Former farm workers of foreign descent in communal areas in post-fast track Zimbabwe: The case of Shamva District

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ABSTRACT

Land and ethnicity continue to condition contestations in relation to belonging amongst rural Zimbabweans. The colonial era defined Zimbabwe's land politics in a highly racialised and ethnicised manner. Racially, the colonial era gave birth to white-owned fertile farm lands, while blacks (or Africans) were resettled in agriculturally-unproductive Reserves, later referred to as communal areas in the post-colonial era. Though they were initially created with a segregatory and oppressive intent bent on disenfranchising native Africans, the Reserves became a definitive landscape embedded in ethnic and ancestral belonging for the autochthonous Natives.

The Reserves were created exclusively for autochthonous Africans, and the colonial administration ensured that foreign migrant Africans recruited mainly as covenanted labour from nearby colonies would not be accommodated and consequently belong in Reserves. Migrant Africans were instead domiciled in white commercial farms, mines and urban areas, and deprived of land rights accorded to the autochthones. In the case of white farms specifically, the labourers experienced a conditional belonging (to the farm). This overall exclusionary system was later inherited and maintained by the post-colonial Zimbabwean government, up until the year 2000.

Zimbabwe's highly documented Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) from the year 2000 did away with the entrenched racial bifurcations of land, as white commercial farms became fast track farms. However, it did not undercut the existence of communal areas. The FTLRP had a profound effect on the lives of commercial farm workers, particularly those of foreign origin who had no other home or source of livelihood to fall back on after fast track displacements. Some though sought to move into communal areas, from which they had been excluded previously.

Within this context, most scholarly studies of the post fast track period ignore the plight of former farm workers especially those that moved to, and into, communal areas. This ethnographic study, specifically of former farm workers of foreign origin in Shamva communal areas, therefore seeks to contribute to Zimbabwean studies in this regard. It documents and examines the perceptions, practices and lived experiences of former farm workers of foreign origin now residing in the Bushu communal areas of Shamva, and how they interface with Bushu autochthones in seeking to belong to Bushu. This is pursued by way of qualitative research methods (including lengthy stays in the

study sites) as well as through the use of a theoretical framing focusing on lifeworlds, interfaces, belonging, othering and strangerhood.

Key findings reveal that belonging by the former farm workers in Bushu entails a non-linear and convoluted process characterised by a series of contestations around for instance land shortages, limited livelihood strategies and cultural difference. This project of belonging does not entail assimilation on the part of the former farm workers, as they continue to uphold certain historical practices, leading to a form of co-existence between the autochthones and allochthones in Bushu. In this way, the former farm workers seem to develop a conditional belonging in (and to) Bushu, albeit different than the one experienced on white farms in the past.

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DEDICATION

To Tavonga H and Hazel T with love.

ACRONYMS

CLA	Communal Land Act
DA	District Administrator
DDc	District Development Committee
DDC	District Development Coordinator
FDC	Farm Development Committee
FFWP	Former Farm Worker Plots
FTRLP	Fast Track Land Reform Programme
GAPWUZ	General Agricultural and Plantation Workers Union of Zimbabwe
GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe
HIV	Human Immune Virus
JAG	Justice for Agriculture
LAA	Land Apportionment Act
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
NAD	Native Affairs Department
NC	Native Commissioner
NGO	Non- Governmental Organisation
NHLHA	Native Land Husbandry Act
PDL	Poverty Datum Line
RDC	Rural District Council
SADC	Southern African Development Community
TLA	Tribal Land Authorities

TTL	Tribal Trust Land
USD	United States Dollar
VIDCO	Village Development Committee
WADCO	Ward Development Committee
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZBC	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 Introduction

This thesis offers a sociological understanding of the lives of former farm workers of foreign descent who were displaced from commercial farming areas and moved into Zimbabwe's communal areas in the context of the Zimbabwean government's Fast Track Land Reform Programme (hereafter 'fast track' or FTLRP) starting in the year 2000. In doing so, the study focuses specifically on Shamva District in Mashonaland Central Province as the case study.

Analytically, I frame this study within post-colonial land and agrarian studies with specific emphasis on questions around ethnic belonging and politics of belonging as well as co-existence between black Africans within the categories of 'autochthone' and 'allochthone'. Autochthones are people thought to have a primordial relationship to a certain territory, or at least to have occupied a particular territory first before other groups. Allochthones are people thought to have originated some distance from where they currently reside. Widespread contestations exist in Zimbabwe and throughout Africa with regard to claims to autochthonous status (Geschiere 2009, 2011, Geschiere and Gugler 1998, Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000). For the purposes of the thesis, autochthones are long-establishment communal areas villagers, whereas allochthones are former farm workers of foreign (non-Zimbabwean) origin moving into and residing in communal areas because of fast track. However, in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in Africa, widespread contestations exist with regard to claims to autochthonous status.

The study adopts Norman Long's interface theory to analyse the ways in which autochthones and allochthones, as human subjects, negotiate and navigate their complex interactions and possible co-existence. In this respect, in drawing upon the notion of life-worlds as propounded by Alfred Schütz, I seek to show how – on a micro-level – cultural values, lived experiences, belief systems and social identities come together along co-constructed interfaces in fluid and often contested ways (Schneider et al. 2010). Though interface theory is said to privilege agency and underplay structure (Denzin 2001, Schuerkens 2003), how structure 'conditions' the coming together and meeting of different life-worlds – as alien ex-workers enter communal area spaces – is brought to the fore.

The historical process of 'othering', in relation to these foreign ex-labourers, is also central to the thesis. Othering is not a one-way process undertaken only by the recipient communal area villagers, as if the ex-labourers have no agency and are mere victims of the machinations of villages on their entry into communal areas. Rather, othering is a two-way process. Therefore, in examining the normative and geo-spatial distances between the autochthones and allochthones (or internal migrants), it becomes necessary to highlight the co-construction of their social interface and how this is configured and reconfigured over time. In accounting for 'otherism', this study also makes use of the concept of 'the stranger' as articulated by theorists such as Simmel (1950) and Hughes (2007). Simmel (1950:1) for instance posits that a stranger "comes today and stays tomorrow", such that the presence of strangers (in this case, foreign ex-workers) may always be a source of otherism. At the same time, for the ex-farm labourers, whose origins remain unidentifiable with any fixed territory (from their perspective), they wander about as strangers belonging to some indeterminate space beyond their here-and-now localised existence.

Finally, the concept of belonging, including in relation to land, appears in the work of scores of scholars, such as Yuval-Davies (2006, 2011), Trudeau (2006), Schein (2009), Antonsich (2010), Youkhana (2010), Anthias (2013), Wright (2015), Yuval-Davies et al. (2018), and Meiu (2019). This concept, and this work, are critical to this study of the convoluted relationships between communal area villagers and foreign ex-farm labourers in Zimbabwe. This entails paying significant attention to the politics of land-based belonging as embedded in the life-worlds of (and everyday interfaces between) autochthones and allochthones (outsiders or strangers).

1.2 Background to the Study

Historically, white commercial farms throughout much of colonial Zimbabwe drew upon foreign labour, chiefly from Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique. There were however local Africans also living and working on the farms. Nevertheless, cross-border movement in the region was common from the early days of the British conquest of Southern Rhodesia[1], with movement into the colony as both farm and mining labourers, often with the encouragement of the colonial state (Chadya and Mayavo 2002). A century later (by the 1990s), most farm workers of foreign descent were

[1] Southern Rhodesia is a colonial name for Zimbabwe, named after Cecil John Rhodes, the owner of the British South African Company (BSAC) that led the colonisation of the territory in 1890. It was renamed Rhodesia in 1963 following the independence of Northern Rhodesia (present-day Zambia). It became Zimbabwe-Rhodesia in 1979, and then Zimbabwe after the end of colonial rule in 1980.

Zimbabwean born (Hartnack 2009) but, in state and popular discourses, they were (and are still) often considered as 'aliens', 'outsiders' or 'foreigners'. This is even though most no longer have links with their countries of origin and perceive themselves as Zimbabweans first (Muzondidya 2007). In fact, even after fast track, when tens of thousands lost their employment as commercial farm labourers (and were in many cases internally displaced), they had not intentions of relocating to their countries of origin (Chadya and Mayavo 2002). With regard to this study, the foreign ex-farm labourers sought residence in communal areas.

Communal lands are a product of colonial racial land segregation whereby Europeans (whites) had the privilege of occupying large tracts of fertile lands, particularly in the form of commercial farms. Infertile and crowded Native Reserves were established for autochthonous Africans, later to be known as Tribal Trust Lands from the 1960s and then communal areas in the post-1980 period. Communal area villagers possess inter-generational usufruct rights to so-called customary land, which includes the rights of control, access and usage, though this has a gendered dimension as men have primary rights to land. These areas, at least from the perspective of colonial officials, became the birthright lands for the autochthones (who occupied the territory of Southern Rhodesia before British colonialism). However, establishing white commercial farms and Native Reserves entailed coerced displacement and removal of Africans on a significant basis, particularly during the first half of the twentieth century. For instance, a large number of villagers in the present-day communal lands of Shamva, who are primarily Korekore and Zezuru ethnically (and part of the broader Shona ethnic group), experienced forced displacement from the fertile Mazowe and Bindura areas in the 1920s to pave way for white settler agriculture (Doke 1931, Matondi 2001).

Despite their arid, crowded and unproductive character agriculturally, communal territories over time became important both symbolically and territorially to autochthones, including as places of historical memory, identity-formation and, more importantly, social belonging. Therefore, a pronounced nexus exists between land, history and belonging in these areas, and often with an ethnic dimension (Nyambara 2001). The colonial state's constant shuffling of the rural population through displacements, alongside the congestion arising in Native Reserves (and then Tribal Trust Lands) (Mlambo and Mwatara 2016), led to local and often bitter contestations which continued after independence. Amongst different groupings of autochthones (or indigenes), tensions and

conflicts arose over land boundaries, access and usage in the context of deepening land scarcity and competing assertions about ancestral origin.

Under such circumstances, different sub-ethnic groups were inclined to refer to each other as 'strangers' (while designating themselves as original 'settlers') (Fisher 2012), claiming that the 'other' was encroaching on their specific territorial space. At times, this would involve making ancestral claims to tracts of land supposedly occupied prior to the entry of colonial settlers. This occurred despite the fact that all such groups were autochthones with reference to the national territory as a whole. Ongoing land challenges in terms of the possibility of co-existence within the autochthonous communal area population (who are said to constitute the 'sons and daughters of the soil' in the Zimbabwean state's public discourse) are bound to be extenuated when a 'foreign' or 'alien' population (ex-labourers from commercial farms) enter into the communal space. Within this context, the FTLRP, which in part was meant to decongest communal areas, has unintentionally led to a new round of migration of 'strangers' into communal lands in the form of former farm workers of foreign origin.

While indigenes have been officially entitled to communal land during colonial and post-colonial times, Africans of foreign origin (notably farm labourers on white commercial farms) have lived and worked at some socio-spatial distance from communal area villagers both pre- and post-1980. In addition, they have been historically located at the periphery (or bottom) of the socio-political (and ethnic) hierarchy in the country. They have long experienced a precarious citizenship without even permanent residence rights, including land and voting rights (Daimon 2014). Autochthonous nationalists have identified them as 'sell outs' in the nation's key historical struggles (Rutherford 2001). Within the micro-politics of belonging, often in their infrequent (and at-a-distance) interfaces with rural autochthones, they have been regularly 'otherised', often called by derogatory verbal slurs. Such labels emerged in part from the fact that farm labourers occupied a subordinate and voiceless status on white commercial farms under colonialism, which continued in post-1980 Zimbabwe. In this regard, they were conceptualised as at-one with white settler farmers, and certainly not 'sons and daughters of the soil'.

'Foreign' labourers on commercial farms lived on the farm, without any independent access to land beyond the farm. Their residence on white farms was precarious as it was contingent on providing ongoing labour to the farmer (i.e. residence was tied to employment). In what Rutherford

(2001) refers to as 'domestic government', involving a complex mix of racialised coercive and paternalistic labour relations, commercial farms represented a form of decentralised despotism in the colonial and post-colonial eras. Marginalised on white-owned land and excluded from communal land during both periods, foreign Africans lacked any meaningful attachment to land. Insofar as they belonged, they belonged to the white farmer under domestic government.

A major turning point occurred in 2000 because of the nation-wide land occupations leading to the fast track land programme. This was a difficult time for all farm labourers, both indigenous and alien, as they were often perceived by land occupiers as aligned to the white farm owners, and defending white farms so as to ensure their own livelihoods (Fisher 2012:16). The occupations took place at a time of major contestation between the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and the newly formed Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), with white farmers supporting the latter en masse. White farmers' strident public support for the MDC complicated the position of farm labourers and the autochthone-allochthone interface, particularly given that most occupiers (as in the case of Shamva) came from nearby communal areas such as Bushu and Madziwa (Matondi 2012, Helliker and Bhatasara 2018). Though there is significant evidence of farm labourers defending the farms against occupation, there are instances where farm workers connived with farm occupiers (including undertaking reconnaissance for occupiers) or even occupied nearby farms (James 2015).

Clearly, then, the foreignness of these farm workers, and their othering, became connected deeply to their being labelled as 'sell-outs', in a similar fashion to the racially-inspired autochthones' struggle against whites (Muzondidya 2007). Both whites and alien farm workers were not 'sons and daughters of the soil', but foreigners. The sellout label prevailing during the land occupations depicted them not only as 'the other' (the stranger) but, as well, the enemy within – in the eyes of the autochthones. If they were nothing more than strangers within Zimbabwean society then, likewise, they would be strangers specifically in the historically designated rural spaces for African autochthones, namely, communal lands. With these 'sell-out' and 'foreign' tags being reimagined and reasserted within the context of the fast track due to their alleged alliance with former white farmers, it remains unclear how they could possibly enter into a condition of co-existence with autochthones.

Under fast track, the vast majority of white farmers were subject to forced displacement from their farms, over a number of years, and most farm labourers (both indigenes and foreigners) had to seek residence and work elsewhere. Hence, tens of thousands of farm labourers were compelled to leave white commercial farms during the occupations and under fast track (Mabvurira et al. 2012). Others remained on the fast track farms, though not necessarily gainfully employed. Under fast track, the former white commercial farms became either commercial A2 farms or A1 farms where small-scale farming was to take place. In the case of A2 fast track farms, many new black commercial farmers did not employ these ex-workers. As well, the new A1 farmers preferred to employ their own kith and kin, leaving the former workers (particularly foreign workers) in a state of destitution. Given their below-subsistence farm wages historically, and in the context of minimum or no retrenchment packages, ex-farm labourers typically did not have a significant asset base for even short-term survival. The Zimbabwean state also failed to incorporate farm labourers into the fast track programme (Sachikonye 2003), seemingly because they were considered as foreigners (Magaramombe 2001), with James (2015) claiming that less than 3% of farm labourers received A1 plots in Shamva.

In this troubling and uncertain context, ex-farm workers migrated to towns or informal settlements, or sought to move into communal areas, but the majority opted to stay on the former white farms (Sachikonye 2003). In the case of Shamva, as indicated, some moved to Bushu and Madziwa communal areas. Ex-farm labourers who are Zimbabwean-by-descent had (at least by birthright) had the right of settling in communal areas, but this would not be necessarily an easy or uncontested entry and transition given the marginality that comes with the farm worker tag (James 2015, Hartnack 2017). In many cases, these farm workers had what they considered as their historical communal area, and some had families or at least relations based there (Rutherford 2001). However, for autochthones moving into a new communal area, this would require approval from various local land-giving authorities. Due to absolute destitution, some alien ex-labourers also sought to migrate into – and live in – communal areas under extremely difficult circumstances (Chadya and Mayavo 2002). At times, this entailed accessing communal plots through political networks. Normally, it involved the granting of inferior portions of land, often along communal boundaries, acting as a buffer zone from wild animals (Daimon 2014).

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Despite Zimbabwe gaining independence forty years ago, the country remains entangled in ethnic politics of belonging that situate certain ethnic groups at the periphery of the nation state (Ndlovu-Gastheni 2009, Muzondidya 2007). This reality defies promises made by the Zimbabwean government at the advent of independence, claiming its commitment to full citizenship for all and a new nation state that is indiscriminate via colour, creed and ethnicity. A conciliatory and all-inclusive approach would ostensibly 'correct' colonial imbalances that had bifurcated land between the white minority and autochthonous Zimbabweans[2]. All resources including land would be divided (in an equitable manner) amongst all races and ethnic groups.

Since the colonial state had constructed – discursively – Africans ethnically, and given that the liberation war of the 1970s pitted adversaries divided primarily on racial lines, there was a reasonable expectation that, with independence, ethnic co-existence within the African autochthonous population would receive priority, and that non-autochthons would have an enhanced sense of belonging (as authentic Zimbabweans) to the nation state. However, this has not been forthcoming, in part because of the rivalries between the two main liberation movements dating back to the early 1960s and the quest for post-colonial power.

Thus, the post-colonial state has struggled with deconstructing colonial systems of inclusion and exclusion particularly when it comes to identity and access to public goods, especially land (Mlambo 2016). This became readily apparent with the Gukurahundi massacres in Matabeleland in the 1980s and the ongoing unfettered access to commercial land by whites during the first two decades of independence. Within the African autochthonous population, marginalisation and exclusion in relation to land and belonging to the nation state has led Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009) to question whether 'Zimbabweans' actually exist. Minor ethnic groups in particular, such as the Tonga, experience exclusion on multiple fronts. The citizenship status and experiential belonging of foreigners, and specifically foreign farm labourers, has been no less problematic. Under fast track, by supposedly 'correcting' colonial land imbalances, the Zimbabwean government

[2] The Ndebele and Shona are the two main ethnic groups that the colonial government recognised as the autochthonous population and that perception has remained albeit in a contested fashion (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009). These two ethnic groups are however made of fragmented sub-ethnic groupings. These include the Korekore, Zezuru, Manyika, Karanga for the Shona (see Doke 1931), while the Ndebele include the Khumalo, Amahole and Zanzi (Ndlovu-Gastheni 2009).

introduced a land ownership and entitlement system privileging those purported to be 'true' Zimbabweans.

Post-colonial dynamics have amplified autochthonous claims and ethnic-based belonging. In terms of the fast track programme, beneficiaries of land were supposed to be Zimbabweans able to trace their origins over time to a particular village or location somewhere in the rural areas (Muzondidya 2007). Whites, Asians and coloureds as well as Africans whose ethnic origins were 'foreign' (that is, emanating from outside the current boundaries of Zimbabwe) were by definition excluded (Muzondidya 2007, Daimon 2014, 2018). Since land access and the rights accompanying it became linked inextricably to a project of belonging to indigenous African societies (Kibreab 1999, Lentz 2007), the privation of land was simultaneously a project of un-belonging. The 'othering' process instrinsic to the Zimbabwean state's national land programme became translated, at local levels, into a micro-politics of belonging where self-acclaimed autochthones categorised Africans of foreign origin within the spectrum of strangerhood, thus continuing to undercut the promises made at independence.

The 'foreigner' label, therefore, has largely contributed to the marginalisation and sometimes (state-sanctioned) victimisation of African migrants, particularly farm workers of foreign origin. Despite immensely contributing to Zimbabwe's once-successful commercial agricultural sector, (former) farm workers of foreign origin remain part of the ignored and marginalised "invisible subject minority" (Muzondidya 2007:326) in Zimbabwean society. Although they physically look just like those said to be autochthones in terms of stature and colour, their origin has confined their being and belonging to a separate category or label. Understanding the foreignness of these (now) ex-farm labourers prior to 1980 entails a focus on the racialised configuration of colonial Rhodesian society, and the manner in which white settler farmers sought access to a docile and cheap African labour force when not available locally. Understanding their foreignness post-1980, and specifically in the context of fast track, requires a more focused examination of dynamics within the African population (i.e. autochtones and allochthones) with reference to land and belonging. This is what the thesis seeks to do.

The thesis focuses on former migrant farm labourers who moved into communal areas within a context of heightened and violent partisan political polarisation between the country's major political parties. Issues of belonging for these ex-farm labourers become pertinent now that the

white farmers to whom they became attached historically have been compelled to leave their farms. The farm was all they knew and, though subject to 'domestic government', they developed a sense of belonging to this rural space. This implies the reinventing and pursuing of new modes of belonging. They had no ancestral ties as such to the farms on which they worked. In fact, in the case of Shamva (and indeed elsewhere), some of the farm occupiers were communal peasants claiming autochthonous ownership to the farms (Matondi 2001). Against such a background, what possibilities lay ahead for these ex-workers? Insofar as they sought to move onto communal lands, what processes would this entail? Would they be accepted and would they be willing to identify with (and live alongside) the very people who were accusing them of being outsiders and sell-outs? Would they, over time, develop a communal area mode of belonging? Alternatively, would they forever be strangers and outsiders never fully within?

These questions become more complex because the ex-farm workers migrating into communal areas are often entering into closed communities in the sense of ethnicity (Cheater 1990). Ethnic-based belonging is more intense in communal areas compared to commercial farms and fast track resettlement areas, as well to urban areas where some of the former commercial farm workers migrated after fast track. Thus, the ethnic dimension of land and belonging becomes critical because, historically, people living in specific communal areas – in most cases – are related by blood (Cousins 1993). They know each other intimately and they usually claim primordial or autochthonous relationship to the land on ethnic grounds (O'Flaherty 1998). Whether they are willing to let strangers in, and under what conditions, requires investigation.

Another factor that makes the communal area question of belonging crucial is the persistent critical shortage of the finite land. Communal land disputes usually due to land shortages are increasingly becoming pervasive among the autochthone themselves, as in the case of Shamva (Matondi 2001). Given this major challenge, how are 'foreigners' negotiating access to communal land and how do they seek to maintain the land and social relations that accompany land and belonging?

