safely. During the rainy season, families drove out to the Mazowe Dam to check the water level and see it spill. A few made the trip north in 1998 to watch the Kariba Dam's floodgates open for the first time in many years. A day at the races appealed to some older members of the white community but was invariably disappointing, there being so few familiar faces left in the crowd.

Arts and live theatre were on hand at the Repertory; however, this theatre was probably better known for its bar, which was a favourite local 'watering hole'. Video stores did a roaring trade. Satellite dishes also appeared during the 1990s and opened television choices to more than just the government-controlled Zimbabwe Broadcasting Commission (ZBC). Overseas coverage of sporting events was enthusiastically received, turning locals for a while into international participants, although many soon found the quarterly US$45 subscription fee 'way too steep' and opted out of the schemes. Australian programmes avidly watched and taken to reflect life in the West included *Neighbours*, *Home and Away* and *Rex Hunt's Fishing World*. Many white homes also tuned in to the English-language radio station with its mixture of 1970–1980s hit tunes, informative discussions on gardening, home decorating and agriculture and Sunday church services. Few books were available for purchase, bookshops often being little more than stationers; yet Zimbabwe had an established printing industry and Harare hosted an annual book fair that attracted a regional clientele. Some families made use of the suburban libraries where elderly white volunteers helped out and English-language books and an occasional British magazine and newspaper such as *The Telegraph* and *Spectator* were on hand. Titles were, however, outdated and budget constraints meant very few recent publications were added to the collections.

Holidays were usually taken in the company of groups of relatives or friends, commonly to destinations in South Africa, perhaps to stay with people who had already emigrated or to go to the beach. People interested in wildlife would drive to Zimbabwe's game parks or further afield to Botswana or Namibia. An invitation to stay for a few days on a houseboat on Lake Kariba owned by a syndicate of friends was especially popular with men, or fishing and golfing at Nyanga in the Eastern Highlands and the Vumba Plateau outside of Mutare. For the less well off, National Parks' Department huts and campsites, built during Rhodesian times and now showing their age, offered an alternative. These located in pioneer or prime wilderness sites, such as the Matopos Hills and the Zambezi Valley, sustained white identity. I also met individuals who had never travelled as far as the Eastern Highlands, several hours away from Harare by car. Others, growing up in Matabeleland, had their movements confined well into adulthood because of the continuing insecurity in this part of the country—a situation that prevailed into the late 1980s.[19] Only with peace was it possible to safely venture farther afield. While some young whites headed off overseas as backpackers on working holidays, it was only a small minority of the very wealthy who contemplated a holiday in Europe. As part of foreign exchange control, the government set holiday allowances, just as during the Rhodesian era. Others nostalgically remembered times before the war when these trips were possible, the British and Rhodesian currencies being of equivalent value, and they were global travellers.

All in all, these factors added up to a limited exposure to new ideas or contact with the world outside Southern Africa, insularity heightened by foreign currency regulations. Thus white Zimbabweans enjoyed a comfortable, if provincial, lifestyle in which old friends and outdoor activities were crucial. A few used the term 'colonial' to describe it; 'the New Year's Eve dance at hotels in the mountains, watching cricket from beneath the trees, nothing much has changed', they said, 'it's all still very colonial'. And, thanking me, they applied this term to themselves as having somehow fallen behind the times, musing 'it's good to have you come and sit with old colonials like us'. Notwithstanding its limitations, this white lifestyle also provided the model of materiality and domestic assistance that middle-class blacks sought to emulate.

The argument

The new regime of Robert Mugabe, coming to power in 1980, was well aware that decolonisation would require a project of mental or imaginative disengagement

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19   Kriger (2007:66) notes that more white farmers and their families were murdered in Matabeleland during the 1982–87 conflict than during the liberation war.

(Ngugi wa Thiong'o 1988:90; Nederveen Pieterse and Parekh 1995:4) for whites as well as blacks and their participation in what would prove to be a programme of profound change. Separation from the majority, however, raised questions with regard to white receptivity, their readiness to confront the crisis of identity awaiting them or to 'come home' by embracing an alien mode of life thereafter (Dallmayr 1993:155). Where some among Rhodesia's white educated elite (Broby 1978) had favoured the continuation of European privilege on account of their skills, the incoming government encouraged them to stay, not by offering compensations or incentives, but by announcing a policy of national reconciliation.