Though some studies have focused on the lives of former farm workers soon after fast track, most analyses consider those who remained on the (less ethnicised) farms or moved to fast track resettlement areas (Sachikonye 2003, Hartnack 2005, 2009, 2017, Chiweshe and Chabata 2019). The prevailing literature on displaced farm workers has not focused sufficiently on those who moved to communal areas, and particular ex-labourers of foreign origins. The troubled history and

contemporary plight of former farm labourers of foreign origin are therefore significantly under-researched in relation to their contested movements into communal lands post-2000 with reference to politics of territory, belonging and identity. Hartnack (2017: 279) queries this dearth of literature clearly stating that, "[it] is not clear how displaced former workers now living in communal areas have fared given the severe lack of literature on their situation".

Despite this gap in the literature, there is evidence that some autochthones in communal areas are uncomfortable with the idea of former foreign farm workers settling in their territorial space (Rutherford 2001, Fisher 2012). Specific chiefs, who act as traditional authorities in communal areas, even called for the repatriation of the former migrants to their countries of origin soon after fast track began. Government officials shared similar sentiments, with one remarking: "They are non-citizens, what other country in the world allows non-citizens to get land?" (quoted in Rutherford 2001:226). Have the authorities, including chiefs, since changed these views towards their fellow Africans now that most of the white farmers (the residue of the colonial legacy) are off the land?

Though the dominant discources seem to have persisted in terms of otherising the former migrant workers, it is pertinent to question whether these ex-workers consider themselves 'aliens', 'strangers', among other 'otherised' categories, especially in relation to communal areas. This is a crucial issue considering that many of the so-called (former) foreign farm workers have lived in the country for their entire lives, with some being second and third generations of migrants who have never set a foot in their 'countries of origin'. They have lost links to the countries of their (purported) ancestral origin (Muzondidya 2007). This calls for insights into the former migrant farm workers' own perceptions and lived experiences as informed by their narratives of interfaces and co-existence with the autochthones, in communal areas in particular.

1.4 Thesis Objectives

The overall objective of the thesis is to offer a sociological analysis of belonging amongst former farm workers of foreign origins in communal areas after fast track in Zimbabwe, with a specific focus on Shamva District. The subsidiary goals include:

- To identify factors determining the former migrant farm workers' decision to (voluntarily or involuntarily) settle in the communal areas.

- To examine the ways in which these former farm workers have negotiated their way through the communal area space, including in relation to land possession and livelihood sources.
- To analyse farm workers' perceptions and narratives of possible co-existence as well as their lived experiences and interaction with the autochthones in the communal areas.
- To analyse autochthones' perceptions and practices in relation to the former farm labourers, including forms of exclusion.
- To consider the role of the state, including chiefly authorities, in the inclusion and/or exclusion of the former farm workers in the communal areas.

1.5 Research Methodology and Methods

This section discusses the research methodology informing this thesis and the research methods used for the fieldwork of the study. A research methodology, which guides the choice of theoretical framework (see chapter 2) and research methods adopted for a study, raises questions around philosophical commitments (Kumar 2011). In particular, it speaks to claims around the fundamental character of social reality or what can be said to exist (ontology) as well as the nature of knowledge and how we come to acquire knowledge about social reality (epistemology) (Ormston et al. 2014). Hence, how we view social reality is intertwined with how we go about seeking that reality (Fleetwood 2005). Overall, a particular ontological claim tends to lead to a particular epistemological claim.

1.5.1 Ontology and Epistemology – A Constructionist Stance

There are a number of different, and competing, 'schools' of ontological and epistemological philosophies. I do not seek to detail the array of ontological-epistemological claims. Rather, in identifying and justifying the specific ontological-epistemological stance taken for this thesis, I merely contrast it with the main opposing stance. The overall philosophical commitment underpinning this thesis is a constructionist-interpretivist one, which I contrast to a positivist-realist one (or simply positivism).

Positivism is premised on the ontological assumption that a universal social reality exists independent of human interpretations, feelings, beliefs and conceptions (Walliman 2006). The

social-material world has a pre-interpretive existence as an objective fact, such that humans merely have interpretations of (or about) this objective reality (Silverman 1985). The only reality which exists is that which exists within the realm of our sensory perceptions, so that positivism disputes the notion of an 'underlying' reality existing beyond (or out of reach) our sensory perceptions. Epistemologically, the observed social world is subject to scientific measurement and is examined by way of identifying the causal relations and regularities which order social reality: these take the form of general laws about human society, or elements of society, devoid of any spatial or temporal variation. As well, consistent with the ontology, sociological knowledge is produced independently of the researcher and human subjects' values and interpretations. Because of this, a positivist epistemology is equated with the notion of explanation, with knowledge of the social world acquired via quantitative research methods (such as social surveys).

Constructivism-interpretivism adopts a different set of ontological and epistemological commitments (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). From a constructivist ontology, social reality does not exist 'out there' as a social fact, independent of subjective and intersubjective meanings and interpretations of it. Social reality certainly exists, but its existence is mediated by socially-constructed definitions of it. Human subjects act out their lives – through social practices – in a manner conditioned by these subjective interpretations. Like positivism, constructivism tends to focus on the world-as-experienced or the sensory-observable world.

Since reality is socially constructed, and human society is an ensemble of different social groupings with different conditions of existence and forms of experience, there are bound to multiple subjective versions of social reality. Social reality does not have a universal undifferentiated presence shared by all. Multiple social realities exist (Baxter and Jack 2008), but realities which are subject to change as different social groupings negotiate their existence through ongoing processes of interactions with each other. Thus, there is a fluidity and dynamism associated with social realities.

Epistemologically, interpretivism argues that, since reality is socially constructed through meanings that social actors attach to their world, social inquiry should concentrate on understanding those meanings (Walliman 2006). Knowledge production therefore involves exploring and understanding the social world of social actors or agents from their own perspectives (Hitzler and Eberle 2000). Social facts are not objective facts, as they are laden with subjective

meanings. Further, because subjective meanings emerge and develop under specific spatial-temporal conditions, formulating generalised or universal claims become more difficult. Though context-specific studies may generate findings which resonate with similar contexts elsewhere, it cannot be asserted that these findings are necessarily replicable in any strict sense. Overall, unlike positivism which seeks to explain human action, constructivism-interpretivism seeks to understand the social world. For this reason, qualitative research methods are consistent with constructivism, as they focus on subjective interpretation and reasoning.

Three key caveats are necessary. First of all, I have outlined the two philosophical claims in their extreme versions, and there are different versions of both positivism and constructivism. Secondly, there are other philosophical stances beyond these two, including the critical realism of Roy Bhaskar which is consistent with Marxism. Critical realism speaks about a stratified ontology and the importance of uncovering and identifying underlying generative mechanisms which give rise to the observable world. Thirdly, the emphasis on the part of critical realism on the structural conditioning of the world-as-experienced brings to the fore the importance of incorporating some notion of 'structure' into a constructivist philosophical stance. In this regard, I do not adopt a constructivism which is equivalent to idealism, as if social reality is reducible to subjective interpretations of it. Further, I recognise that the world-as-experienced (as investigated in this thesis) is infused with structural arrangements and tracings, in which exist differential power relations. These structural arrangements and tracings condition experiences and interpretations, and they also mediate the relationship between subjective interpretations and social practices – in other words, interpretations only condition social practices, they do not determine them. Given this third caveat, I am sensitive to 'structure' and set the structural context of this study in the contextual chapters (chapters 3, 4 and 5).

1.5.2 Constructivism and Belonging, Strangerhood and Autochthony

In order to document the lives of former farm workers of foreign origin and the autochthones in Bushu communal areas, there was a need to understand the lived experiences, narratives and understandings from the perspective of the concerned actors. As such, my research is based on the constructivist premise that social reality is constructed by human subjects and does not exist as external actualities, and I thereby give significance to the voices of the research participants. In the study site of Bushu, I focused on research subjects' perceptions, values, cultures, stories, histories and emotions as a way of understanding their life-worlds, particularly in relation to questions

around belonging, strangerhood and autochthony. All these questions incorporate a focus on social interpretations and practices, and the manner in which belonging, strangerhood and autochthony are subjected to everyday contestations because of these structurally-conditioned interpretations and practices.

Thus, a constructivist-interpretive methodology proved crucial in seeking to identify and understand the subjective interpretations, lived experiences and everyday practices of former farm workers as they interface (or interact) with long-established communal area residents (autochthones) in Bushu. As a result, my research philosophy led me to adopt qualitative research methods as the most suitable way of unpacking and addressing my thesis objectives. A quantitative approach was unsuitable for my study since the approach falls short of enabling an in-depth understanding of social phenomena (Yin 2014). Instead, a qualitative approach proved useful to me since its main focus is "to understand, explain, explore, discover and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and experiences of a group of people" (Kumar 2011:103). Thus, for me, qualitative research became "a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (Creswell 2009:4). More specifically, it entailed a semi-ethnographic case study of two villages within Bushu communal areas in Shamva District into which former farm workers moved subsequent to the fast track land reform programme.

1.5.3 Case Study Research Design

The research involved a single case study design, which proved suitable since the study sought to obtain a qualitative in-depth understanding of belonging. A case study can be understood as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin 2014:16). It is most appropriate when studying interactional dynamics and contemporary events in a 'natural' setting (Kumar 2011), including contested narratives of belonging in Bushu communal areas

A case study may entail exploratory, descriptive and explanatory inquiries (Yin 2003). In terms of exploratory inquiries, a case study is particularly suitable for researching and understanding an issue which has been inadequately studied (Baxter and Jack 2008, Kumar 2011). This was the case with my study which specifically focuses on former farm workers of foreign origin who migrated

to the communal areas in the aftermath of fast track. As already stated, nothing substantial has been documented concerning former farm workers of foreign origin who moved to the communal areas post fast track (Hartnack 2017). Beyond this, I use the case study for both descriptive (how) and explanatory (why) purposes, not merely detailing projects of belonging in Bushu (and contestations around them), but also offering an explanation (or understanding) of them in both a historical and structural context.

It is necessary to delineate the case studied in this thesis. Generally, a case is understood as "a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context ... in effect, your unit of analysis" (Miles and Huberman 1994:25). Thus a case could be an individual, organisation, event, process, village or a group to be studied (Kumar 2011). Further, a researcher could study a single case or multiple cases (Yin 2003, 2014). In this light, I chose Shamva District as my one case study. There are several villages in Shamva to where the former farm workers of foreign origin migrated following fast track. I should note, though, that the actual number of former farm workers of foreign origin and their families in Shamva is unknown. The villages include Kajakata, Zhanda, Chakonda, Marange, Chishapa and Jiti. Initially I paid visits to these villages and engaged in informal interviews with the villagers including the former farm workers and the autochthones.

Those conversations ended up persuading me to select two villages due to their significant numbers of former farm worker population as well as the cooperation of the participants and the village leadership. Thus, two villages in ward 13 of Shamva District's Bushu communal areas were selected through non-random purposive sampling, as sub-case studies. The two villages were, however, not chosen for comparative purposes as I was not aware of any significant differences between the two, before, during and even after the study. The presence and extent of the key issues under study (around the politics of belonging) were also considered before choosing to purposefully sample these two villages. I will call these villages Rena and Tina for confidentiality purposes.

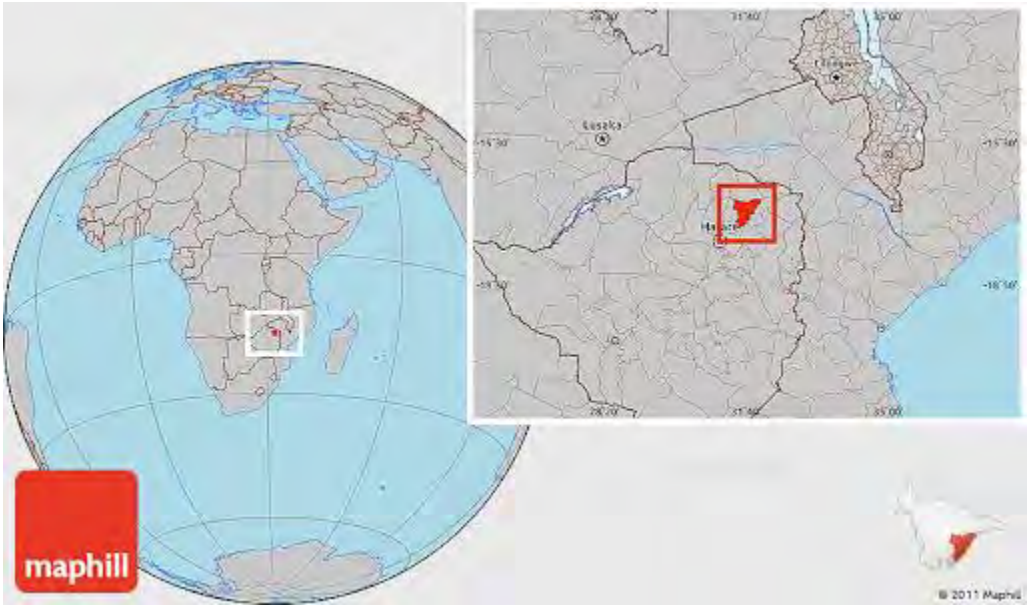
My selected villages also gave me ease of entry as I had networks there, having worked closely with the village leaders there between 2012 and 2014. During that period, I was employed as a Gender and Community Development Officer for Shamva District under the then Ministry for Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development. As well, formal clearance and entry into the field was easier for me as the authorities in the form of the Provincial Development Coordinator

(PDC) for Mashonaland Central Province (where Shamva is located) and the Shamva District Development Coordinator (DDC) were keen to have the research conducted in their province and district respectively. Both of them are holders of Master degrees, and their enthusiasm and cooperation regarding my study can also be understood by the fact that they appreciate the value of research. They also spoke of their intentions to pursue their own PhDs. From the DDC's office, I went to the Ward Councilor's office who introduced me to the village heads of Rena and Tina. The village heads assisted with identifying potential research participants. The initial participants introduced me to more participants, thus a snowball effect became part of my data sampling.

Given the case study design, and the selection of two villages in Bushu, there is no claim to the effect that the two sites represent (at least statistically) sites more broadly in Shamva or other communal areas in the country. A case is not to be confused for a sample (Creswell 2009). However, the evidence collected, and conclusions reached, should have relevance in terms of understanding similar dynamics around the politics of belonging for former farm labourers of foreign origin in similar or comparable sites (Yin 2014).

Shamva District falls under the auspices of Chaminuka Rural District Council in Mashonaland Central Province. Shamva town is 86 kilometres northeast of the capital of Harare, and 28 kilometres form the provincial capital of Bindura (Masuko 1998). Currently, Shamva consists of communal areas (under Bushu and Madziwa chieftaincies), older resettlement areas from the 1980s, A1 and A2 fast track farms and remaining white and black owned commercial farms (Bhatasara and Helliker 2018). Shamva is a politically volatile area with a large support base for the ruling ZANU-PF party. For an extended period, pre-dating 1980, communal areas in Shamva district were characterised by "frequent and bitter struggles" (Matondi 2001:8) over the finite communal land available, with these struggles involving autochthones or indigenes. Hence, historically, practices of social and spatial boundary making, including clashes over ancestral land claims, have been prevalent in the district. Foreign ex-farm labourers migrated into Shamva's Bushu communal areas during fast track within this historical and political context.

Figure 1.1: Zimbabwe Map Locating the Study Area



Source: Maphill (2011).

1.5.4 Research Methods

Though not strictly a research method, I should indicate that, prior to my fieldwork, I immersed myself in pertinent secondary (scholarly) literature pertaining to fast track land reform (and related matters) as well as more analytical literature around land, ethnicity, belonging and othering in Southern Africa. Studying this literature was central to shaping my thesis focus, topic and objective and, additionally, it allowed me to identify research gaps, particularly that nothing of significance was known or written about the former farm workers who migrated to communal areas post fast track displacements. The immense popular and scholarly concentration on fast track itself as well as A1 and A2 fast track farms resulted in an academic neglect of communal areas in general. I therefore chose to close that gap (though future studies are necessary) by focusing on former farm labourers of foreign origin and the politics of belonging in communal areas of Zimbabwe, and specifically Shamva for the reasons given.

My empirical chapters (chapters 6-9) are highly dependent on primary ethnographic data gathered during my fieldwork between September 2019 and March 2020. Since the research focuses on the lifeworlds and interfaces between two distinct groups, it required research methods that "counterpoise[] the voices, experiences and practices of all the relevant social actors involved"

(Long 1999:1). In this context, my fieldwork entailed simultaneous and multiple data collection methods including participant observation, in-depth semi-structured interviews (including life history interviews) and (one) focus group discussion.

1.5.4.1 Interviews

Interviews proved a useful data collection method, in particular by enabling an understanding of perceptions, life histories and lived experiences of my participants. I used in-depth semi-structured interviews for both key informants and ordinary participants in Bushu. Ordinary participants included the former farm workers of foreign origin and the autochthones residing in Bushu. In total, I interviewed 25 former farm works of foreign origin and 15 autochthones across both sites, bringing the total number of in-depth interviews with ordinary participants to 40. As indicated, these ordinary participants were selected on a non-random, purposeful and snowballing basis. Hence, there is no claim that they are statistically representative of any universe (or population) in the two villages studied. I also interviewed six key informants: the District Development Coordinator (DDC), politicians including the councilor for ward 13 and the Member of Parliament for Shamva South constituency, chief Bushu, and the two traditional village heads in whose villages I conducted my fieldwork. All the key informants were male possibly indicating the gendered realities of leadership in Bushu which are skewed towards men. These interviews ensured that I obtained in-depth evidence about the pertinent historical contexts for purposes of locating analytically the perspectives and experiences of former farm workers, and their relationships with indigenes over time. Table 1.1 below lists the formal interviews conducted.

Table 1.1: List of Formal Interviews

	Ex-farm Labourers		Ordinary Autochthones		Key Informants
Age	Males	Females	Males	Females	
25-29	-	-	1	-	
30-34	-	-	-	1	
35-39	1	-	1	2	
40-44	1	2	-	1	
45-49	2	1	2	1	1
50-54	2	3	2	-	2
55-59	3	1	1	1	1
60-64	2	2	-	-	1
65 and above	4	1	2	-	1
TOTAL	**15**	**10**	**9**	**6**	**6**

Source: Author's compilation.

The interview sessions for both key informants and ordinary participants took an average of 40 minutes. However, for some participants (both key informants and ordinary participants), there were multiple interview sessions in order to understand fully the complexities of the history of Bushu and the current contested politics of belonging from multiple perspectives. The guides for semi-structured interviews the appear in Appendix 1, 2 and 3. I chose not to record my interviews since participants were not comfortable with being recorded, particularly during the initial interviews. All of my participants spoke Shona (my mother language) and thus it was very easy for me to understand my research subjects, despite different accents. Some of the former farm workers of foreign origin (particularly first- and second- generation ones) would sometimes revert to their 'home language' (specifically, Chewa). I therefore engaged the services of a friend of mine conversant in Chewa who would from time to time help to interpret and translate.

The interview guides, composed of open-ended questions, allowed me to explore, describe and explain the relational dynamics between the former farm workers of foreign origin and the

autochthones in Bushu. They contained several key questions (open-ended, value neutral and understandable) that were meant to *guide* the interviewing process and delineate the issues to be explored. Open-ended interviews allowed my research participants to narrate their experiences, thoughts, feelings and perceptions in their own words and language. Therefore, in-depth and semi-structured interviews have the ability to explore perceptions, meanings, experiences beliefs, values, practices and motivations based on the social lifeworlds of individual interviewees (Silverman 1985, Kumar 2011), in my case with regard to localised and land-based narratives around the politics of belonging. This allowed both the researcher and participants to interpret meanings based on the participants'' points of view, leading to a conversation-type interaction during the interviews (Yin 2014).

In as much as they enable a conversation to flow between a researcher and participants, open ended questions can give both parties some leeway to depart from the interview guide question sequence (Creswell 2009). In certain instances in Bushu, such deviations from the guide resulted in both the researcher and participants pursuing other issues emerging during the interview process, which were not necessarily important to the issues under investigation. However, some of the deviations ended up revealing issues very pertinent to the study, which had been trivialised or overlooked at the beginning of the study. Open ended questions also allowed me to probe more on issues I felt needed to be explained further. Most importantly, the interviews allowed participants to discuss issues they felt were very important. I remember the Shamva Disrict Development Cordinator clearly stating to me, "now your research has begun…" (Interview with the Shamva DDC, 19 September 2019), as he began to tell me about key land dynamics in Bushu, which coincidentally were left out on my interview guide. Issues he raised were to later prove very vital to the study.

The flexibility of the interviews also enabled me to constantly revisit, rephrase or change the chronology of the questions or to completely skip some questions as I deemed fit. For example, in some instances, respondents would address a question appearing later in the guide, before being asked. I would listen attentively to the interviewee despite the disruption to my pre-pre-conceived interview guide, to ensure a free-flowing conversation, skipping that question in the guide later if necessary. In some instances, participants would ask me to save some questions for later interviews. For instance, I remember one of my participants, Martha, telling me point blank that she could not answer some questions before getting to know me better. So, she chose which

questions to respond to especially during our first interview. I had to skip some of the questions during our first two interviews. However, as our rapport and mutual trust became stronger, we managed to revisit some of the previously-omitted questions.

The flexibility of open-ended and semi-structured interviews was particularly important when it came to questions which were politically-sensitive. I noticed that some of the participants were initially uncomfortable with discussing issues of partisan politics. For instance, I found out that ordinary participants in particular would change the topic whenever issues about the MDC or ZANU PF were brought to the fore. I would then skip these questions and revisit them later, particularly during our follow-up interviews. Thus, in some instances, I avoided initially some questions, only to ask and even probe more only when the context was appropriate.

In some cases, because of language issues, wording would also be altered at times in order to fit in with the linguistic preferences and abilities of individual participants. That would entail using vernacular, colloquial or very formal language including English, depending on which seemed to flow most appropriately with individual participants in relation to their gender, age, ethnicity or education background. Thus, for instance, interviews with the District Development Cordinator flowed quite well in formal English, while Shona was more comfortable for autochthonous participants including village heads and political leaders. The study provided me with an opportunity to learn some other African languages particularly Chewa.

Interviews with the ordinary participants (especially the former farm workers of foreign origin) sometimes took the form of life history narratives (six in total, with 3 males and 3 females) whereby participants shared their life journeys, including significant events in their lives (see Appendix 4). Dhunpath and Samual (2009:4) highlight that life histories attempt to "structure the process of the telling of stories to yield rich, in-depth details about the specific life experiences, memories and interpretations that the individuals produce". The former farm workers of foreign origin spoke to me in-depth, albeit to varying degrees, about their lives and experiences before and after fast track. I asked them about their background and contemporary lives: including where they or their parents came from, migration experiences (for first generation migrants), childhood and growing up on white commercial farms (especially for those born in Zimbabwe), work and livelihoods on the farms, their marriages and family, their land occupation experiences, how they ended up in Bushu and their life experiences in Bushu. The life histories expedited an

understanding of negotiated relationships between the former farm workers of foreign origin and the autochthones in Bushu noting how those dynamics were also conditioned by broader socio-economic and political forces.

Key informants also significantly contributed to data generated in this study. Key informants are people in positions of authority or those with specialised knowledge of a particular social phenomenon (Cohen et al. 2007). Their influential positions usually equip them with knowledge or skills to which ordinary people might not be privy. Their information or narratives are, however, not immune to personal subjective positioning (Yin 2009). Quite often, key informants wield considerable direct and indirect influence over the various institutions and people over which or who they preside. These informants proved very vital to the understanding of land issues and narratives of belonging in Bushu, as well as issues about policy particularly in relation to land, administrative issues, and political and cultural phenomenon impinging upon land and belonging in Bushu.

1.5.4.2 Observation, Informal Interviews and Daily Conversations

Besides the more structured, formal interviews, I also engaged in informal interviews, daily conversations and observation of certain processes as I interacted with participants or as the villagers interacted between or among themselves. Observation involves "the process of learning through exposure to or involvement in day-to-day or routine activities of participants in the research setting" (Schensul et al. 1999:91). Observation takes various forms, including covert observation whereby the researcher observes or eavesdrops without participants being aware that they are being observed. It can also take place where those being observed are aware of this, sometime involving mild participation by the researcher. More strident participation observation entails the researcher openly becoming a part of the group under study and engaging in similar activities with the participants (Silverman 1985). In my study, I included all three of these forms of participant observation. The six-month period I spent in the two villages allowed me to observe events as they transpired in their natural settings in both villages. This ethnographic dimension meant that I could identify and investigate interfaces as a lived reality (i.e. real-time interfaces) for former farm workers of foreign origin and the autochthones in Bushu.

Importantly, observation carried out in an unobtrusive manner gave me the opportunity and ability to delineate the difference (if any) between what participants say and how they actually act. In this

light, I would observe the former farm workers and the autochthones as they interacted at community points especially at growth points, food-handout distribution points, boreholes and at one time at a funeral. Walks and visits to some of my participants' homesteads allowed me to observe first-hand the villagers' agricultural plots and homesteads as well as their daily routine activities. These walks, especially during my first days in the field, were accompanied by community members well known to the villagers and such people helped to enable and in some cases initiate conversations and interactions including between me and potential participants. Observational walks would sometimes cover long distances of up to 15 kilometres. Poor road networks in the villages meant that the use of a car was very limited and so I had to rely on walking. The poor road networks proved to be a blessing since walking on foot, though tiresome, enabled me to reach all my participants while making a series of observations and engaging in more conversation along the way.

Getting a glimpse of participants in their real-life settings provided significant depth to the study, unlike interviewing participants only on matters about their settings (and away from those very settings). I remember the relief and non-verbal cues of happiness expressed by beneficiaries of the food-handout programme as their names were being called out for them to receive maize. Capturing such non-verbal cues would have been difficult if I was to rely on interviews only. Even observing seemingly trivial activities later proved useful to the study as such activities were in fact pregnant with meaning to the social actors concerned. For instance, an apparently ordinary act such as watching television later proved very vital in understanding issues of belonging among the former farm workers of foreign origin in Bushu. Noticing how Chewa movies seemed important to many of my participants of foreign origin, I ended up engaging in informal conversations which shed light on the social meanings of foreign movies. Again, understanding such meanings and dynamics arose through highly informal, participatory fieldwork.

As I took transect walks in the villages, I would engage in daily conversations with the villagers and this helped me to (almost accidentally) capture the complexities of village dynamics which would 7 later prove to be of great substance to my research. For instance, I came to know about the *chinamwali* rite of passage which was practiced by former female farm workers of Chewa origin while eavesdropping on a conversation between two men at Kajakata shopping centre. Informal conversations proved vital as well for purposes of verifying my observations, thereby

improving my understanding of matters about interfaces and belonging in Bushu. In some instances, informal interviews proved to be a source of valuable information as I could salvage data that could have been difficult to access in more formal interviews. All observations made and informal interviews undertaken were captured in field notes.

1.5.4.3 Focus Group Discussion

A focus group discussion is a discussion with a group of people purposefully selected for a particular topic for research purposes (Creswell 2009, Yin 2014). I held one focus group discussion with eight Bushu village heads at Kajakata shopping centre, with the aim of developing insight into the cultural implications of the presence of the former farm workers of foreign origin in Bushu (see Appendix 5 for focus group guide). Village heads as traditional leaders wield invaluable knowledge about Bushu's cultural landscape, particularly in relation to the cultural politics of belonging and cultural othering in Bushu. These cultural dynamics proved difficult to unpack by way of only interviewing ordinary people including the autochthones in Bushu. As such, the focus group discussion with custodians of culture in Bushu (the village heads) was invaluable in this regard, as was the interview with chief Bushu.

The number of participants in a focus group need to be limited, otherwise the discussion becomes unwieldy and difficult to regulate (Kumar 2011). Simultaneously, over restricting the number (for example, to three or four) might facilitate a smoother discussion but would be inadequate in terms of obtaining a full understanding of the topic of investigation. For this reason, groups between six and ten participants are often encouraged (Smithson 2000, Ritchie 2013), and hence the decision to incorporate eight village heads into the focus group discussion about cultural dynamics in Bushu. Issues of patriarchy and power, however, emerged as I am a young powerless woman in cultural terms, interviewing eight locally powerful men. Nevertheless, the male village heads were cooperative and mutual respect ensued throughout the discussion, leading to fruitful insights.

Focus group participants may be homogenous or mixed in terms of age, gender, class, profession, or education among other variables (Ritchie and Lewis 2013). It is therefore pertinent for researchers to identify the different personal attributes they are 'targeting' when it comes to the selection of focus group participants. As well, failure to take cognisance of possible internal dynamics amongst members of the group might result in some group members dominating the discussion or, in extreme cases, even 'othering' other participants (Yin 2014). The autochthonous

village heads differed in terms of age (with the average age of 50), with one village head in his forties almost unilaterally dominated the discussion from the start, depriving others the opportunity to articulate their views. During the discussion, I could sense that his fellow heads were irked by his domineering approach. This village head later told me that some of his fellow village heads despised him because he was well-educated and from a better-off household. Despite this initial challenge, a more inclusive discussion eventually transpired.

1.5.5 Data Analysis

In terms of the data analysis, fieldwork data is essentially meaningless if it is not systematically analysed in order to confer meaning and offer an understanding of the phenomena under study (Silverman 1985). Arising from evidence collected through qualitative fieldwork methods, qualitative data analysis involves:

> [A] selection of the unit of analysis, subjective observation of the realities of the phenomenon, becoming an instrument for data analysis, looking for multiple realities behind the data, categorising and finding themes from categories and through analytical insights to present an overall story line of data (Vaismoradi and Snelgrove 2019:2).

Qualitative data analysis, based on a case study, is not meant to provide conclusive generalisable findings, as it is very context specific to the phenomena or case under study (Kumar 2011).

In this study, data was analysed thematically by way of identifying recurring themes and patterns of meanings emanating from the findings (Braun and Clark 2012) A theme "can be described as the subjective meaning and cultural-contextual message of data" (Vaismoradi and Snelgrove 2019:3). Theme identification involved carefully going through my fieldwork evidence in an effort to first code and categorise the evidence in a meaningful way (i.e. in a manner which speaks to the general objective of the thesis) (Kumar 2011). In this sense, the 'keyness' of a theme is measured by "whether it captures something important in relation to the overall research question" or objective (Braun and Clark 2012:10). The themes were therefore developed with my overall objective in mind, though the objective only conditioned the thematic categorisation of fieldwork evidence. In other words, as much as possible, I allowed the evidence to 'breathe' and 'speak to me' as the researcher. This was important because the study was in part exploratory, such that new unexpected and unplanned themes arose from the field, though pertinent to the overall objective. As the researcher, I was therefore very active in generating themes, allowing themes to develop in

a manner sensitive to the interplay between my overall objective and the richness and complexity of the fieldwork evidence.

Finalising the main themes took considerable time and effort, including recategorising evidence in seeking to refine the themes. In doing so, I had to draw upon the evidence generated through different research methods, namely, interviews (including life history interviews), observations (and informal conversations) and the one focus group discussion. I moved back and forth between these diverse sets of evidence, identifying both similarities and discrepancies. I analysed my data through highlighting critical similarities and differences in subjective narratives, perceptions and practices in relation to belonging between the autochthones and former farm workers of foreign origin in Bushu. I was deeply sensitive to context of narratives, that is, the context within which the perspectives and stories of research subjects were put forward, in order to understand their 'true' subjective meanings (Braun and Clark 2012). I also paid particular attention to the way in which perspectives, narratives and subjective meanings related to actual cultural and social practices, and whether or not claims about practices tally with actually-existing practices.

In the end, thematic analysis provided the organisational basis for the four empirical chapters of the thesis, as well as the foundation for addressing the subsidiary objectives of the thesis.

1.5.6 Ethics and Challenges

Ethical clearance was sought for and granted by the Rhodes University ethics committee. Gatekeepers' permission was also sought for and obtained by the Provincial Development Coordinator for Mashonaland Central Province and the District Development Coordinator for Shamva District. Ethical issues were observed throughout the entire research process and these were informed by the research principles and protocols of Rhodes University. Written and verbal consent was given by the participants (see Appendix 6). Because of the sensitivity of the 'foreigner' tag in the Southern African region and Zimbabwe in particular, the thesis topic and study area were considered to be of medium risk. Because of this, anonymity and confidentiality were ensured in order to prevent harm for the research subjects, notably those of foreign origin residents who would potentially be exposed to victimisation. To that effect, I use pseudonyms for ordinary participants.

The volatile political and socio-economic situation that has characterised Zimbabwe over a number of years made it difficult for some potential research subjects to readily decide to participate in the

study. The research was also carried out at a time when there was a general outcry over land shortages in Bushu communal areas. This was indicated in particular by the village heads and the autochthones, who feared that their descendants might be prejudiced of adequate land. As such, some potential participants were unwilling to participate while some thought that they were supposed to give 'desirable' responses so that their belonging in Bushu would be guaranteed. For example, during our first interview, one participant made it clear that she would only freely talk once she was certain that I was not a 'spy' from the government. Trust was, however, built over the months and she became one of my most reliable participants. She also referred me to some of her friends who also participated in the study. More generally, the six months spent in the villages provided for an adequate period to forge a trust-based relationship with my participants. Finally, some participants thought that I was conducting a needs assessment especially for the former farm workers. As a result, they thought that I was the rightful person to ask for help. For instance, one participant asked me to source for a wheelchair for his disabled son, and another asked me to help him look for an autochthonous wife. Due to this, I had to reiterate to my research subjects that the purpose of my study was purely academic.

1.6 Thesis Outline

This thesis consists of ten chapters. Chapter two discusses the theoretical framing for the thesis. It focuses on theory about social interfaces and lifeworlds, and how this theory informs issues of belonging and othering in relation to land in post-colonial and specifically post-fast track Zimbabwe. Chapters three to five are contextual chapters with specific reference to Zimbabwe. Chapter three provides a historical narrative about former commercial farm workers of foreign origin across the colonial and post-colonial periods, with attention given to the form of authority and belonging on white commercial farms. Likewise, chapter four is a historical chapter stretching into the post-colonial period, but it considers the history of communal areas as a place of belonging for autochthones. Chapter five has a specific thematic focus, and it seeks to highlight the scholarly literature around land and belonging in Zimbabwe pertinent to the focus of this thesis.

Chapters six to nine are the empirical chapters of the thesis. Chapter six gives an overview of Shamva communal areas (and specifically Bushu) in relation to their history, chieftainship, land spirits and families considered as autochthonous to the area, and it highlights acts of exclusion and inclusion of strangers in Bushu. Chapter seven and eight capture the perceptions, practices and

experiences of the former farm workers in Bushu communal areas. They examine why former farm workers decided to settle in Bushu after the fast track displacements, and the various livelihood activities that they have pursued since then. In the context of interfacing with autochthones, there is a focus on former farm workers' perceptions of autochthones including various strategies employed to assert belonging in Bushu. Chapter nine shifts to an examination of the autochthones' perceptions and narratives of belonging with reference to the former farm workers of foreign origin in Bushu. It unpacks the autochthones' sources of contestations with the former farm workers as well as possible sources of mutual co-existence as the two groups interface in Bushu over time.

Chapter ten is the concluding chapter of the thesis, and it demonstrates the ways in which I addressed the thesis objectives alongside the relevance of the theoretical framing for understanding the case study of belonging in Bushu.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORISING BELONGING, OTHERING AND STRANGERS IN SOCIAL ACTORS' LIFEWORLDS AND INTERFACES

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the theoretical and conceptual lens that inform this thesis. It discusses Norman Long's actor-oriented interface theory, including the idea of lifeworlds, as a crucial foundation for the theoretical framing. In this context, it considers key notions such as othering, belonging and strangerhood while also highlighting how these are useful notions in offering a sociological analysis of the former farm workers in Bushu. The theoretical concepts hybridised together assist in understating the inter group dynamics between the autochthones and allochthones particularly in relation to land and belonging in Bushu communal areas. While the ex-farm workers of foreign origin are conceptualised as the 'other', the 'strangers' and allochthones who do not belong to Bushu on ancestral grounds, it will become clear (throughout the thesis) that they seek to context this framing of their existence by way of projects of belonging.

At the same time, they are different in many ways from the autochthones of Bushu, that is, those who are thought of as being the original inhabitants of Zimbabwe. The different ethnic and cultural backgrounds (embedded in their respective lifeworlds) do create a social distance between the two groups, with the autochthones othering the former farm workers of foreign origin who they consider as unbelonging to Bushu. The former migrants seek to subvert ostensible autochthonous claims and hegemonies by asserting their own agency and quest for belonging. In doing so, they use cultural capital among other means to contest their stranger label and, in the process, they also otherise the autochthones within the autochthones' supposed territorial space.

Because of this, contested politics of belonging appear when the two groups (with their own lifeworlds) interface with the movement of the former labourers into Bushu. It may be that, when the two groups continue to interface over time, new modes of belonging might be forged, with the stranger, the other and allochthone labels losing their meaning and significance in the process. There is a possibility that, with time, the former migrant workers and their descendants become considered as part of the autochthones; or, the status of allochthones might persist. These possibilities are explored in the empirical chapters of the thesis, with this chapter setting out the

theoretical framework for facilitating an examination of contested belonging in Bushu communal areas.

2.2 Actor-Oriented Interface Theory

At an abstract level, the thesis is framed within Norman Long's actor-oriented interface theory, which is concerned primarily with analysing "cultural diversity, social difference and conflict" among and between social actors (Long 1999:1). Grounded within a micro-level perspective of human practices, Long's theory enables a sociological examination of the lived experiences, subjective perceptions and personal narratives of human subjects as they interact relationally. As active social agents, human subjects construct (and reconstruct) social meanings as they go about interfacing and interacting with others. In the context of social relationships, human subjects' perceptions and meanings arise within their lifeworld (including cultural arrangements, social histories and everyday experiences), which then condition their practices. Though lifeworlds are bounded systems of belonging, they are not static and closed systems, as the lifeworld of a particular social grouping may be reconfigured through processes of interaction between different lifeworlds. These interactions or encounters take place along a multiplicity of social-cultural interfaces (Long 1991, 1999).

In the case of this thesis, the key lifeworlds and social interfaces relate to the autochthones living historically within communal areas and the former farm workers of foreign origin (allochthones) whose historical existence was tied to white commercial farms. Actor-oriented interface theory becomes pivotal in understanding the group-based politics of belonging as former farm workers of foreign move into and live amongst the autochthones of Bushu communal areas and their well-established world of existence (or lifeworld). This implies that allochthones are required to forge if not assert belonging in a space already marked by the pronounced sense of belonging amongst autochthones.

Unpacking this entails a consideration of how these two groups navigate each other's presence, including the possibility of both co-existence and conflict. Focusing on key interfaces, and the processes of negotiation taking place along these interfaces, hence provides a basis for identifying the fluid and shifting character of the social interactions and relationships emerging and developing between autochthones and allochthones. With reference to Bushu, negotiated contestations between the two lifeworlds relate to an ongoing politics of belonging made visible through the lens

of land, ethnicity, cultural repertoires and intimate relationships in Bushu. Unearthing and identifying the convoluted nature of these interfaces also raise questions about the related dynamics of 'othering' and strangehood (Long 1999), as detailed later.

Though these two lifeworlds exist prior to the movement of allochthones into Bushu communal areas, there is a very real sense in which the presence of autochthones and allochthones (as markers of different lifeworlds) in Bushu is only made possible by processes of self-identification and the identification of the other. More specifically, a process of dialectical identification takes place, whereby autochthones self-identify in a particular way and identify (or even construct discursively) the existence of autochthones, and the allochthones do likewise. The key becomes whether, and to what extent, these discursive constructions are undercut or reinforced along the everyday interfaces once the former farm workers move into Bushu.

Lifeworlds and interfaces are critical, then, when accounting for social-cultural differences and sources of conflict between social groupings. Long substantiates this by arguing that an interface can be understood as a "critical point of intersection or linkage between different social systems, fields or levels of social order where structural discontinuities, based upon differences of normative value and social interest, are most likely to be found" (Long 1989:1). Communal areas become the socio-spatial site within which the two lifeworlds meet and interface, and where experiences and claims of belonging are negotiated through acts of contestation. In the same manner, processes of acceptance and mutual co-existence between the two groupings may emerge along social-cultural interfaces. With significant interaction over time, and even though assimilation does not occur, mutually-understood socio-cultural boundaries of existence may arise and be demarcated, involving shared intersubjective definitions and understandings of the other. Such standardised patterns and modes of acting and relating would likely express and demonstrate the permeability of different lifeworlds as the boundaries and content of lifeworlds undergo change through negotiated interfaces (Long 1999). In the case of Bushu, this would involve the presence of activities and practices that both bind and separate the autochthones and allochthones.

Though interface analysis is micro in orientation, ideally it should entail reflections on the wider macro institutional domains (Long 1999). As Long (1989:2) puts it, an analysis of interfaces, "should also explore how these interactions are affected by, and in turn themselves influence, actors, institutions and resource-fields that lie beyond the interface situation itself" (Long 1989:2).

This implies that the character of local interfaces often reflect broader cultural and institutional dynamics, conditioning them in the process and perhaps reinforcing processes of local exclusion and inclusion, and the politics of belonging in particular. Intrinsic to these broader structural arrangements are power relations, which become embedded within local interfaces. In fact, it may be that because of prevailing power differentials, the very capacity to define another grouping (culturally and politically) as the 'other', and to act on that 'othering' process, is uneven across groupings (Long 1999). In thinking about Bushu, it could be that the autochthones have 'home-field' advantage in this regard, as their claim to belonging to the communal area is beyond dispute.

Prior to any significant and regular encounters of two (or more) lifeworlds, conceptions of the other lifeworld(s) are already in play. This knowledge of other lifeworlds, and the shaping and construction of worldviews of other lifeworlds (Long 1999) may not entail any prior contact at all, or it might involve casual and sporadic encounters in the distant or near past. Hence, it may be disconnected from any meaningful lived experience of other lifeworlds. Nevertheless, this 'pre-constructed' knowledge becomes the basis on which social meanings are generated prior to the coming into existence of meaningful interfaces. This knowledge, which may entail caricatures of other lifeworlds, configure the first significant real encounters and may be subject to reinforcement or change as the interfaces multiply and develop over time.

More broadly, then, "various types of knowledge, including ideas about oneself, other people, and the context and social institutions, are important in understanding social interfaces" (Long 1999:3) and their possible trajectories. What people know, or think they know, and the fragility or stability of these knowledge-based perceptions, inform courses of action. Further, because they involve claims to belonging (or claims that others do not belong), they are infused with power dynamics and differentials. As such, "a major task of interface analysis is to spell out the knowledge and power implications of this interplay and the blending or segregation of opposing discourses" (Long 1999:4). Knowledge-claims, and the cultural repertoires supporting them, become crucial as well in identifying the conditions leading to collaboration and contestations along the interfaces of autochthones and allochthones in Bushu communal areas. This entails analysing how they harness their knowledge and cultural capital to construct social discourses in a manner which provides a springboard for defending, altering or even subverting entrenched notions of belonging prevalent in the communal areas. To reiterate, besides culture and knowledge, power and politicking are

pivotal to practices along social interfaces (Long 1989), and they all become intertwined with each other as claims and acts of belonging (and non-belonging) arise and develop.