The terms offered to whites to stay after independence are outlined in the following chapter. The argument is advanced that reconciliation introduced a debate about racial identity and clarified official expectations of whites who opted to remain in the country. More particularly, by de-absoluting and problematising the present, reconciliation opened up the possibility that things could be different (Falzon 1998:69) and that a new conversation or relationship between the former colonisers and colonised could evolve. Outward signs taken during the 1980s to reflect whites' willingness to reconcile included emigration figures, voting patterns and their preparedness to advance the government's national development goals.

Moves towards black self-determination and sovereignty began with the symbolic and spatial re-inscription of the country. Chapter 3 describes the decolonisation of Rhodesia's national iconography and geographical landscape that mirrored Zimbabwe's shifting social relations. Colonial landmarks and symbols linking Rhodesia's history to the territory were revised during the 1980s and early 1990s, eradicating from the landscape social knowledge that privileged white identity, decentring the settlers and denaturalising their presence. Whites, contesting this, produced an alternative metaphysics of European settlement—also identified in this chapter—which served to root them firmly and legitimately in Zimbabwean soil.

With the removal of white knowledge, the question of what was now to be remembered about the colonial era proved critical to the decolonisation process. Chapter 4 discusses the official critique of Rhodesia's past objectified at Heroes' Acre, a monument that provides a concrete and visual display of the settlers' interpellation in the discursive constitution of national rebirth. The chapter asks to what extent whites recognised themselves and were able to invest in the subject positions on display and suggests that settlers and their descendants were offered only a few limited ways of being in history. Importantly, as a body of knowledge, this icon embedded colonialism as a cognitive frame, thereby putting in place the ideological foundation necessary for the State's future nationalisation projects.

Remaking the country to reflect a black identity also required that moral codes be reworked. Revisions to the scope and meaning of Zimbabwean citizenship provide examples. Chapter 5 describes the 1984 exercise of renunciation of foreign citizenship that was to put an end to the separation of the former colonists and colonised. Here, the State looked for evidence of a sense of commitment from settlers, of loyalty objectified in, among other things, passports, tools in the politics of their identification. Court decisions and legislative revisions, also detailed in this chapter, suggested greater weight being placed on *jus sanguinis*, of belonging in terms of descent, as the basis for citizenship of the country. Consequently, whites had little confidence that their claim to citizenship on the basis of birthright would be accepted.

Ideas about who belonged and how they belonged in racial and cultural terms also surfaced in debate surrounding economic decolonisation. Chapter 6 addresses the prominence given indigene representations from the early 1990s—hitherto a term unheard in Zimbabwe's identity politics—in an anticipatory discourse of black economic empowerment. The grounds on which whites believed that they too could legitimately position themselves as indigenes and call Zimbabwe home are examined. Their perceptions did not, however, enjoy widespread acceptance among the majority. Instead, the black discourse produced whites as aliens, between cultures and countries, and the 'poetics' of their displacement (Kaplan 1990:26) was captured in the designation of white farmland described towards the end of the chapter.

Chapter 7 shifts the focus from pragmatic to affective dimensions of community identification. It suggests how subjectivity and the remaking of identity, emerging out of Zimbabwe's changed power relations, have been felt and interiorised by members of the white community, generating within them a sense of being disconnected from their history and homeland. The question is posed rhetorically whether whites could think, or imagine, a way through estrangement and find a passage out of their current deracination. The search by a few to find common ground and engage with blacks in pushing for government accountability and constitutional reform is then described.

Thus, in large measure, this is a study of Zimbabwe's borders and boundaries from 1980 to 1999, all in one way or another informed by memories of Rhodesia's colonial period. Where some had a taxonomic clarity, others were more a matter of personal definition. Nonetheless, each record structured consciousness, separating people from one another, and reflected the whites' corresponding journey from pioneers to exiles. Reading now scholarly works of Zimbabwe from 2000, I am struck by how much has changed, yet at the same time many underlying ideas appear ever familiar. Chapter 8 provides a postscript that illustrates the continuing purchase of memory in multi-party electoral challenges and land reform that have fed the 'Zimbabwean crisis' at the start of

the twenty-first century. In conclusion, the suggestion is made that there is a strong theoretical distinction between the post-colonialism of New World settler societies and the Old World states of Africa and Asia. An undifferentiated use of the term elides radically different ways in which decolonisation has taken place, the possibilities for settlers putting paid to the past and the trajectory out of colonialism for those who elect to make their home in the post colony.