Even though Long developed his theory specifically to analyse development interventions in rural spaces and the work of development agencies, actor-orientated interface theory provides a useful analytical foundation for examining compromises and conflicts between autochthones and former farm workers of foreign origins in this study. It helps to account for othering, strangerhood and the politics of belonging, which are concepts central to this study and to which I now turn.

2.3 Othering

The concept of 'othering' has prevailed in the scholarly literature for some time now, in part in order to analyse the politics of belonging of various social groups (Mead 1934, Fanon 1952, Heider 1958, Tajfel and Turner 1979, Bhatt 2006, Jensen 2011, Brons 2015). Othering or otherism is a theoretical concept whose roots are often traced to Hegel's master-servant dialectic (Jensen 2011, Brons 2015). Hegel's dialectic approach, which is consistent with sociological thinking, is based on the notion that self-consciousness and self-identification are shaped through comparison with others. When the positing or asserting of social-cultural difference arises, then self-differentiation and self-distancing also often emerges. Thus, without an understanding of the 'other', there cannot be a self-conception and vice versa (Jensen, 2011, Yuval-Davies 2010). Comparison is what gives rise to a negative construction of the other, simply because the 'other' is just "*not*-self" (Brons 2015: 69).

Though Hegel's dialectic may have depicted individual and not group differentiation, sociologists and others have since borrowed from Hegel's dialectic to analyse group-based social dynamics, entailing "social exclusion, discrimination, and/or subjection" (Brons 2015:72). Those considered as different or as outsiders become the 'alien', the 'orient' or the 'stranger' (Harris et.al. 2017). or even the 'inferior' (Brons 2015).

Simmone de Beauvoir's 1949 work entitled *The Second Sex* popularised the concept of 'othering' and Spivak (1985) is credited for introducing the term as a theoretical concept more broadly (Jensen 2011). Arguing from a feminist perspective, de Beauvoir used the concept to describe how men are regarded as the 'norm' and women as the 'other' (Jensen 2011). Women's otherness produces a shared subjectivity (held by both men and women) in which women exist in and through

men, so that their existence (and the consciousness of their existence) is mediated by the presence of men. Masculinity becomes the hegemonic norm by which men are subjects, while women are the polar opposite (mere objects). This patriarchal process of othering is also embedded in intersectionality and interlocking systems of oppression that include gender, class, nationality, race and ethnicity (Crenshaw 1989, Collins 1989).

Though othering has been defined and coneptualised in slightly different ways, central to all understandings is the creation and presence of social-cultural boundaries between groups, and maintained over time. Lister (2004:101) for instance defines othering as a "process of differentiation and demarcation, by which the line is drawn between 'us' and 'them' – between the more and the less powerful – and through which social distance is established and maintained". This boundary setting normally entails uneven power relations and typically entails a pronounced discursive element, "by which powerful groups … define subordinate groups into existence in a reductionist way which ascribe problematic and/or inferior characteristics to these subordinate groups" (Jensen 2011:65). It also involves, simultaneously, the mutual construction of the other and those doing the othering: "Othering is the simultaneous construction of the self or in-group and the other or out-group in mutual and unequal opposition" (Brons 2015:70). The emergence of a binary differentiation and dichotomy of 'us' and 'them' is consistent with the earlier discussion about lifeworlds and what might arise along interfaces.

Social differences (for example, in terms of gender, class, ethnicity and nationality) form the basis for social identities and social belonging (Yuval-Davies 2010, Jensen 2011). Othering does not invariably emerge out of such social differences, as the latter may exist alongside social harmony and cohesion. However, insofar as difference becomes strident grounds for separation, differentiation, hierarchisation and exclusion, it entails shoring up the boundaries between groups for purposes of defence and protection. Othering becomes a strong possibility in this context, particularly when the 'other' is conceptualised as a moral and material threat existentially (Yuval-Davies 2010). As Bauman (1991: 8) notes, the 'other' becomes a source of cultural and political impurities and, even further, the outright enemy.

Attempts to justify otherism have been epitomised by pathologising the cultural other, including as one who is inherently inclined "to crime and/or problematic and aggressive sexuality" (Jensen 2011:63), as a kind of fetishised sexuality, thereby being "equated with the savage, uncontrolled

and deviant as opposed to orderly and civilized" (Jensen 2011:63). As such, the 'other' becomes associated with narratives of fear. This comes out clearly under colonial conditions where white fear of black bodies (and all that these bodies represented) prevailed.

However, forms of othering occur in post-colonial Africa, including as a way of excluding the other from belonging to the nation. Though, in most African societies othering may be attributed to the colonial project (Muzondidya 2007, Daimon 2014, 2018) and the fostering of racial and ethnic identities under colonialism, it takes on new post-colonial forms, notably within the black African population (along the lines of a distinction between indigenous Natives and alien Natives, or genuine Natives and other Natives) (Geschiere 2009, Ceuppens and Geschiere 2005). In post-colonial Zimbabwe, there are many cases of othering, including between Shona and Ndebele speakers, which became dramatically and violently expressed during the *Gukurahundi* atrocities of the 1980s. As well, ethnic (and alien) others include Africans of Malawian, Mozambican and Zambian origin, whose presence within the nation has never been fully accepted (such that they remain as denizens and not citizens) (Daimon 2014:148). The focus of this study, former farmer labourers of foreign descent, falls within this category.

Othering sometimes has a spatial-territorial dimension to it as well. Claims to territories (i.e. particular tracts of land) and strategies for defending territory may heighten the intensity of othering processes, or may even engender these processes – leading to, or reinforcing, marginalisation and exclusion (van Houtum and van Naerssen 2001). This took place on a large scale in colonial Zimbabwe, leading to the construction of whites-only areas from which blacks were excluded, except in the main if they entered white spaces for labouring purposes (Rennie 1978, Johnson 1992). With blacks confined otherwise to the Native Reserves (and in effect out of sight, therefore out of mind), white settlers (and particularly white farmers) engaged in processes of belonging to Africa through the natural landscape, unmediated by black bodies. In this sense, white farmers never grafted themselves onto the local in an authentic sense (Hughes 2010). The tightly-controlled white farm territories, in which at first foreign farm labourers predominated, contributed in no small measure to the social-cultural difference which arose between allochthonous farm labourers and the Native Reserve (now communal area) autochthones (Muzondidya 2007, Daimon 2014).

Overall, delimiting territorial boundaries at sub-national level, and creating gate-keeping mechanisms to control border crossings, gesture and signify who belongs and who does not belong (Schein 2006). Those who are geographically immobilised with reference to entering protected territorial spaces become subject to socio-cultural othering and are deemed unfit to enter and disrupt the space – as if defending of territory involves a process of maintaining moral purity against the possible ravages of aliens and strangers (Hughes 2007), a point pertinent to this study of former foreign farm labourers and communal areas as territorial spaces. In the case of these ex-labourers, it becomes crucial to examine in what ways they seek to graft themselves onto the local in entering communal areas spaces by interfacing directly with the autochthones, thereby becoming 'naturalised' communal villagers through a gradual albeit non- linear and convoluted process.

Though 'the other' tends to be conceptualised as the powerless, as if defined and controlled by the group doing the othering, 'the powerless' also engages in discursive representations of the latter (itself, a form of othering). In doing so, as an active agent, it often becomes involved in self-representation in a manner contrary to the image constructed of them; and, further, it seeks to act against the forms of exclusion and marginalisation it experiences. Jensen (2011) calls this 'refusal', as 'the othered' group goes about claiming normality through downplaying difference. Claiming normality by such a group is a strategy of humanising and revaluing itself, thereby seeking to negate the othering process altogether. The extent to which this is a viable strategy depends in part on the character and degree of contact between the dichotomised groups prior to significant interfaces arising. Such prior contact may call into question the validity of the othering process or it may in fact reinforce it (Harris et al. 2017).

This will be discussed in the case of the former farm workers of foreign origin in Bushu, who at times seem to assert their agency in order to refute the othering process of autochthones and gain belonging on this basis. This will entail reference to any encounters and contacts between autochthones (in communal areas) and allochthones (the ex-labourers) before the fast track land reform process which displaced the latter.

2.3.1 The Stranger

Like othering, strangeness is a social construct that is born out of an encounter with the unfamiliar and unknown (Marotta 2002). Therefore, without the familiar, there cannot be a stranger. To

Baumann (1998:17), strangers "are the people who do not fit the cognitive, moral, or aesthetic map of the world". Thus, the stranger is always held with suspicion at best and contempt at worst. As such, social groups are always keen to set, structure and maintain their spatial and cultural boundaries vis-à-vis strangers, as a form of closed system based on social exclusion. Outsiders and newcomers are viewed as "the stranger that threatens the stability and coherence of this social order" (Marotta 2002:38).

As a cultural and ethnic other, the stranger is "constructed in/ by an assumption of fear which is based on categorical assumptions and a notion of contamination" (Harris et al. 2017; 20). The fear stems from the stranger's "unknownness", such that "strangers may come to be seen as an invading wave or flood that will engulf us, provoking primitive fears of annihilation or for the dissolution of identity" (Sanderock 2000:205). Because "the stranger… epitomises chaos and thus is a potential threat to the stable and fixed boundaries" (Marotta 2002:39), they may be subjected not only to exclusion but also suppression. Boundary maintenance thus becomes critical, as I seek to show with reference to autochthones and allochthones in Bushu communal areas.

Apart from being the cultural other, the stranger is also constructed within the realm of homelessness (Marotta 2002). Simmel (1950: 1) posits that a stranger "comes today and stays tomorrow", but the origins of the stranger will constantly be a source of otherism. In this way, as Simmel (1950: 1) also argues, the stranger's origins are not here but elsewhere, and hence the stranger is "not the owner of the soil". Exclusion from a bond with the soil helps to inform and remind strangers that their strangeness continues: they have invaded the home of 'locals' and this becomes the basis of contempt and indignation (Baumann 1998). A stranger thus contaminates locals' unadulterated form of living when meaningful interfaces emerge. The stranger becomes unwanted 'dirt'. As Baumann (1998:11) aptly puts it:

> [T]he locals of all times and places, in their frenzied efforts to separate, confine, exile or destroy the strangers compared the objects of their exertions to vermin and bacteria. No wonder either, that they compared the meaning of their own action to hygienic routines; they fought the 'strangers', convinced that they defended health against the carriers of disease.

Even in instances when strangers provisionally become accepted as part of a 'local' group, the condition of strangeness involves a continuous process of negotiation, in that locals feel the need to constantly check on the stranger in their quest to keep order and purity (Baumann 1998). In this

sense, ‘once a stranger, always a stranger’, as strangers can never be purified of their wrong-doings. Insofar as Baumann’s argument has validity, this would mean that Africans of foreign origin (after moving into communal areas) would always be held with suspicion by autochthones, as if their foreign origin would stamp their exclusion for eternity. Such an argument will be interrogated in the empirical chapters.

The concept of the stranger is also useful for this thesis as the stranger is constructed within the realm of the cultural and national other (Baumann 1991). It thereby speaks to the question of the Native-Alien distinction which is directly pertinent to this thesis. Aliens who exist within national boundaries sometimes occupy ambivalent positions where they are considered neither insiders nor outsiders, and they are in-between and betwixt. For Baumann (1991:58), such strangers are a “third element” or “hybrids”, which makes them difficult to classify. These ambivalent strangers are therefore “always on the outside even when inside” (Marrota 2002:45): strangers who share the same nationality as insiders but whose ancestry is traced to foreign nations (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000). Such people have sometimes faced violent exclusion in Africa (Geschiere 2009, 2011, Zenker 2011). This goes some way in explaining the awkwardness of the ex-farm workers of foreign origin, and why autochthones and the Zimbabwean state at times inhibit or block alien penetration into the communal areas (regardless of the fact that generations of ‘aliens’ have been living ‘inside’ Zimbabwe for more than a century).

2.4 Belonging

The character of this study imperatively calls for a conceptualisation of belonging and the politics of belonging. The concept has been widely used to conceptualise and analyse the often-contested integration of people into various social collectivities. It has been used in cultural geography (Trudeau 2006, Schein 2009, Wright 2015), anthropology (Miller 2003, James 2013, Bennett 2014, Meiu 2019), sociology and migration studies (Yuval-Davies 2006, 2011, Antonsich 2010, Youkhana 2010, Anthias 2013, Yuval-Davies et al. 2018), and in psychology (Bowlby 1969). As people who for long a time were caught up in a web of conditional belonging on white commercial farms (Rutherford 2001, 2018), it becomes crucial to investigate how farm workers of foreign origin have asserted their belonging in the highly-ethnicised communal areas. In order to achieve that, it is useful to first discuss the concept of belonging.

I should highlight that I have chosen to use the notion of belonging rather than identity. While identity speaks to the 'self', belonging goes further than simply the self by having a relational focus, or what is external to self. Thus, belonging is concerned with an individual's location in social relations and space. Identity speaks to 'who' they are and with 'what' they identify themselves, and belonging focuses on to 'what' an individual belongs (Anthias 2013:7). At the same time**,** it has been argued that the concept of belonging has been "vaguely defined and ill-theorised" (Antonsich 2010:644) while, to Wright (2015:391), belonging is a "puzzling term". For Youkhana (2015:11), the concept of belonging "ranges from a personal feeling, the sense of belonging to a certain group, place, or social location, to the understanding of belonging as a resource that can be used to draw social demarcations and establish border regimes, the so-called politics of belonging." Overall, belonging, like othering, is a two-way process which can be understood as "an act of self-identification or identification by others" (Yuval-Davis 2006:199). Nevertheless, there is a need to clearly define and conceptualise the term, and its usage in this thesis.

2.4.1 Belonging to the Landscape

Belonging is usually intimately linked to a particular geographical space. It is "a personal, intimate, feeling of being 'at home' in a place" (Antonsich 2010:644). Belonging thus speaks to spatial boundaries where certain people share an emotional attachment to a place and can 'feel at home' once in and at that place (Youkhana 2015, Trudeau 2006). 'Home' becomes "a symbolic space of familiarity, comfort, security, and emotional attachment" (Antonsich 2010:646). In relation to belonging, a home is something that can be created, maintained or lost in its spatial and affective form. Home is also constructed within different physical layers of landscape that might range from an individual's house, neighbourhood, village or country (Antonsich 2010). Contestations around belonging may exist at all these levels, sometimes simultaneously. Beyond their place of belonging, people might be treated as "strangers or as non-members of the host society with conditions that … [amount to] … 'otherness'" (Kibreab 1999:387).

To Hughes (2010), as noted earlier, colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwean whites (and white farmers in particular) cultivated a sense of belonging through forming an intimate and homely relationship with nature and the natural environment, rather than with black people. This enabled white Zimbabweans to comfortably construct a home in a space of social exile (Hughes 2010), a project of belonging disrupted by fast track land reform. This project of belonging differed

dramatically from the projects of belonging forged by Africans in terms of landscape, with a pronounced connection between land, life and spirituality – as we develop in the empirical chapters of this thesis.

Belonging in therefore constructed within the realm of spatial-belongingness or a 'sense of belonging to place' (Fenster 2005, Wright 2015). Places are constructed and reinforced by people's intimate stories of attachment to those places and, without such stories, places risk becoming *terra nullius* (Schein 2009, Wright 2015). Thus "the telling of stories about ourselves and our places is central to identity and community and to creating and maintaining a sense of belonging" (Schein 2009: 812). To that effect, a home fosters belonging at a deeply emotional level, as a feeling of attachment. Emotional attachments to particular spatial locations are normally embedded in childhood memories. As Antonsich (2010:467) argues, a place "where a person was born and has grown up often remains a central place in the life of that individual", including memories of family members and ancestors (Schein 2009, Bennett 2014). Nostalgia and memories about certain places are even central in fostering people's 'belonging from afar', no matter where they may go and be (Miller 2017).

Strong attachments to certain landscapes thus condition people's present and future lives. For instance, despite the globalisation and deterritorisation mantra, African refugees often long to return to their 'homes' in post-conflict periods because there can never be an authentic home elsewhere (Kibreab 1999). In this 'elsewhere', an African refugee remains a sojourner, and a stranger who does not seemingly belong. In Zimbabwean communal areas, older generations with nostalgic memories of past places (from which they were forcefully removed under colonialism) often show interest in going back to their ancestral lands to perform rituals in their sacred places (Marowa 2015). Conversely, the younger generations born in urban areas of Zimbabwe are not particularly attached to communal areas because their childhood memories are entrenched elsewhere. It therefore becomes essential to analyse how former migrant farm workers and their descendants have sought to forge a home and belonging in communal areas, despite any lingering sense of belonging to white commercial farm spaces.

An individual's emotive attachment to a particular place, however, goes beyond history as it is also connected to their present and future obligations and entitlement to that place (Bennett 2014, Schein 2009). As such, quite often when people chronicle their narratives of belonging to certain

places, “stories told are as much about the future as they are about the past” (Schein 2009: 813). People tell stories of belonging ‘before’ and ‘now’ “under the purported aim of getting the facts straight” to inform the future, namely, that their future generations rightfully belong to a particular place (Schein 2009: 813). In Africa, places are central to people even after death (Mujere 2012, Geschiere 2009). Africans including Zimbabweans are very particular about the places where they bury their dead. Thus, Africans are normally buried in their rural villages even after spending years in the city. This is a claim to perpetual belonging, in the past, present and future.

Village funeral processions are in themselves “true festivals of belonging” where rural and urban blood relatives come together to practice clan-defined funeral rituals (Geschiere 2009: 18). The living believe that they can connect to the dead via physical graves. Hence, being interred elsewhere carries with it social stigma (Mujere 2012): “Graves can therefore be markers of where ‘some-body’ or ‘bodies’ belong(s)” (Mujere 2012: 17) and “where one is buried is the crucial criterion of where one belongs” (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000: 435). As such, ancestral graves greatly serve as evidence of a people’s historical attachment to a place. Graves go beyond the present as they create material landscapes of belonging since their presence “may cause, enable, or constrain in the future” (Fontein 2011:714). Because of this, the bond between departed kin and the land (as encapsulated in physical graves) can serve as legitimate claims for belonging for the descendants of the departed, especially in instances were belonging and autochthony is contested. In addition to graves, ghosts, ruins and other related parts of the material landscape are central in forming an attachment between people and land as they command a “more ‘active’ and ‘affective’ presence” (Fontein 2011:713). Landscapes therefore become inalienable gifts which generations pass on to each other, assert their belonging and build their memories and future prospects around (Bennett 2014).

2.4.2 Belonging to a Community (Collective)

Though it has been often conceptualized in spatial terms, the concept of belonging can also be understood within affective, non-spatial terms. Thus, belonging to a ‘home’ at times can be “found in practices, shared and repeated habitual interactions, emotions, memories” (Teerling 2011:1084). Belonging becomes a set of social practices and its essence “lies in the repetition of certain activities which people ultimately identify as core routines” (Mujere 2012: 14). Shared activities, for instance cultural rituals, attending funerals, and religious and political activities, become central in bringing people together and, in the process, creating a sense of belonging among

members engaging in those activities. Consequently, those who do not participate in these defining group activities become outsiders even though they may share a spatial territory.

Belonging to a community of people is a form of identification that can be ascribed or attained. Through ascription, individuals share belonging with those people who share the same attributes, according to variables such as ethnicity, gender, class, race, and age group (Harding 1991). Attained social statuses such as professions, religious or political affiliations help to foster belonging as well. In this thesis, ethnicity and nationality are central to belonging in Bushu communal areas, and being an autochthone or a perceived allochthone has important consequences for fostering and experiencing belonging there. While nationality and citizenship are attainable, ethnicity tends to be a life-long identity which is difficult to escape. In the case of the former farm labourers, their ethnicity is associated with their status of foreigners, which complicates any movement away from an alien status in the minds of autochthones. As such, the ex-labourers' exclusion, othering or strangerhood relates to their nationality, citizenship and ethnic origin locations (Muzondidya 2007, Anthias 2013).

In this light, belonging involves emotional identifications and attachments to particular collectivities: belonging entails "a deep emotional need of people" (Yuval- Davies 2004:15, Anthias 2013:6), and is "about emotional attachment, about feeling 'at home'" (Yuval-Davis 2006:197). In this way, belonging is constructed not only in relation to places as it becomes located in relationships with other people, non-humans and even ideas (Wright 2015). Individuals invest emotions in social collectivities with which they identify themselves, with emotions being pivotal in bringing people together or setting them apart (Wright 2015). Though they are not always prominent in people's everyday interactions, emotions usually flare up when people's belonging is threatened (Yuval- Davies 2006, 2018). In scenarios where people's belonging to community appears threatened, they may be prepared to lose their lives in defense of those with whom they commune, as well in defending their territory. Xenophobic attacks and anti-foreigner practices are possible outcomes of such strong feelings.

2.4.3 Citizenship

Besides having social-cultural significance, belonging is also related to questions around state sovereignty and the existence of national citizenship (Fenster 2005, Youkhana 2015). Official citizenship has been a significant focus in terms of a legal sub-category of belonging (Antonsich

2010, Youkhana 2015). The existence of the nation-state is an influential component of any project of belonging, as political ideologies of nationalism often form the basis for justifying inclusion and exclusion based on citizenship. As the "contractual relationship between a person and the state" (Youkhana 2015:12), citizenship facilitates or hinders access to certain rights and privileges as granted by the nation state (Yuval-Davies 2006).

Rutherford (2001), Daimon (2010) and Muzondidya (2007) for instance argue that the lack of citizenship (and a denial of the accompanying rights of citizenship), in the case of Zimbabwe, leads to the exclusion of former labourers of foreign origin from the nation state, including land rights. Land relates to territory and landscape, and thus involves access to spatial rights when it comes to the politics of belonging. Spatial rights entail "the right to enter a state or any other territory of a political community and, once inside, the right to remain there" (Yuval-Davies 2006:208). In this way, spatial rights include the right to plan a future in the adopted country without being required to return back to one's original country (as what may happen in the case of refugees). As such, "[c]itizenship is aspirational, providing visions of what a future social order might look like, and of how political belonging and participation within that order ought to be structured" (James 2013:27). With regard to the former farm labourers, the spatial rights to land not only refer to Zimbabwean territory as a whole, but to communal areas more specifically, and their construction of a post-fast track future in these spatial sites.

Further, citizenship goes beyond the contractual agreement between the individual and the state as it also pertains to the relationship "potentially between the person and all the other people whose access to social rights are being threatened by her/him" (Yuval-Davies *et al* 2018:240). There is thus a correlation between an individual's legal status (regarding citizenship) and the capacity to connect with others in fostering a sense of belonging (Antonsich 2010). In other words, the perspectives and practices of those with citizenship (and land rights), such as communal area autochthones, condition the experiences of allochthones and their possibilities of belonging at the micro-level (Yuval-Davies et al. 2018). Self-proclaimed autochthones might block the local construction of belonging by allochthones, including by way of stereotyping, stigmatising, intimidation and even violence.

However, citizenship in-itself is no guarantee of belonging. Further, even without citizenship, other attributes may facilitate the forging of belonging. Hence, using citizenship as a yardstick for

belonging is problematic as it assumes that a legal recognition translates into belonging. As Wright (2015:396) puts it, belonging is 'thicker' than citizenship (Wright 2015:396). Individuals or even entire social groupings might hold citizenship papers yet they might never feel or experience an authentic belonging to the nation-state (Yuval-Davies 2006); and the state may in fact prevent them from doing so. Official citizenship simply does not guarantee optimum inclusion (Anthias 2013). Citizens can be excluded in certain social milieus due to their various intersectionalities (that include gender, ethnicity, age, and race) (Yuval-Davies 2007). Because of this, exclusion becomes tantamount to "non-belonging to the social fabric" (Anthias 2013:8).

Many examples of this exist in Zimbabwe. Despite constitutional provisions to the contrary, women in Zimbabwe have for long being denied access to spatial rights (in accessing communal land in their own right) due to patriarchal arrangements (Kufandirori 2015, Steen 2011, Makura-Paradza 2010). The cases of Ndebele and Tonga people in Zimbabwe also highlight that, even with citizenship, belonging to the nation often becomes a fraught and troublesome process. This is why it becomes important to examine projects of belonging empirically (as in this study), in order to examine the interfaces along which non-citizens and even citizens (officially) might be able (or not able) to realise citizenship rights (including land access) via – for want of a better phrase – a practical or lived citizenship. I do this with respect to the micro-belonging projects in Bushu communal areas.

2.4.4 Politics of Belonging

Unusually, but not invariably, the process and existence of belonging is infused with power relations and differentials (Schein 2009), as already intimated. Overall, the politics of belonging can be understood as "the arena of contestation of people and groups with similar senses of belonging" (Youkhana 2015:11), often with pronounced ethnic, religious, cultural, national and other dimensions. For Yuval-Davies (2006:196), a politics of belonging comprises "specific political projects aimed at constructing belonging in particular ways to particular collectivities that are, at the same time, themselves being constructed by these projects in very particular ways". Further, Antonsich (2010) highlights the significance of the discursive underpinnings of belonging, thus conceptualising the politics of belonging as "a discursive resource that constructs, claims, justifies, or resists forms of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion". Hence, whether talking of collectivities or spatial sites, micro-politics become entangled with claims to – and projects of – belonging, leading at times to negotiations and contestations around boundary maintenance.

It many cases belonging to collectivities and spatial sites overlap, leading to heightened levels of conflict around political belonging. Thus, a group's belonging to a certain territorial space may be constructed through "the comforting realisation of others' absence" (Antonsich 2010:649). When this happens, belonging to a place is equated to belonging to a group of people or a particular collectivity. As such, "[m]embership (to a group) and ownership (of a place) are the key factors in any politics of belonging" (Antonsich 2010:649). Those who are accepted as belonging to a specific collectivity would then be entitled to certain privileges and resources that fall within the boundaries of the territory (Yuval-Davies 2006), while others would be denied entry and thereby excluded from the benefits of territory.

Autochthonous groups assert hegemony over the territorial space, with their claims to political belonging founded on such factors as language, culture, ethnicity and religion; and these factors are put forward as grounds for positing the existence of a territorial authenticity absent amongst allochthones. Access to territory, if at all possible and successful, is conditional on the part of newcomers adapting to the prevailing authenticity defining the territory (Antonsich 2010) – if not in full, at least to an acceptable level as defined by the hegemonic autochthones, whose power to define and delimit outweighs that of the allochthones. Whether this entails only partial belonging (as an outsider now on the inside) is explored in the case of the ex-labourers in Shamva communal area.

Studies on belonging speak of non-belonging (Trudeau 2006). To Wright (2015: 396): "There are myriad ways to not belong: formal and informal; social and economic; local and global; discursive and material". Newcomers enter territory in a condition of non-belonging and seek somehow to transcend this condition. Certainly, if entry is completely blocked, that condition continues. But, once inside, newcomers seek to chip away at their non-belonging. As indicated, this is a complex and convoluted process without a certain end. Any project of political belonging is irreducible to the belonging/non-belonging dichotomy. Rather, it involves uneven processes, with different "intensities, magnitudes, and breadths of local attachments" (Meiu 2019:152). Belonging therefore relates to "just how much does one belong" (Meiu 2019:154)

In pursuing a politics of belonging as a process, allochthones may adopt various tactics in pursuit of their overall end-strategy of (seemingly) complete belonging. Besides navigating and negotiating along boundary interfaces in a transparent and open manner, at times newcomers

pursue more devious tactics – including developing a 'fictitious public identity' (Kibreab 1999). In an effort to stamp their belonging in a territorialised place, they might clandestinely keep their own 'authentic' identity and pretentiously adopt local traditions and practices in an effort to earn the host community's approval and acceptance. As a hidden politicking, pretense would include adopting local names, languages, religions and cultural arrangements publicly, while maintaining their 'authentic' practices when interacting amongst themselves (Colombo et al. 2011). In this sense, the real intensity and breadth of their belonging remains hidden.

2.4.5 Belonging as a Process, an Act of Becoming

Though belonging can be understood as a condition (as a state of being), it is also a process; it is contextual and temporal, elastic and fluid, and subject to contestation (Yuval-Davies 2004, 2006, 2018, Geschiere 2009, Antonsich 2010, Anthias 2013, May 2017). As 'something' that is not fixed, belonging as a process entails "an act of becoming" (Wright 2015: 393). In short, both "being and becoming, belonging and longing to belong" exist simultaneously as two dimensions of belonging as a social phenomenon (Yuval-Davies 2006:202). Thus, individuals may long to belong (whether to a landscape or social collectivity), and they devise and deploy various strategies that may bring them closer to landscapes and collectivities in order to become embedded in them – as former farm workers in Bushu tend to do.

In the process of belonging, there are some requisites for belonging (such as religion, culture and language) which may be attainable through attempts at assimilation into a landscape or collectivity, but there are others more difficult to acquire. Race, place of origin and ethnicity tend to be more fixed as categories of existence, thereby inhibiting any smooth transition in the process of belonging. In this regard, the acceptance of former migrant workers as an authentic part of the communal areas in Zimbabwe becomes problematic because of the prominence of ethnicity for instance. Their surnames and accents make it easy to identify their 'otherness' and to distinguish them from the autochthones (Muzondidya 2007).

Nonetheless, shared values, resources and networks (for example, between autochthones and allochthones) sometimes come into play, and these may dilute the significance of certain fixed categories of existence and facilitate the processes of belonging (Anthias 2013). A shared religion is one example of this, but the relevance of such commonness may be minimised by existing differences, such as political affiliation. Even those who share an ethnicity might be divided by

religious affiliation or politics. This means that a complex array of factors, which do not neatly fold into each other, condition a process of belonging, some disabling and others enabling. Such scenarios call for a deep appreciation of the complex character of processes of belonging, and the manner in which (in the case of this study) the former farm labourers and the communal area autochthones engage in convoluted acts of navigating their social interfaces.

2.4.6 Staying Authentic, Ambivalence and Dual Belonging

Despite longing to belong to other landscapes or collectives, and pursuing this as an open-ended and complicated process, individuals or social groups may still want to preserve some definitive part of their current condition of belonging. Common descent, culture, language, religion and even a shared myth of common destiny among others are some of the elements that, when combined, hold groups together and mark their overall lifeworld (Yuval-Davies 2006). Because of their importance for group validation, these may not be open to negotiation in seeking to transition to a new belonging.

Transitioning thus is not equivalent to assimilation (or annihilation of cultural togetherness), and any demands on the part of the 'host' community for assimilation are bound to lead to a deeply contested politics of belonging. Hence, a certain ambivalence exists amongst 'newcomers' as they proceed cautiously in entering into a new landscape or collectivity, seeking to preserve part of the past in moving forward into the future. In this context, an uncertain mix of the residual and the emergent characterise processes of belonging, leading only to an uneasy state of co-existence with a 'host' community.

While newcomers might feel the need to preserve key aspects of their culture, they usually find it necessary to also identify with and participate in their new community's culture, with this accommodation often becoming the basis for their acceptance and belonging (Wright 2015). For instance, as an unusual example, some non-indigenous Australians have reconfigured their sense of belonging through incorporating Aboriginal 'modes' of existence (such as Aboriginal religion) as a "panacea to the spiritual emptiness evident in non-Indigenous Australia" (Miller 2003:221). In this sense, to 'Aboriginalise' is therefore to 'become' a native Australian. As such, belonging becomes a 'nurtured' experience (Wright 2015), as the practices of newcomers are shaped by the cultural milieu into which they enter, even if this 'nurturing' is neither intentional nor explicit. In this thesis, various cultural practices that Africans of foreign origin have adopted in becoming part

of the autochthones in Bushu are set out, while also identifying those cultural practices that the newcomers refuse to let go.

In addition, there is also the possibility of a dual belonging. At the level of citizenship, dual belonging speaks to the idea of an individual having an attachment to two nation-states simultaneously. This is usually the case with immigrants maintaining an identification (or sense of belonging) with their country of origin. This means that belonging is not a zero-sum game, as fostering belonging in a new place over time does not necessarily entail a corresponding dwindling of belonging to a past place (Simon 2012). This does not imply that the past has equal weight with the present (and the future). However, it does imply that past belongings linger on not just in memories but as crystallised in the everyday cultural and social practices of the present. At times, this also involves dual citizenship, as in the case of immigrants in France (Simon 2012).

Dual belonging may also arise sub-nationally, with individuals or groups having simultaneous attachments to two or more places within a particular national territory. Indigenous Africans in Zimbabwe, because of forced removals in the colonial past into present-day communal areas, at times express a longing for their (past) place of origin. This became pronounced during the land occupations in the year 2000, with some occupiers claiming rights to particular white farms on ancestral grounds. Likewise, former farm labourers of foreign origin, as the focus of this thesis, may still have a sense of belonging to the white farm though seeking belonging in communal areas.

2.5 Autochthony, Land and Belonging

To understand issues of communal area belonging in this thesis, it is pertinent to have an appreciation of the relationship between land and belonging. In many societies, certainly in Africa, "the issue of land or of property is still central to belonging and individual well-being" (Schein 2009: 815). Access to land is often a status symbol to which are attached certain rights and privileges which might not be accorded to the landless, including even voting right. Land therefore may form the basis for spatial belonging in most societies and denying a person land could be tantamount to categorically denying them belonging (Trudeau 2006).

Recent studies have challenged the valorisation of globalisation and the associated notion of global citizenship, showing the ongoing significance of localised identities and land-based belonging (Kibreab 1999, Lentz 2007, Gescheire 2011, Zenker 2011), including in relation to the realms of

"tribes, ethnicity, indigeneity, chiefships, and other nativist kinds of attachment to regions and locales" (Meiu 2019:147). This is where the concept of autochthony becomes relevant. Geschiere (2009, 2011) points out that autochthonous claims are quite pivotal in shaping belonging in Africa. In Africa the popularity of autochthony has resonated with multi-party democratic processes especially in Francophone states such as Cameroon (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000) and East Africa notably in Kenya (Githigaro 2017). In these multi-party states, 'strangers' or allochthones (with foreign origins) are blamed for voting for and supporting opposition parties to the dismay of 'nationalist' and 'revolutionary' ruling parties. In Ivory Coast for instance, former president Laurent Gbagbo set in motion the Ivorian National Identification Campaign requiring Ivorians to track their citizenship claims to their villages of origin as a verification process to attain voting rights (Geschiere 2009). However, autochthonous claims are often strategically divorced from nationalistic or nation-based claims and are instead localised as micro-belongings via ethnic and cultural based identities (Lentz 2007). Autochthony has thus become a powerful tool "to exclude the Other, the allogène, the stranger" (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000: 423).

The term 'autochthony' is derived from two Greek words: 'autos', meaning self and 'chthon' meaning soil (Geschiere 2009). The word translates literally as 'of the soil' (Geschiere and Jackson 2006: 2, Dunn 2009:113) or "born of the soil … born of the earth itself" (Geschiere 2009:2). In this regard, autochthony has been conceptualised as "an 'emptier' and … elastic notion…that states no more than 'I was here before you' (Yuval-Davies 2018:231). It is "the proclaimed 'original' link between individual, territory and group" (Zenker 2011:63). The antonym of the term, 'allogene' or 'allochthone', depicts those people who originate from perceived foreign lands (Landau 2006, Geschiere 2009).

The concept of autochthones hence is based on an ethnic group's primordial relation to land that is based on 'first-comer' claims (Lentz 2007, Geschiere 2009). Groups that claim to have settled on a certain piece of land before others claim to be 'daughters and sons of the soil' or '*vana vevhu'* in the Shona vernacular (Muzondidya 2007). The term has been used extensively to account for ethnic differences, politics of belonging and resource disputes in African countries such as Ivory Coast, the Congos, Senegal and Cameroon (Dunn 2009, Geschiere 2009). Xenophobic attacks in South Africa can also be understood within the realm of autochthony. Because of this, 'the local'

becomes a crucial starting point for examining politics of belonging around land (Geschiere and Gugler 1998).

Autochthonous claims have reignited settler-indigene contestations over land in the post-colonial societies not only in Africa but also in the developed world (mostly in former settler countries), particularly North America and Australia between whites on the one hand, and Native Americans and Aborigines respectively on the other hand (Miller 2003, Dunn 2009, Schein 2009, Githigaro 2017). In Europe, there has also been a resurgence of autochthonous claims to land and belonging in the United Kingdom, Denmark, the Netherlands and Belgium (Geschiere 2009, Zenker 2011).

Clearly, autochthony speaks to the strong connection between people and soil (Geschiere 2009). In most African societies, purported first comer groups "are believed to have established a special relationship with the spirits of the land, ensuring fertility and the wellbeing of the community" (Lentz 2007:40). In the vernacular Shona language, such spirits are called '*mhondoro*' and they are highly celebrated and consulted on issues relating to land use (Cheater 1990). Autochthony thus speaks to "claiming land and heritage; investing in kinship and ethno-regional relations; returning to the native village to build a house or to be buried; identifying, naming, and excluding strangers; waging wars; and doing business" (Meiu 2019: 148). When a person cannot claim a village-based origin to their place of residence, they might be considered as an autochthone nationally but still a foreigner. In the Shona vernacular, such people are referred to as '*vabvakure'* (meaning those who came from afar). An entire grouping of people, and not just single individuals, could be labelled in this manner (Zenker 2011:73).

However, the notion of autochthone (or indigene and other related terms) is not immune to debate and criticism. For instance, some argue that the term should be rejected because of its "cultural essentialism" (Zenker 2011:64). Others defend the term, as it forms part of a necessary political project to bring about redress for autochthones marginalised from their historical lands (Barnard 2006). In the case of post-colonial Zimbabwe, autochthones claims are very pronounced, at both the national and local level. At central level, the exclusionary nationalism of the ruling party posits that certain groups fall outside the realm of 'sons of the soil', and this has a clear ethnic twist to it (Muzondidya 2007). At local level, in relation to particular tracts of land, ancestral claims abound (as demonstrated during the land occupations). For communal areas in Zimbabwe, it is the ethnic first-comer claims that define belonging. Both levels (central and local) affect the belonging of ex-

farm labourers of foreign origin to communal areas, who might be seen as "scrounging strangers who have immigrated into and are threatening to take over one's own homeland" (Zenker 2011:68).

2.5.1 Autochthony and Land Disputes

Because autochthony is an 'elastic notion', disputes over the rightful and legitimate first-comer often arise. Given the centrality of land not only to belonging but also to livelihoods in Africa, these disputes may be quite intense. Land is valuable in Africa as it is a source of livelihoods and a social mooring. In most African societies, rural people:

> [T]end to identify strongly with their territories because of the opportunity this offers regarding rights of access to resources and protection by virtue of being a member or citizen of that territory. People identify themselves with territories where their entitlements emanate from belonging to a society, which occupies a geographically bounded physical space (Kibreab 1999:408).

Most land is highly territorialised on an ethnic basis (Kibreab 1999, Lentz 2007), thus its centrality to the quest for belonging. Territoriality involves "the attempt by an individual or group [or state] to affect, influence, or control people, and relationships, by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area" (Sack 1986:19). Typically, those who claim autochthonous attachment to territory end up territorialising belonging. They will then be compelled to "safeguard 'ancestral lands' against 'strangers' who 'soil' this patrimony" (Ceuppens and Geschiere 2005:386) on the basis of first comer claims against later immigrants. As Kibreab (1999:387) explains:

> In such societies, the original occupiers have the right to exclude or deny entry to outsiders, or if they allow them to enter, they can impose conditions of entry and residence, as well as resource use … [T]he aspiration of people who consider themselves different from 'others' to inhabit culturally and ethnically distinct territorialised places has never been greater.

Ethnic-based autochthonous claims to land therefore "provide a legitimate framework in which to negotiate various forms of land rights" (Zenker 2011:69), such that it is the autochthonous "'ethnic' that legitimises privileged access to land" (Zenker 2011:71). In this way, land rights are "intimately tied to membership in specific communities", formed through "the nuclear or extended family, the larger descent group (clan), the ethnic group" (Lentz 2007:37). This implies that an individual's claim to land is linked to group membership and, in turn, group membership is linked to land (Lentz 2007).

These autochthonous claims to land have at times sparked violent land-based conflicts in many parts of Africa, among groups "who now define themselves on the basis of ethnicity, tribe, clan, religion, language or other forms of cultural legacy" (Kibreab 1999:388). Exclusionary ethicised territorialism in Africa makes the naturalisation of aliens and refugees difficult, and they are often confined to spatially segregated sites away from contact with the locals. This is done ostensibly to prevent 'outsiders' from entering territorialized land (Gausset et al. 2011, Githigaro 2017). It also explains in part why racial and ethnic groups considered 'foreign' are regarded as unbefitting to own land (or particular tracts of land) in Zimbabwe, both at the official state level and amongst communal area villagers themselves (Muzondidya 2007). Further, it goes some way in explaining some of the violence characterising the land occupations and associated fast track land reform in the country (Hartnack 2005, Kufandirori 2015).

Importantly, just like belonging, claims about autochthony are fluid, negotiable and open to dispute (Mujere 2012, Lentz 2007). Autochthonous claims by a group of people can be – and are – challenged by others; and, if this is successfully done, the group may lose its autochthonous claims and become a stranger (Geschiere 2009). In other words, contestations arise around claims about being the original inhabitants of a particular area, with multiple and competing claims existing in many cases. In this vein, Africa has been called a 'frontier' continent whose history is "a history of migrations" (Mujere 2012: 8), involving "[u]ntold millions" (Groves 2020: 13), with historical mass population movements such as those by the Bantu and Nilotic peoples making particular autochthonous claims sometimes difficult to sustain.

This difficulty has been exacerbated by the spatial restructuring of pre-colonial societies (including through war and conquest) and as well as by significant colonial removals of people from their supposed ancestral lands. All this means that people may be considered as new-comers to an area but, at the same time, assert autochthonous claims because of their proclaimed ancestral origins – as if reclaiming lost lands. Any self-proclaimed group of autochthones is bound to experience some 'unease' because of the possibility of competing proclamations of autochthony arising – the language of autochthony is thus "a 'nervous' one" (Geschiere 2009: 28). This entails significant discursive work, as competing groups of autochthones seek to construct historical narratives about their past with specific reference to the area under dispute.

In the end, as Lentz (2007) rightly argues, the concept of a primordial autochthone is problematic, as it is based on a selective recount of historical events, involving processes of both remembering and forgetting. Insofar as disputes exist around being first inhabitants of a specific area, with two (or more) groups asserting ancestral belonging over the same area, this means that autochthonous status ultimately becomes detached from the question of ancestral origin. It becomes a question of what happens in the present, and not what existed in the past: a dynamic process of becoming, rather than a fixed ahistorical essence. More specifically, multiple claims about autochthony and belonging (with regard to a tract of land) arise over time, so that sedimentations of autochthonous status emerge and exist (Mujere 2012). This relates to the fact that belonging is a project or a process, as different groups of people seek to develop a sense of (non-primordial) belonging to new territorial places over time – the newcomer, in the end, becomes an autochthone if the project of belonging is successful; and the process is repeated as time moves on.

2.6 Conclusion

The actor-oriented interface theory informs this thesis chiefly due to its ability to analytically capture the lifeworlds and interfaces of different (and competing) social groups; in the case of this thesis, in relation to Bushu autochthones and the ex-farm labourers of foreign origin. Issues of othering and strangerhood invoked by the politics of belonging (emanating from everyday interfaces) are also central to this thesis, as I seek to understand the discourses and practices of both groups as they negotiate their co-presence in Bushu. Importantly, the former farm workers of foreign origin enter Bushu as the otherised stranger, seemingly ethnically bankrupt of authentic claims to belonging to the Bushu landscape due to different past. They come to Bushu with their own lifeworld which is seemingly divorced in many respects from that of Bushu autochthones; yet, at the same time, they seek to assert and stamp belonging to both the landscape and the collective community. The autochthones, claiming first-comer rights, may respond in different ways, ranging from outright rejection of the strangers to some form of accommodation and co-existence. It is through analysing the negotiated interfaces between the two groups that the politics of belonging are brought to the fore.

CHAPTER THREE: ZIMBABWEAN FOREIGN FARM WORKERS – HISTORY AND BELONGING

3.1 Introduction

This contextual chapter provides an examination of farm workers (on white commercial farms) in Zimbabwe, dating back to the colonial encounter to the fast track land reform programme and beyond. I first provide an overview of 'domestic government', as the form of authority prevailing on white farms, as this facilitates an understanding of the lifeworld and conditions of existence of farm labourers, including through the prisms of their marginalisation from the nation-state and institutionalised othering. In the end, farm-based domestic government conditions sets the tone for the migrant farm labourers' later attempts at (re)inventing their identity and forging new forms of belonging in the communal areas in the face of fast track. The chapter also gives a historical account of the emergence of farm labourers (including migrant farm labourers), as white settlers slowly developed a viable and productive commercial agricultural sector under colonial conditions. A further discussion focuses on the period from 1980 (Zimbabwean independence) up to fast track in the year 2000. At the end of the chapter, I discuss farm workers from 2000 to present, focusing on farm workers' experiences during and after fast track, while bringing to light how some farm workers of foreign origin ended up migrating to the communal areas following fast track displacements.

3.2 Domestic Government

Before discussing the historical context of white commercial farming and commercial farm workers (particularly those of foreign origin) in Zimbabwe, it is necessary to give a general thematic account of white commercial farms, farmers and farm labourers by highlighting the farm labour regime and farm worker mode of belonging, as well as the overall agrarian political economy in both colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe. This discussion relies heavily on Blair Rutherford's work on Zimbabwean commercial farm workers and, in particular, his use of the notion of domestic government. Rutherford (1998, 2001a, 2001b, 2003, 2008, 2013) has written

extensively on Zimbabwean commercial farm workers, and his concept of domestic government (and conditional belonging) in relation to commercial farm workers is very useful in appreciating the historical power relations that have shaped foreign farm workers' belonging. The focus is on the permanent labour force (not temporary labour often drawn from Native Reserves/Tribal Trust Lands/communal areas) falling under domestic government.

3.2.1 Conditional Belonging

In both colonial and post-colonial times in Zimbabwe, permanent (mainly male) commercial farm workers (who tended to be predominantly Africans of foreign origin) existed within a farm based 'domestic government', until at least the fast track programme (Rutherford 2001a, 2008, 2011, Bolt 2015). A 'domestic government' system implied that farm workers were "paired to the farmer" and placed under farmers' 'private' and not 'public' administrative system within the farms, thereby isolated and marginalised from the central governance of the national government and the nation state (Rutherford, 2001a: 234). Thus, instead of becoming and being part of the nation state, farm workers particularly those of foreign origin were a 'forgotten' people "hidden away living in the margins of Zimbabwe" (Rutherford 2001a:1). In this way, the farm became the "centre of their world" (Hartnack 2005:355). In terms of the labour regime on the farms, domestic government spoke to the racialised, paternalistic and coercive relations between the farmer and his workers. A gendered paternalism also existed, between the male farmer and the permanent male worker, with the former often drawing upon the obligatory part-time labour of the male worker's wife (and sometimes children) (Rutherford 2001a, Mkhize 2012).

Living and labouring on the farm and possibly accessing a plot of land for personal use (thereby, cultivating crops) might have helped to facilitate a sense of belonging for farm workers, notably foreign workers. Harmonious relations with the farmer in most cases guaranteed a lifetime home, employment and social provisions for permanent farm workers and their families (Rutherford 2008). In the colonial period, compound housing was often very deplorable. Post-1980, farm compounds on many white farms showed significant improvement, including asbestos roofed houses (Auret 2000). The idea that farmers provided welfare for their farm workers (including housing) while the national government 'ignored' them might have also fostered a shared identity between farm workers and the farmer. As Rubert (1998:126) points out, albeit romantically, with respect to the construction of farm worker accommodation in farm villages: "[A] small village, and they were quite happy living in their own village. … [T]here was [no] doubt about that, they

were contented, very contented living in their loosely supervised compounds so as to be with their own people during non-working hours".

At times, in the farm compounds, farmers would geographically separate families from different ethnic groups to reduce inter-ethnic conflicts that periodically erupted in the compounds. While again perhaps overstating the position, Rubert (1998:127) argues that different ethnic groups "wanted their own compounds". Nevertheless, undoubtedly, workers from different ethnic groups (including from foreign lands) sought to communicate using their native languages and at times practice their unique cultural and religious rites. Kinship and ethnic ties and a sense of shared identity and ethnic belonging was apparent within farm compounds, leading to the ongoing relevance of cultural symbols and practices among the 'foreign' workers.

Deceased farm workers and their families were interred on the white farms. Commercial farms had graveyards particularly set aside for their employees. In that regard, farms provided a home for the farm workers, especially those of foreign origin, before, during and after life. Former farm workers might therefore feel attached to the farms years after leaving them. As one scholar noted, "the graves of deceased farm workers or other colonial-era African migrants continue to have a latent potential to provoke future controversy" (Fontein 2019:714). If Fontein's claim is anything to go by then, in future, former farm workers might claim belonging to the former commercial farms by virtue of their historical material presence of their loved ones (as they appear in the form the graves). Thus, in a way, farms and farmers probably provided a sense of belonging and attachment for the farm workers, more than what the national government of Rhodesia or Zimbabwe did (Daimon 2014).

3.2.2 Paternalism and Coercion

Historically (at least until the FTLRP), white commercial farms were a racialised and gendered institution whereby the farmer was constructed discursively (and existed in practice) as an authoritative, knowledgeable, white, married, patrilineal and patriarchal figure (Rutherford 2001a). White farmer paternalism over his black labourers prevailed within the colonial 'us' (white farmers) versus 'them' (black farm workers) dichotomies, stamped by the colonial experience of being "either the victim or the perpetrator of colonisation" (Auret 2000:3). Colonial white hegemony 'constructed' blacks (including black farm labourers) as ostensibly highly irresponsible and thus in dire need of European modernisation and edification, and white farmers "saw

themselves as paternal figures safeguarding the lives of their black people" (Bolt 2015:159). In this light, farm workers needed to be managed by a 'responsible' white farmer (Rutherford 2001a), with domestic government entailing the existence of "paternalistic family and family-like relations between workers and farmers" (Moyo et al. 2001:190). As fathers, farmers oversaw the lives and labour of their workers (and their families), whom they viewed as perpetual "boys", and they set up conditions and devised stratagems in maximising paternalistic control of their workers (Mamdani 1996:4, Rutherford 2001b:635). In the end, domestic government involved both coercion (threats and physical punishment) and rewards (for example, credit, groceries and accommodation) (Rutherford 2001, Bolt 2015).

Domestic government was embedded in farm-based land relations whereby permanent (including foreign) farm workers were miniature serfs "bound to farm owners in a quasi-feudal relationship" (Sachikonye 2003:19), with farmers providing accommodation to permanent labourers in farm villages or compounds. Ongoing access to accommodation depended upon ongoing labouring for the farmer. Hence, the farm-based labour and tenancy regime was conditional, as "a native or his family shall be permitted to occupy a portion of such land under condition that he supply labour to such owner" (Arrighi 1966:41).

In many but not all instances, farm workers could practice some level of semi-subsistence farming to supplement their meagre income, against a background whereby the state denied land access in particular to African 'foreigners' (Auret 2000, Rutherford 2001a). Most farms were therefore expansive enough for the farmer to spare land for his workers, with wives being the main agricultural labourers on these small plots (Auret 2000:8). However, the land was accessed at the farmers' whim, without any legal tenure contract in place. Farm workers had to maintain good relations with the farmer in order to access and maintain land plots. The feudal-type arrangement meant that loss of employment, or any fall out with the farmer, meant the loss of a home and land or the labourer.

Foreign farm workers, without any inherit right to live in Native Reserves (later, Tribal Trust Lands and communal areas) were particularly "disadvantaged mainly because they reside on the property of their employer" and "various social rights are tied into or embodied in land and territorial rights" (Moyo *et. al.,* 2000: 183,185). The absolute dependency of foreign farm workers on commercial farm land "created considerable insecurity, making fear, jealousy and outward compliance part of

the life of every farmworker" (Auret 2000: 9). This implied that migrant farm workers' reliance on the farmer for land undercut their autonomy and created a 'conditional belonging' (Rutherford 2008). More than autochthonous farm labourers, they belonged to the farm, but this was conditional on ongoing employment.

As paternal figures, white farmers were convinced that they employed an irresponsible (male) labour force incapable of budgeting when spending their wages, often spending wages on 'beer and women' (Johnson 2000, Rutherford 2001a). As such, farmers paid part of their employees' wages in the form of groceries (in lieu of cash) under the (racist) pretext that, "their workers were improvident, wasteful and would drink away the money – *as blacks would*" (Hughes 2010: xvii). Farm worker poverty existed, therefore, on the grounds of labourers' inability to spend wisely, and not because of their paltry farm earnings, even though farm labourers received exploitative wages far below any poverty datum line (Auret 2000). Farmers believed that they were responsible for their black employees to the extent of even budgeting their domestic consumption.

To Rutherford (2001a, 2004), the most effective form of reward that sustained paternalistic farm domestic government was credit. Most farms had a farm store and, in some cases, a bottle store as well, where farmer workers usually shopped. Since they earned low wages, which were insufficient to see them through the month, farm workers relied on credit from the farmer. The granting of credit to permanent farm workers catered for various needs including groceries, seeds and fertilisers for their small fields and gardens (if made available for the labourers), school fees, and funds to use in cases of emergency such as funerals (Rutherford 2001a). More important was the provision of the maize meal, which forms the bulk of the rural diet in Zimbabwe. Farm workers were hence 'fed' by their paternal figure especially in times of drought when communal peasants faced starvation. As Hughes (2010: xvii) notes: "Ironically, in exploiting black farm workers, white farm owners had also protected them… The … population of farm workers ate better than most Zimbabweans… [W]hites' prejudice-based paternalism actually sheltered blacks from a far harsher political economy".

Though they had the 'privilege' of accessing food from the farmer, farm workers were not at liberty to dispose of the maize meal, for instance through selling it to nearby communal villagers, lest they face the farmer's retribution. Credit granted to farm employees was more than a simple commodity exchange between two autonomous individuals, as it was a well-calculated part of the

domestic government regime (Rutherford 2001a). Thus, as a father, the farmer not only gave credit to his employees but also controlled the expenditure of the credit, otherwise his 'wasteful' children would not be able to account for their credit. Farm credit undoubtedly left farm workers indebted to the farmer more often than not. As a result, farm workers would not be able to leave the farm until the clearance of their debt. Perpetual indebtedness implied that permanent farm workers were stuck with their paternal employer.

As a 'government', farmers also provided welfare services to their permanent farm workers (and families), including health, shelter, education, and possibly small portions of lands for subsistence (Rutherford 2001a). Both the colonial and post-colonial governments never considered farm labourers, particularly those of foreign origin, as their responsibility and hence the labourers existed outside the realm of any state welfare benefits (Johnson 2000, Auret 2000, Rutherford 2003). Because of this, the farmer was their only reliable safety net. White male farmers especially, through their wives, would avail and even administer medication to their ill and injured employees, despite the fact that they were rarely qualified or certified to do so. The administering of farm medication took place usually "from the back door of the farmhouse" and even spanner boys could 'treat' ailments (Auret 2000:10). Rubert (1998) cites an incident during the colonial era when a Mazowe farmer allegedly treated his severely burnt employee using motor oil. Government health workers were also reluctant to attend to farm workers with one state doctor in Bindura (Provincial capital) claiming that he could only attend to farm workers between 9-10 am on weekdays only (Rubert 1998).

Farmers constructed farm schools for their workers' children in order "to keep them [labourers] on the farm" (Rubert 1998:122), with many farmers in a particular area sharing one school facility. The farmer incurred very low costs in the form of "merely the salary of a teacher and perhaps constructing a shed to act as a school house" (Rubert 1998:121). Most farm schools only offered primary education, enabling children to become the next generation of farm labourers (Rutherford 2001a, Auret 2000). The farmers would often harness school children as a reliable source of casual labour.

In terms of domestic government, and besides paternalism, farmers would also control and monitor their workers' private lives including all activities in the farm compound. Farmers monitored their employees' private belongings including bicycles, television and radio sets in compound houses

(Scoones et al. 2018). Workers were constantly required to declare sources of their income each time they were seen in possession of new personal belongings. In a similar fashion, the white farmer could and did control with whom farm workers interacted, notably by not allowing labourers to talk to 'outsiders' without the farmer's knowledge and consent. These 'outsiders' were anyone who did not belong to the farm in question, including government officials, politicians, union leaders and even civil society groups (Rutherford 2004). Farm workers who interacted with such outsiders without the farmer's or, at least, manager's or supervisor's consent might be construed as being 'political' or at least as disrupters, and this was a punishable offence that could result in dismissal (Rutherford 2004). Employees, especially those of foreign origin, could not afford losing their jobs as this had serious socio-economic implications. In some cases, farmers would also control workers' movements. As Hughes (2010:107) observes:

> On these estates, permanent workers in the compound shopped at the farm store, and often recreated on the farm's football pitch. There was simply nowhere else to go. No public areas separated farms, and little transport existed to bring workers into, say, … town. Whether the farmer wanted to or not, he or she controlled access to and communication with the entire workforce, even on weekends.

So stringent was the control that, when the FTLRP programme came about, those former farm workers who remained on the farms at times celebrated their new found 'freedom' from the commercial farmers' hegemonic control (Scoones et al. 2018).

Violence or the threat of violence against farm labourers was also central to the disciplinary control underpinning domestic government. Domestic government was initially a prerogative of the white farmer in colonial times. However, the intensification of African resistance to colonial rule in the 1960s up to independence meant that some reforms arose (Rutherford 2001b). Farm workers started to receive certain entitlements and rights, as different political, civil and administrative groups began challenging white hegemony. This occurred even more so after 1980, but white farms still remained as fiefdom-like rural spaces. Admittedly, many farmers felt compelled to move towards a "mediated paternalism" through adopting 'modern managerialism' which brought about a hierarchical dependence among black farm workers (Bolt 2015:60).

Black farm managers, supervisors and foremen were introduced and they became directly involved in domestic government, managing farm workers all over the farms including in the fields and the residential farm compounds. Black managers and supervisors would see to it that farm workers

followed the 'rules of the farm', even if the rule enforcement entailed using threats and physical violence against fellow black employees (Rutherford 2001a) – actions that in the past were meted out by the white farmer himself. Despite these reforms, and even in postcolonial Zimbabwe, violence against farm workers continued to prevail, and workers still feared their white employers and black supervisors (Rutherford 2004).

The innate fear of their 'strong' bosses deterred farm workers from seeking trade union protection, though rural unions remained insignificant throughout much of the colonial period. Joining and participating in unions was tantamount to challenging the sovereign power of the bosses. In colonial times, the government in the main would act as a pseudo-union for the workers. More often than not, the government would simply encourage farmers to pay farm workers more in order for them to retain labour when labour shortages arose (Rubert 1998, Johnson 1998). However, in most cases, farmers would adopt paternalistic arguments by claiming that offering higher wages to farm labourers would result in the further development of worker complacency and ill discipline (Rutherford 2001a). In fact, in both colonial and postcolonial eras, farmers devised means to discourage their employees from participating and joining unions, arguing that they had the sovereign welfare of their employees foremost in their minds (Rupert 1998). In post-colonial times, farmers refused to allow General Agricultural and Plantation Workers Union of Zimbabwe (GAPWUZ) from deducting membership subscriptions directly from their employees' wages (Rutherford 2001a). As a result, farm workers would eventually withdraw their subscriptions and, in that way, farmers succeeded at times in killing the spirit of unionism on the farms (Rutherford 2004).

In defending sovereignty over their rural spaces, against both government and union intrusions, white farmers were in a strong position to act in coercive ways. They had a leeway to exercise "a system of benevolent paternal autocracy" (Rubert 1998:89). The Masters and Servants Act of 1901 initially "provided the legal architecture" of domestic government and among other providences, banned farm workers' freedom of organisation, association and the right to strike (Rutherford 2008:82). The 1959 Industrial Conciliation Act which, accorded gratuities on retirement from work, did not apply to farm workers as they had no legal status as employees. Under their so-called benevolent paternalism, farmers would ill-treat their workers through various punitive ways, including non-payment of wages, beatings, torture and even shootings and murder (Rubert 1998,

Masaka 2012). Acts of violence were often justified by the farmers under the pretext that "where there is no fear of the master there is no work done" (Rubert 1998:95).

Some farmers believed that workers were more likely to desert farmers who paid less than those who used physical violence. As such, farmers with a record of beating workers often offered their workers higher wages as a retention strategy in the colonial period. In post-colonial times, abusive farmers would retain workers through paternalistic credit (Rutherford 2001). This however, does not imply that farm workers were helpless totally in the face of farmer wrath and, on occasion, they did lodge farmer ill treatment complaints cases before courts of law. Typically, they feared doing so because they might experience further mistreatment or even dismissal as a result. As well, under colonial conditions, farmers often received lenient rulings in court cases even those involving murder. Such lenient rulings serve to show how white settler farmers (with their domestic government) together with the colonial national government trivialised the lives of farm labourers (Rupert 1998). In post-colonial Zimbabwe, farmers would try to manipulate the legal system by sometimes calling Labour Officers declaring their innocence before workers would lodge a complaint (Rutherford 2001a).

3.2.3 A Place called Home

Though labourers shared a physical proximity with the white farmer, the two existed in distinct and distant social lifeworlds. Even though farms and farmers might have fostered a sense of belonging amongst workers (including migrant workers), the relationship between farm workers and farmers was neither even nor mutual. White farmers had nothing in common with their farm workers except for a paternal relationship (Rutherford 2001a:34), a relationship also marked by coercion. Even though they lived on the same farm, white farm owners lived very comfortable lives in modern well built, European furnished and fenced farm houses while most farm workers (except black farm managers) led very precarious lives living in poorly built houses in the farm compound away from the farm house. Although farmers needed workers to work for them, white farmers never identified themselves with black workers. Instead, black workers would sometimes prove to be irritants in the eyes of their white bosses (Rutherford 2001b, Hughes 2010).

Alternatively, European (white) farmers chose to identify themselves with the African savannah and landscape rather than black people (Hughes 2010). As Krog (2003:76) notes:

> "The labor" could facilitate or disrupt farm operations, enriching or infuriating the boss. Even so, these blacks operated within the confines of whites' administrative project: Euro-Zimbabweans managed them but did not construct an identity around them. Commercial farmers, like many other savannah whites, felt the primary tension or contradiction as (white) Man against the land – not white against black.

Auret (2000) reports that some white farmers never visited or knew anything about their workers' lives or farm compounds. Likewise, farm workers were not at liberty to visit the farmer's (often-extravagant) farm house. The physical distance was a social distance, therefore demonstrating that, though they lived on one farm, the two lived in completely different social lifeworlds. Nonetheless, despite this and having to work and live under intense surveillance and control, farm workers (particularly those of foreign origin) tended to display gratitude to the farmer, though not in an open way necessarily. As Auret (2000:3) notes:

> Many workers especially those who had been migrant labourers feel deep gratitude towards the farmers, for they are keenly aware that, when they arrived in what was then Rhodesia, their lack of skills and education meant that they could find employment only as manual labourers, and yet the farms offered them jobs and homes.

Because of this, many farm workers were willing to be part of domestic government and the farmer was indeed a provider if not a savior in precarious times. The elasticity of domestic government, far from being autocratic exclusively, was the only relationship that entailed some sense of belonging for farm workers, considering their overall marginalisation from the nation. In some way, they could call the white farm their home.

3.2.4 Farm Worker Differentiation

Despite the seemingly uniform representation of farm workers as presented so far, it is necessary to note that they were never a homogenous group. This means that forms of belonging (and the intensity of belonging) varied amongst black workers on farms. Up until fast track in the year 2000, they were stratified by form of labour contract, age, number of years lived and worked on the farms, nationality (with some being Zimbabwean), ethnicity, gender, skills and qualification level among other factors. There thus existed a "farm hierarchy" whereby some farm workers were actually more superior compared to others (Hartnack 2005: 357). There existed a class of what Rutherford (2001b) calls *vanhu vakuru* (i.e. big men) who comprised farm managers (who in some cases were white, while black managers increased in numbers towards the 1970s), supervisors,

foremen, tractor drivers and other skilled personnel (Rutherford 2001a). Below these in the farm hierarchy were unskilled general labourers. Farm supervisors, foremen and others earned more than ordinary farm workers. The farm's 'big men' tended to live near the farmers' house, at times far from the main workers' compound. In some farms, a two-compound system existed, whereby senior (and long serving) members of the labour force lived in asbestos roofed houses while new members would start by occupying mud thatched huts only to graduate to a better compound after serving for some time (Rubert 1998).

As such, typically, senior workers had a more loyal and intimate relationship with the farmer compared to fellow black workers (Hartnack 2017). They might identify themselves more with the farmer than other workers, and thereby belong to the farmer more than they did with manual labourers (Rutherford 2001b).

Even amongst ordinary labourers, there was elements of heterogeneity. Ethnic origins and years spent on farms at times created boundaries between workers (Rutherford 2001b), though these were not impermeable. Age also differentiated farm workers and their attachment to the farm and the farmer (Hartnack 2017). While belonging to the farm and the white farmer was stronger for some older and senior ranked workers, it was a different case for younger and unskilled labourers. The young and unskilled were constantly 'at the bus stop' waiting for the next bus to take them to another farm where they deemed conditions to be better than what their present boss was offering them (Auret 2000). This may still entail attachment to white farms, but not to a particular white farm. Nevertheless, particularly unfavourable working conditions on specific farms, or perceived differentiation across white farms in terms of labour and living conditions (Rupert 1998), led to high labour turnover – primarily, but not exclusively, amongst the younger generation of farm workers.

Because of this, and discussed more fully later, 'unbecoming' farm workers has been easier for younger farm workers in moving beyond the farms in the context of fast track. In many cases, they sought to reinvent their identity as (former) farm workers (post-fast track) and possibly form new modes of belonging elsewhere, including in the urban areas (Hartnack 2017). Some older, loyal and senior farm workers are still in contact with their former white bosses almost two decades after farm displacements, with some still receiving material assistance from their former boss (Hartnack 2017). In certain cases, these farm workers followed their white bosses, who managed to secure

farms elsewhere in or outside of the country, possibly showing strong bonds of belonging between the two.

3.2.5 Gender

Gendered paternalism was also an integral part of the commercial farm's political economy. As mentioned, the farmer was a male figure (both discursively and in practice) with only few female farm owners. The few female farm owners were usually widows left to take care of their dead husbands' estate and, in many cases, these women would sale the farm if none of their sons were willing to take over the farm. Daughters were not expected to be farm inheritors; instead, they would be 'married off' (Rutherford 2001a). This, however, does not imply that farmers' wives were irrelevant to farm management. As a leading feminine figure on the farm, they perfectly fitted into the domestic government equation. In fact, domestic government began in the farmer's house whereby farmers' wives played reproductive roles through managing domestic workers, welcoming visitors, and cleaning and decorating farm houses; and, in the process, they were rarely directly involved in the day-to-day running of the farm's productive agricultural activities. In the rare cases where farmers' wives directly got involved in farm business, they would perform clerical work (Rutherford 2000). Thus "white farming women were 'incorporated wives' defined as integral parts of the farmer's domestic authority in his 'family' and his farm not as economic agents in themselves" (Rutherford 2001a:33).

In the same manner that the white (male) farmers were 'responsible' for edifying male black workers, farmers' wives were regularly on a mission to edify black farm workers' wives. Thus, white farmers' wives maternally 'supervised' and 'cared' for farm workers' wives and any female workers (Auret 2000). They became patrons of women's clubs on farms, responsible for imparting life skills including hygiene and reproductive health issues, as well as 'empowering' black farm women through livelihood projects such as sewing, baking and crocheting (Auret 2000, Rutherford 2004). In return, black women on farms were expected to be grateful for the concerted efforts of their white 'madams' in seeing to it that their lives improved. The 'madams' would keep the proceeds and distribute the profits accrued from the various projects run by the women's clubs (Rutherford 2004). For example, in the 1990s, farmers' wives in partnership with NGOs and the Commercial Farmers' Union formed the Farmers' Wives Association that was active in supervising farm-based women's clubs, promoting home and garden competitions and shows as well as mobilising prizes for the winners (Auret 2000).

The gendered farming paternalistic political economy also imagined, as indicated, a (permanent) farm worker as a male, married figure with children, one who had authority over his family (Johnson 2000, Rutherford 2001a, Mkhize 2012). This accounts for male domination of the permanent labour force on farms, and white commercial farmers' preference for married black labourers (who also had children), over single men or women (at least up until the mid-1990s) (Johnson 2000). Since permanent farm workers lived on the farms, the workplace also became a home, making family-based social relations key to the sustenance of the farm's political economy. As a result, farm women and their children's "access to housing was tied to the employment of the male head worker who also acted as manager over his family members in their capacity as residents and workers on the farm" (Mkhize 2012:139).

Permanent farm workers' wives and children were an important part of domestic government as they were a crucial source of casual labour. They would perform some of the necessary piece work on the farm, the form of labour taken in casual or temporary working arrangements (Rutherford 2001a). At times, wives and children would even undertake some of the work allocated to the male worker by, for instance, weeding a portion of land. Male workers would thus ensure the provision of extra casual workers by mobilisng family labour (Johnson 2000). A workers' family was a reliable source of extra labour for the farmer, and hence effectively managing permanent male workers was important for the farmer. Failure to provide family labour might have serious negative implications for the male worker. To ensure labour access and sustainability, farmers through farm supervisors usually handled any domestic disputes arising within the farm compound. For women married to permanent farm workers, marriage was a safety net and a survival strategy with which to gain ease of access to benefits enjoyed by permanent employees, including land (in its form of small fields and gardens for subsistence cultivation), a house, retirement packages and credit facilities.

The gendered character of domestic government was witnessed by the ways in which farmers separated families according to their gendered family composition. Permanent male workers usually lived in better houses in a compound separated from any single men and women living on the farm, who often formed the bulk of casual employees (Rutherford 2001a). Single employees received inferior single roomed houses (usually on a temporary and/or seasonal basis).

Initially, migrant women formed the bulk of single females in the farm compounds. Later, indigene women flocked onto the farms, especially after the 1930s when Africans lost considerable pieces of land and cattle due to the Land Apportionment Act (Rubert 1998). These women (either autochthones or allochthones) served as casual labour and sometimes as 'temporary' wives to the migrant farm workers, with some local women eventually marrying the migrants (Nyambara 2005).

In fact, farms became a haven for marginalised indigenous women who included single and childless women, those running away from arranged marriages, prostitutes and some who had been accused of witchcraft in the (now) former Reserves (Rubert 1998). Even though they were marginalised, the farm became a haven for some level of safety and security for single women, as long as they observed the 'rules of the farm' as a basis for remaining on the farm (Rutherford 2001a). As unmarried casual workers, they had more autonomy compared to their married counterparts, but they could not access benefits accorded to male workers. Their situation changed due to post-colonial advocacy that resulted in single (and indeed married) women becoming permanent workers in their own right (Rutherford 2001a). Their percentage, however, remained low compared to male workers engaged as permanent workers.

3.3 Colonial Creation of White Commercial Farms Workers

The history of Zimbabwe's white commercial farms and farm workers (including foreign labourers) traces back to colonial times when the British South African Company (BSAC) annexed the colony in the late 1890s. After settling in the territory now known as Zimbabwe in the 1890s, the white colonial administration introduced an array of economic activities that required a reliable cheap labour supply. Initially, mining prospects propelled white settlers into the territory However, the expectation of a 'Second Rand' soon dissipated and the focus soon turned to agriculture (Johnson 2000).

Early European settler agricultural success necessitated a considerable arsenal of cheap labour since the pioneer white farmers were "men who had little more than possessions in an ox-wagon, and debts at home" (Rennie 1978: 88). In places, vast forests needed to be cleared and destumped and infrastructure had to be built from scratch, yet farm machinery was – at best – primitive, and expensive and unavailable (at worst). Thus, the ambitious but capital-starved European farmer required cheap African manual labour; otherwise, the land had no commercial value (Arrighi 1970,

Nyambara 2005). This led to a situation whereby when "white farmers took land, they also gained control of the people on it" for labour purposes (Rennie 1978: 87).

At first, the colonial administration sought to rely on local labour for the farms (Johnson 2000), but autochthonous Africans were unwilling to leave their land-based livelihoods to become labourers. Early white settlers devised various strategies to undercut African agriculture and stimulate (if not compel) Africans to become wage-labourers on farms (and in other parts of the settler economy) (Arrighi 1970). This included, among other actions, the creation of a money economy as a medium through which to purchase goods and services (Munro 1998, Johnson 1998). At the same time, new wants such as sugar, tea, clothes, handbags among other commodities were introduced in order to entice Africans into labour (Hughes 2010). In this sense, the need to labour was in part created artificially.

Stimulating the entry of Africans into the labour market on its own was ineffective in creating a sufficient African labour force since Africans had exchange commodities such as cattle with which to earn money. Following the defeat of Africans in the 1896-97 wars of dispossession, the new colonial administration together with settler farmers developed an array of land-based strangulation strategies to ensure a source of cheap African labour, at least over the short-term. In the main, this involved expropriating land and livestock from Africans, including by way of draconian racial legislation entailing the establishment of Native Reserves. Vast areas of arable and fertile land were designated as European land while Africans were to be settled in arid and infertile reserves. For instance, the Native Land Husbandry Act together with the Land Apportionment Act of 1931 and its subsequent amendments ensured that, by 1955, 30,500,000 acres of land were owned by Europeans, although much of this land remained unused or was underutilised (Youe 2002). In the case of Matabeleland, Ndebele people often chose to stay on their (now-dispossessed) land as serfs on European land, shunning the newly-created African Reserves which they thought of as 'cemeteries not homes'.

In 1901, the colonial government passed the Masters and Servants Act which became the cornerstone of farmer-farm worker relations for years to come, including configuring domestic government. This draconian legislation gave employers absolute control over their workers. The Act forbade workers from disobeying their master's command, missing work without permission, neglect of duty and abusive behaviour towards the Master and his family. In return, the Master

was supposed to cater for his workers' welfare (Rutherford 2001a). This legislation also banned farm workers' freedom of organization and association as well as the right to strike. Farm workers, for many decades to come, received remuneration even lower than their counterparts in the mines and the manufacturing industry (Johnson 1992). They simply worked on the margins (Rutherford, 2001a).

Initially, though, white settler conditions for Africans to stay on European land came under various regimes, including labour tenancy, sharecropping, rent-schemes and 'kaffir farming' (Rennie 1978, Youe 2002). Existing before the emergence of a fully proletarianised farm labour force years later, these different labour conditions ebbed and flowed over a number of decades and were subject to spatial variations across the countryside. In large part, they ensured a source of cheap labour for the settler white farmers for some time (Youe 2002). The flexibility of the different labour arrangements up to the 1930s (when the Land Apportionment Act was enacted) ensured that, for example by 1925, in one Southern Rhodesian district, "out of a total African population of 15,000, only 1,600 lived in the reserve; of the rest, 4,500 squatted on unalienated (Crown) land and 7,780 lived on white farms" (Youe 2002:559-560). This implied that Africans resorted to serfdom-type conditions on white farms as a better alternative to settling in the arid Reserves.

Under the 'kaffir system', local Africans could practice agriculture on absentee European land in return for a fee. The word 'kaffir' in this instance was a pejorative term by European farmers to show their contempt for other settler farmers who allowed Africans to utilise their land. Sharecropping involved Africans growing crops on European land, with an obligation of sharing some of the produce with their European landlords. Labour tenancy entailed Africans working on European land in exchange for portions of land on which to practice their own agricultural activities. In addition to labour, settler farmers also benefited from the tenants in various ways, including dipping and grazing fees (Arrighi 1970, Nyambara 2002). Thus, for a while, local African farmers thrived on European land owing to prevailing land and labour arrangements, realising high yields, and even owning and breeding large healthy stocks of animals (Nyambara 2005). This arrangement appeared to be mutually beneficial.

However, the fear of growing African agricultural enterprises and competition, especially by increasingly successful settler farmers, forced the colonial administration to periodically review and reverse sharecropping and 'kaffir' farming (Youe 2002). Successful African farmers under

these existing arrangements posed a serious threat to cheap labour availability for the expanding white farmers who thrived on this labour. Labour tenancy (compared to 'kaffir farming' and sharecropping) was more appealing to wealthier European farmers since it did not entail significant agricultural production (and thereby competition) by Africans, and it ensured the provision of a labour force. Their constant pressure on the colonial state led for instance to the eviction of an estimated 85,000 African families from white farmland between 1945 and 1951 (Youe 2002:565).

Labour shortages were becoming an increasing concern amongst white farmers. The fact that serious competition for African labour (from mines and industries in the colonial economy) was also arising from the 1920s, only served to exacerbate the possibility of ongoing farm labour shortages (Rennie 1978). Further, though Africans benefited from the land and labouring agreements, they entered into them reluctantly. In extreme cases, local Africans were forced to sign agreements, only to dishonour them in actual practice. Africans wanted autonomy from the white farmers and detested working for them. European settlers were aware, from the start, that autochthones demonstrated an unwilling to work for them. Certainly, they constantly complained about the "typical reserve native apathy regarding work" (Nyambara 2005:276).

As Africans lost their land and moved (voluntarily or by force) into the Reserves, the colonial administration introduced further tax regimes such as the hut tax and dog tax to compel Reserve Africans into wage labour (Hughes 2005). While in part successful, these Africans largely laboured as casual and seasonal workers on in their endeavour to meet the imposed tax obligations (Rubert 1998), while returning to the Reserves during key parts of the agricultural season to attend to their own crops (Johnson 1992). With the undercutting of 'kaffir farming' and sharecropping, labour tenancy and the intermittent supply of labour from Reserves proved insufficient. This became particularly problematic from the 1940s and after the Second World War, given significant growth in white agriculture. Thus, settler agricultural output by volume increased by 259 percent between 1937 and 1958 and agriculture stamped itself as the colony's main economic activity (Nyambara 2005: 281). There was a clear need for an alternative and reliable supply of, in particular, a permanent labour force. In 1939, the Rhodesia Agricultural Union (RAU) and the Matabeleland Farmers' Union already reported labour shortages "ranging from 15 to 80 per cent of farming needs in most districts of the colony" (Johnson 1992:115). Despite the hegemony and sovereignty of

domestic government, the colonial government often lobbied farmers to provide better conditions to their employees including better wages for retention purposes.

Desperation for labour (on the part of white farmers) in the face of a growing demand for food during the Second World War, culminated in the passing of the Compulsory Native Labour Act of 1942. In order to contribute to the British Allied forces in the war, colonies were obliged to contribute to the needs of the war. One way of achieving this was through providing food that was in short supply. Since Rhodesian farmers were producing many cash crops (especially tobacco), there was a call to increase vital food produce especially maize (Munro 1998). To realise this, settler farmers argued for the need to coerce African labour into their labour forces, which would also avert the growing critical labour shortages (Johnson 2000).

Though reluctant at first, colonial administrators finally succumbed to the demands of farmers and embarked on forced conscription of African 'gang' labourers. The Act "empowered the state to conscript African males between the ages of 18 and 45 who were out of employment for three months or longer" (Johnson 1992;120). The first gang went into Shamva on 26 March 1942 (Johnson 2000:94). For four years during the war, conscripted Africans laboured on European farms (and in mines and industries) under the convenient pretext of imperial 'war efforts' (Johnson 2000, Munro 1998). By 1945, nearly 50,000 Africans had been conscripted into forced labour countrywide (Johnson 2000:106). It was not unusual for farm workers to abscond or run away under conditions of conscription, or even from abusive farmers, with farmers deemed cruel possibly losing half of their employees annually.

Settler farmers realised the advantages of forced labour to such an extent that they requested for its continuation after the war (Johnson 1992, Munro 1998). This move was thwarted by the colonial administration, which reminded farmers of the punitive measures that they would potentially face from the International Labour Organisation during peace times. Therefore, the Compulsory Native Labour Act was repealed following the war. This left farmers in Southern Rhodesia in a desperate need for labour once more. Against this background, autochthonous colonial subjects' resentment of (and hostility towards) white farming settlers continued and this created an unease on the part of settler farmers to hire local Africans (Rubert 1998). Added to this, some evidence of agricultural production in Native Reserves on a semi-commercial basis, and the ongoing presence of labour tenancy arrangements on numerous (less productive) white farms, implied that the autochthones

were not a reliable and sufficient labour source for the colony (Scott 1954). Farmers had to look elsewhere for labour, to foreign lands (as discussed later).

By the late 1950s and into the early 1960s, the earlier forms of land-labour arrangements (for example, labour tenancy) no longer existed and farm workers had been in large proletarianised, i.e. had become wage-labourers. Simultaneously, from the 1950s, there was significant political mobilisation and organisation in the urban centres of Southern Rhodesia (Drinkwater 1998). The burgeoning African nationalist and labour movements sought, quite unevenly, to penetrate the rural areas, including white farms. In 1960, there occurred the first formation of a farm workers' union (Agricultural and Plantation Worker's Union). However, in general, white farmers refused to recognise the union, while also refusing to deduct farm workers' contributions to the union. The 1960s, as indicated, also witnessed farmers trying to make a shift from unmediated direct control to a new form of domestic government informed by modernised management (Bolt 2015). Meanwhile, farm workers were alienated completely from any form of political participation and representation, as epitomised by the Rural Council Act of 1966 which tied voting rights to land ownership in white commercial farming areas (Waeterloos and Rutherford 2003).

The guerrilla war broke out and intensified in the 1970s across the Rhodesian countryside, including affecting white-owned commercial farms. Widespread acts of arson and violence by guerrillas against white farmers took place, with farmers in vulnerable areas leaving and even abandoning their farms (Rutherford 2001a). The status of farm labourers during the guerrilla war was deeply controversial. Overall, the guerrillas were ambivalent about farm workers, in some instances blaming workers for aligning with their white bosses while, in other instances, guerillas claimed to be acting on behalf of farm labourers in releasing them from white oppression (Fisher 2012). At times, farm workers supported the guerrillas; at other times, they did not. In the meantime, white farmers labelled those African workers who sympathised with the guerrillas as disloyal sell-outs (Rutherford 2001a).

Farm workers took advantage of the war to table their demands. Succumbing to the pressure, the Labour Committee of the Rhodesian National Farmers' Union (RNFU) was 'transformed' into the Agricultural Labour Bureau with the task of addressing concerns around farm worker welfare. In 1979, towards the end of the war, an Industrial Board for the agricultural sector was set up for the first time. But, this was under the control of the Agricultural Labour Bureau which, in effect, was

a farmers' organisation (Rutherford 2001b). Thus, white farmers still attempted to have both institutionalized and domestic control over their workers. In 1979, a minimum wage for agricultural workers was introduced.

3.3.1 Foreign Farm Workers under Colonialism

The significant labour shortages on farms, which were subject to fluctuation over time, prompted the colonial state to assist in ensuring an influx and supply of foreign migrant workers mainly from neighbouring Mozambique, Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) and Nyasaland (now Malawi) (Scott 1954). Overall, production and expansion on white farms (and in other parts of the colonial economy) became dependent increasingly on foreign labour (Johnson 1992). The scaling up in recruitment of labour migrants from neighbouring colonies occurred in different phases. Initially, through the Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau (1903-1933), the colonial state recruited about 13,000 labourers (including farm workers) per year between just 1906 and 1911 (Chadya and Mayavo 2002:13).

The migrant African wage labour force rose from less than 50 per cent of the total labour force in 1904 to 68 per cent in 1922 due to organised recruitments and conscriptions (Arrighi 1970: 210). In the 1940s, at least during World War 2, farmers also illegally recruited labour from nearby colonies by offering higher wages to potential recruits. Other workers came clandestinely, usually with the help of fellow compatriots returning to Southern Rhodesia (Johnson 2000, Groves 2020). Later, the colonial government formed the Rhodesia Native Labour Supply Commission, which supplied migrant labour to colonial employers up to the 1970s (Johnson 1992). The Commission recruited an average of 14,000 migrant workers per year between 1946 and 1971 (Chadya and Mayavo 2002:13). A majority of the migrants ended up working in farms and mines (Johnson 1992).

Colonial foreign labour agencies employed a wide range of strategies to recruit migrant workers from neighbouring colonies. One strategy involved tricking foreigners into joining the labour force by giving them promises which they never fulfilled. For example, the Rhodesian Native Labour Bureau is said to have promised these migrants allowances for their families back home, something that never materialised (Chadya and Mayavo 2002). The government also entered into bilateral agreements with governments of the surrounding colonies. Examples of these include the Tete

Agreement of 1913 with Mozambique and the Tripartite Labour Agreement of 1937 with Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia.

By the 1950s, half of Southern Rhodesia's African labourers were migrants, with those from Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia comprising one-quarter and one-sixth of the migrant labour population respectively, while those from Mozambique accounted for one-tenth (Scott 1954:29). These colonies had a considerable labour excess problem, including post the great depression of the 1930s as economic recovery was particularly slow (Rubert 1998). A remnant of African migrant workers also came from Bechuanaland (now Botswana), South Africa, Tanzania and Namibia. Northern Rhodesian migrant workers dominated migrant labour in the years up to 1911, after which those from Nyasaland became increasingly popular; however, they were overtaken by Mozambicans after World War 2 (Rubert 1998).

Once in the colony, the 'covenanted' farm workers recruited by government agencies lacked any autonomy from their employer (i.e. the farmer) because they were tied to specific farmers as per the bilateral agreements (Scott 1954). This explains why many migrant workers shunned government recruitment agents, preferring to migrate and find work clandestinely, since they had leeway to freely move when (and to where) they wanted if not 'covenanted' (Johnson 2000). This tended to undercut the relevance and effectiveness of cross-border recruiting arrangements, including the one with Mozambique through the Tete agreement of 1948. After 18 months of voluntary recruitment, the Rhodesia Native Labour Supply Commission only managed to recruit 300 labourers out of the anticipated 15,000 workers (Johnson 2000:120). This early failure in Mozambique forced the Commission to look for voluntary labourers in the densely populated Northern and Central Nyasaland, but this also proved difficult. As Scott (1954:32) explains, during a 1949 recruitment in the then Nyasaland:

> Despite an intensive campaign, including the dropping of propaganda leaflets from aircraft over remote villages, the Commission has obtained less than one-third of its annual Nyasaland quota. Two Rhodesian tobacco companies with permits to recruit seasonal labor for their Salisbury factories have been equally unsuccessful. Although this is due partly to a decline in migration resulting from the development of the native tobacco and cotton industries [in Nyasaland], it stems mainly from the desire of Nyasas to migrate uncovenanted. Recruits are often separated from their friends, are invariably sent to employers unable to attract the free labor available, cannot give notice if dissatisfied, and cannot leave employment for fear of punishment for desertion.

Agencies recruiting 'covenanted' workers ferried them by rail and 'free' government-sponsored *Urele*[3] trucks and buses into Southern Rhodesia through various routes (Rubert 1998, Johnson 1992). These routes, from their native countries into Southern Rhodesia, often determined their destinations and eventual areas of special concentration. In this respect, Northern Rhodesians were domiciled in the southern and south-western parts of the Rhodesian colony, Nyasas ended up in the northern and central districts, Mozambicans dominated the eastern parts, while Bechuanaland migrants prevailed in the south-western districts, notably Bulilima-Mangwe (Scott 1954).

Migrants who shunned covenanted recruitment usually migrated into the colony on foot in their individual capacity, without the participation of the state administered recruiting agencies (Johnson 2000). Such workers were freer to migrate even further south to the more lucrative Union of South Africa which offered higher wages compared to Southern Rhodesia (Johnson 2000). The independent and long arduous journey on foot by uncovenanted migrant workers earned foreigners the Shona derogative name '*mateveranjanji*', meaning 'those who came following the railway line'.

Migrant workers were largely men. It is understandable then that literature on colonial migrant workers focuses on male workers, with females remaining almost invisible (Scott 1954, Clark 1977). The African patriarchal system militated against female employment while the manual character of most available work favoured men. As well, men dominated even the female sex-typed jobs. For instance, in 1951, there were only 3,638 African women in domestic service, as compared with 47,705 men (Scott 1954: 44). Migrant and local African women's participation in the broad employment sector, however, increased in the 1930s and the number of women seeking employment increased from 3,769 in 1941 to 41,748 in 1951 (Scott 1954: 44). Women, and specifically migrant women, dominated the bulk of seasonal and casual work on white farms.

When most male migrant labourers moved into the colony, they left their wives and any children behind, though some would be joined by their families later (Johnson 2000). This took place in part due to the farmers and colonial officials' efforts to rejoin migrant labourers and their families. The colonial administrators assisted with transporting migrants' wives and children into Southern Rhodesia and these families joined their husbands and fathers on the farms. Most young men

[3] *Urele* is the name of the transport service that ferried migrants from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

migrated as bachelors and they married mainly local women once in the colony. The women (as wives) would prove to be vital when seeking communal land stands (Nyambara 2005, Rutherford 2001a).

Due to their consistent recruitment alongside the reluctance of autochthonous Africans to join the permanent farm labour force, African migrants tended to dominate the labour force over time in most of colonial Zimbabwe such that, by 1960, foreign workers accounted for 60 percent of permanent agricultural labour (Clark, 1977). A significant number of these were Malawian, who preferred farm work to mining (which was the choice of Zambians) (Scott, 1954). In fact, Malawians dominated in the Mashonaland farms, the area of this study (Shamva).

African migrant labour on white farms tended to wane in the post-1958 period when the colonial administration passed the Foreign Migratory Labour Amendment Act which was aimed at phasing out foreign labour in Southern Rhodesia (Muzondidya 2007: 328). The Act was meant to repatriate Africans to their countries of origin, and this was a setback for the majority of the migrant workers who had since lost ties with their kin in their countries of origin. African labour immigration into Southern Rhodesia was deemed no longer necessary in the 1960s due to a myriad of reasons. Besides the overall increase in the local African population, there was a rising demand of employment from autochthones especially following intensified loss of land to white settlers in the 1950s (Johnson 1992, Rennie 1978).

Rising wages in the former labour-source colonies (especially in Northern Rhodesia) also meant that potential jobseekers in these colonies no longer found working in Southern Rhodesia necessary. The expansion of profitable African agriculture in Nyasaland likewise dwindled the foreign labour supply (Johnson 2000). After World War 2, both Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland faced labour shortages of their own as well, in seeking to build their post-war economies. Resultantly, migrant labour in general, and migrant farm labourers more specifically, showed a decline especially from the 1970s. Soon after independence in the mid-1970s, refugees from civil war in Mozambique joined farm labour forces albeit in insignificant numbers (Waeterloos and Rutherford 2003). More locals joined farm labour post independence in Zimbabwe (1980) such that, the year 2000 at the onset of the FTLRP, migrant workers accounted for only 10 percent of the total farm labour population (Chambati 2017).

During the colonial era, and like autochthonous farm labourers, foreign farm workers became subsumed under the domestic government of white farmers. On the one hand, foreign labourers were more threatened than their local counterparts by the insecurity embedded in conditional belonging to the farm, as they had no other 'home' in the colony. On the other hand, and because of this, it is quite possible that their sense of belonging to the farm (and farmer) was more intense than was the case with autochthonous labourers.

3.4 Farm Workers Post Independence (1980-2000)

After gaining independence from white minority rule in 1980, the new Zimbabwean government took an ambivalent stance towards farm workers. It inherited a system (of domestic government) on white farms which it continued to largely ignore, along with failing to address farm worker welfare in a vigorous manner. It also tended to be somewhat derogatory about the supposed alien status of farm labourers. Over time, though, farm workers' electorate potential drew the national government's interest and attention (Rutherford 2001a, 2008). In fact, even in the early 1980s, the new ZANU-PF government quickly sought to demonstrate its presence in commercial farming areas (Rutherford 2004). Partisan village committees were established on farms with ZANU-PF issuing party cards to farm workers in exchange for a dollar (Rutherford 2001a:45), as if these workers were now considered as part of the imagined nation (Rutherford 2013). However, this in large part entailed mere politicking. Overall, domestic government continued to thrive in post-colonial Zimbabwe (up until 2000), again despite the passing of various pro-worker legislation by the government (Sachikonye 2003, Rutherford 2008). In practice, farm workers remained marginalised from the nation state (Rutherford 2013), and they continued to be subject to the dictates of white farmer rule within the confines of the farmer's privatized rural space (Daimon 2014).

In an endeavour to abide by its initial socialist rhetoric endowed with a populist nationalism, the ZANU-PF ruling party introduced a number of initiatives meant to address the plight of Africans including farm workers (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009, Kufandirori 2015). It repealed the Masters and Servants Act in 1980 and, for the first time, farm workers legally became 'workers' and not 'servants' (Rutherford 2008) with the right to strike, protest and demonstrate (Rutherford 2001a). It banned child labour and female workers became entitled to equal wages with male workers. While the government established a new minimum wage for farm labourers in 1980 (and revised

it three times within a year), labourers continued to receive salaries that were far below the Poverty Datum Line (Auret 2000:19).

White farmers complained that the minimum wage was exorbitant and made farming unprofitable. Many responded by reducing the number of permanent employees and engaging more seasonal and casual workers in an attempt to contain labour costs (Rutherford 2001a). The size of the agricultural labour force declined significantly from 314,893 in 1977 to 247,400 in 1984 and, more importantly, the share of permanent employees dropped from 79 percent to 68 percent during the same period, falling even further to 50 percent by 1990 (Rutherford 2001a:46). This was a setback for workers (and foreign workers in particular), since they accessed land and shelter by virtue of their status as permanent farm employees. Also noticeable was an increasing shift towards the employment of female agricultural labourers, linked in part to the trend away from permanent labour.

In being granted the right to form unions, the General Plantation and Agricultural Workers' Union of Zimbabwe (GAPWUZ) was officially recognised in 1986 (Kufandirori 2015). The union started to sit with the Agricultural Labour Bureau on the Employment Board for the Agriculture Industry. The Employment Council for the agricultural industry was established in 1991 and became responsible for finalising annual collective bargaining agreements, including around wages and working conditions for agricultural labourers. In terms of these agreements, permanent employees were entitled to sick leave, vacation periods and retirement packages (Rutherford 2001a). Non-permanent, seasonal and contract workers were ensured of some level of wage parity with permanent workers, but they had no benefits and could be fired on a week's notice. However, they could become permanent employees by default if employed for more than eight consecutive months. In 1993, an Employment Code governing disciplinary procedures, grievance procedures and dismissal of employees was instituted. Though the code seemingly protected farm workers, it actually formally re-established if not institutionalised domestic government. It entailed an officially-sanctioned disciplinary committee comprised of farm management and workers; however, in practice, farm disciplinary committees comprised of management alone on a regular basis (Rutherford 2001a), highlighting the ongoing power relations on farms.

Meanwhile, under the Zimbabwean state's development mantra of the 1980s, alongside a global focus on post-1980 reconstruction in the country, donors and NGOs began to engage with the lives

of farm labourers (Munro 1998, Rutherford 2001). NGOs such as Save the Children and donor agencies such as SIDA bankrolled and activated primary health care, HIV-AIDS and orphans, sanitation and education programmes on a number of commercial farms. In the mid-1990s, they also initiated Farm Development Committees (FADCOs) on commercial farms in partnership with farmers, as a way of facilitating farm labourer participation in farm-based development programmes (Rutherford 2001a), while also trying to link these with ward- and district-level administrative structures. The FADCO-farmer partnerships resulted in the limited construction of brick houses, toilets, preschools and borehole drilling on farms. Indirectly and implicitly at least, this initiative challenged, if only in part, the ongoing prevalence of domestic government (Auret 2000), but it had no real effect in this regard. Meanwhile, the national government remained mainly aloof from these initiatives and never sought forcefully to enhance the rights of farm workers or enact educational, health and housing policies and build infrastructure (for example, clinics and schools) specifically focusing on farms. In fact, white farmers preferred it that way, to minimise government intrusions.

The implementation of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme in the 1990s led to significant expansion in export-orientated agriculture as well as widespread diversification in commercial agricultural activities (for instance, into flowers, horticulture and game-keeping). At the same time, it resulted in a deemphasis on the protection of farm worker rights by both government and farmers. This is despite the Commercial Farmers' Union's Agricultural Bureau coming up with an Agricultural Workers' Welfare Plan in 1997 to ensure that farms meet minimum standards for primary education, housing, water and sanitation by the year 2007. In this light, in 1997, a local NGO, the Farm Community Trust of Zimbabwe, was formed and it became involved in spearheading farm workers' programme throughout the country (Auret 2000), including articulating the rights of farm labourers. One positive move was the Local Authorities Election Laws Amendment Act of 1998 which gave non-property holders in commercial farms (namely, farm workers) the right to vote in local council elections (Waeterloos and Rutherford 2003).

3.4.1 The Late 1990s: Land and Party Politics

Farmers' complacency to invest in employee welfare programmes was aggravated by the insecurity posed by the 1992 amendment of the 1985 Land Acquisition Act which threatened to annex land from commercial farmers for redistribution and resettlement purposes (Munro 1998). The Act gave government the authority to acquire farm land that was underutilised, land owned

by absentee-landlords and commercial farms adjacent to communal areas. Up until then, the land reform programme involved market-led, state-assisted land redistribution, with only minimal land in fact being redistributed from 1980. In 1997, the government used the Act to designated 1,470 farms for compulsory resettlement, with implications not only for white farmers but also for their labourers. In the end, in part because of significant farmer litigation around these designations, no compulsory acquisitions arose.

Meanwhile, in seeking to engage the donor community around land redistribution, the Zimbabwean government held a major donors conference on land reform in September 1998, with representatives from 48 countries and international organisations (Rutherford 2008). Though significant levels of international funding did not emerge from this conference, it did occur alongside the formation of what became known as the second phase of the land reform programme in Zimbabwe (with the first phase ending in 1997-1998), and it directly contributed to the programme's formation. The second phase continued to focus on market-led reform with a promise of a more inclusive and transparent process.

Up until this time, farm workers were never officially recognised as possible beneficiaries of the state's land redistribution programme, particularly foreign workers as they were seen as aliens without a home in Zimbabwe (Rutherford 2003). Their status as potential beneficiaries became even more problematic during the 1990s, as the government shifted its priority from landless, land short and vulnerable groups (as beneficiaries), to a more 'productivist' stance incorporating only those demonstrating agricultural experience, capacity and productivity. Farm labourers fell outside of the category of the 'productive and efficient' farmer (Rutherford 2001a). In a turn of events, and under the land programme's second phase, there was a shift towards considering farm labourers as worthy land beneficiaries. This arose from the advocacy of NGOs and GAPWUZ (Moyo et al. 2000), and the 1998 donor conference set this further in motion. But it was also a response to farm worker mobilisation in 1997, arising because of declining real wages in the face of structural adjustment. This entailed a wave of unprecedented strikes, protests and demonstrations on the farms with farm workers stopping work and blocking highways. These came as a surprise to farmers who always thought that they were in full control of farm workers (Rutherford 2001a).

In 1999, the new National Land Policy of 1999 became the first policy to recognise farm workers as possible beneficiaries of land resettlement in Zimbabwe's 19 years of independence (Muzondidya 2007). While the land occupations stopped the policy in its tracks, it is likely that – if implemented – it would only be applicable to autochthonous farm labourers (James 2015), as foreign workers had neither the ethnicity nor the citizenship pertinent to accessing land in Zimbabwe (Mayavo 2002). In fact, the 1998 Land Conference recommended that farm workers would need to access land through their chiefs, headmen or local councils, and this automatically disqualified migrant workers who had no homes in communal areas where these authorities preside over (Muzondidya 2007).

In the same year (1999), Zimbabwe witnessed the formation of what was to become a viable opposition party (Movement for Democratic Change, MDC) to ZANU-PF. The farm worker trade union movement (GAPWUZ) was linked to the major national trade union federation (Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, ZCTU), and this federation worked alongside the urban civic movement in the formation of the MDC. In this way, GAPWUZ and farm labourers more broadly became entangled in an oppositional civil, political and worker movement. In one instance, this involved farm labourers from a farm 50 kilometres outside of Harare becoming involved in disruptive street politics in the capital city, an event "unique in the postcolonial history of Zimbabwe, and unthinkable in its colonial history" (Rutherford 2013:846). In 'invading' the urban space, these labourers were asserting their visibility beyond the fringes of the rural landscape.

The MDC sought to capitalise on the marginalisation of farm labourers by garnering their support on the farms. As Rutherford (2013:849) notes: "Members of the provincial mobilising team of the newly formed MDC approached farm workers through the hegemonic discursive and institutional hierarchies which had marginalised those working on commercial farms from the wider political society". Seeking the support and loyalty of farm labourers in opposition to ZANU-PF was always going to be a difficult task for the MDC, if only because labourers felt the daily weight of white farmers' domestic government on their shoulders and were agitating against it in the late 1990s. The fact that white farmers openly expressed their support for the MDC only served to complicate matters from the perspective of farm labourers. ZANU-PF condemned both white farmers and agricultural labourers for their seemingly unqualified support for the opposition party. They were

given labels such as ‘sell-outs’, ‘enemies of the struggle’, ‘enemies of the state’ and ‘puppets of the West’ (Hartnack 2005, Mlambo 2011, Rutherford 2013).

ZANU-PF seized the moment to remind the farm workers of its hegemonic political role during and after the liberation struggle (Rutherford 2013), and direct threats were issued against any farm labourers purporting to be MDC supporters (Sachikonye 2003, Hartnack 2005). However, the extent to which farm labourers supported the MDC, on a voluntary basis, in the immediate months after its formation in late 1999 remains difficult to assess. The MDC’s entrance into the farms and access of farm workers was at the discretion of the ‘midwife’ farmers, such that farmers mediated the relationship between the MDC and their labourers. Because of this, “farm workers remained creatures of the commercial farmers [and their domestic government] rather than players on the national stage” (Rutherford 2013:861).

In February 2000, Zimbabweans voted in a referendum pertaining to constitutional changes, with controversial clauses about enhancing the executive powers of the state president and allowing for compulsory acquisition of land. While ZANU-PF called for a ‘yes’ vote, MDC called for a ‘no’ vote. ZANU-PF lost the referendum, possibly signaling an end to the ruling party’s hegemonic political domination (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2003, Rutherford 2003). Soon after the referendum, occupations of white farms (and other landholdings) arose, resulting in a nation-wide occupation movement led by war veterans (ex-guerrillas of the liberation war). The ruling party and Zimbabwean state turned a blind eye to the occupations but they legitimised them ultimately. Already, in May 2000, the Land Acquisition Act was amended to grant power to compulsorily acquire land for resettlement with obligations to compensate farmers for improvements on the land only and not the land itself (Sachikonye 2003). By mid-2000, the state had formulated the fast track land reform programme, thereby officially moving forward with the displacement of white farmers and a massive land redistribution exercise.

As the occupations and fast track moved forward, farm labourers were faced with the possibility of imminent farm displacement as well, and they (especially those of foreign origin) had to contemplate about their future, and life after the white farm. In this regard, a survey in the three Mashonaland provinces highlighted that, in the event of termination of their current farm employment, most farm workers (63 percent) preferred relocating to fast track resettlement areas, while only 13 percent wanted to move to communal areas and only 2 percent considered

repatriation to their countries of origin. The survey also revealed that 74 percent of the farm workers had no home to turn to in the event of displacement (Waeterloos and Rutherford 2003:544). Certainly, then, the writing was on the wall for farm labourers.

3.5 2000 Onwards: Land Occupations and Farm Workers

The land occupations and fast track were a watershed moment, changing the lives of farm workers and white farmers, and commercial farms, forever. Code named *jambanja* (mayhem), 'third *Chimurenga*' (war) or *hondo yeminda* (land war) in the vernacular lingua franca, the occupations were led by war veterans (who fought in the war of liberation or second *Chimurenga*), but also involved ruling ZANU-PF supporters and youths as well as thousands of ordinary villagers from the surrounding communal areas (Hartnack 2005, Kufandirori 2015) There were cases of peaceful occupations (Matondi and Dekker 2011, James 2015, Bhatasara and Helliker 2018), involving lengthy negotiations between occupiers and farmers during which some form of tenuous co-existence arose. However, most farm occupations took the *jambanja* (violent) route (Justice for Agriculture 2008) or, at the very least, involved high levels of intimidation and threat. Shamva commercial farm takeovers in large took the *jambanja* style with incidents of death (mainly of farm labourers) recorded in the confrontations between occupiers and farm workers (Matondi and Dekker 2011, James 2015). As the occupations progressed, there was a more significant presence of security force personnel amongst the occupiers.

The position of farm workers in the occupations was complex and did not present a unidimensional experience (Hartnack 2005), in part because of the sheer variation in the character of the occupations across the countryside, as well as due to the heterogeneity of the farm worker population itself. Though predominantly foreign in the colonial era, local Zimbabweans formed the bulk of the farm labouring force in the post-1980 period (Muzondidya 2007, Hartnack 2009). The occupations had different implications for autochthonous and allochthonous farm labourers in terms of post-farm lives, with many (but not all) autochthones still having attachments to the communal areas. Owing to their heterogeneity and the overall uncertainty and fear of the unknown arising from the farm occupations and possible displacement, farm workers responded differently and at times ambivalently to the farm occupations and occupiers (Waeterloos and Rutherford 2003, Sachikonye 2003).

In the midst of sudden occupations, farm workers were faced with a troubling decision: whether to choose between staying loyal to the farmer or aligning with the occupiers. While sitting on the fence became an almost untenable position, the stance taken by farm workers was typically a tactical one involving possibly shifting public stances in the pressure of the moment. Either way, they were fully aware that their stance would have immediate and likely far-reaching consequences. One interviewed farm worker narrated his insecurity and dilemma (Rutherford 2004:131) saying: "People want to survive and are very suspicious of both the *murungu* [white farm owner] and the war vets. We don't know whether the farmer will flee, abandoning us, or we all will be chased away by the war vets. We have no time for meetings".

There is some evidence to suggest that Zimbabwean-by-descent workers were more likely to align with the land occupiers and thereby facilitate the eviction of predominantly white farmers (Chambati 2012). But they did not do this always at the farm at which they worked, but also at nearby farms (Chiweshe and Chabata 2019). These farm workers spied on and divulged information about the white farmers (Hartnack 2005), sometimes identifying particularly undeserving farmers deemed as 'cruel' or 'bad', and whose farms were prioritised first by war veterans for occupations (Fontein 2011). Some of these workers received fast track land (Scoones et al. 2018), though it is believed that only about 3 percent of farm workers benefited from fast track (James 2015).

Though there was not a clear divide between autochthonous and allochthonous labourers in relation to farm occupation responses, rarely did migrant workers celebrate the displacement and eviction of white commercial farmers (Hartnack 2005). Most farm workers of foreign origin seemed to oppose the land occupations, fearing loss of employment and the benefits which come with it (Kufandrori 2015). They feared that, after the evictions, the new farmers would chase them away from the farms. They therefore accused the land occupiers (including the war veterans) of trying "to put mud" in the farm workers' mealie meal (Rutherford 2004:141), thereby denying them their livelihoods.

White farmers also warned their labourers of destitution if they were to support the war veteran-led farm occupations (Rutherford 2001a). Rutherford (2004:140) quotes the dilemma of one farm worker in this respect:

> The *murungu* [white farmer] had a meeting with all workers in July telling us that 'you are leaving the war vets to do as they like on this farm and you are leaving them to bother me at my house.' He then said, 'Now I am going to stop helping you on funeral expenses, stop giving you the maize, stop carrying you when you want to go to Harare; and now I am prepared to go and stay in town. If this farm is closed down [by the war vets], I am not worried because I am not going to suffer, but you yourselves will.' The *murungu* then left for Harare.

In this context, at particular farms, clashes would arise between the farm workers themselves, with both sides accusing each other of being traitors. Rutherford (2004:141) captures a narration by one farm worker irked by a fellow worker employed as a farm teacher, and was conniving with the war veterans in plotting the farm's occupation:

> We told [the teacher] that 'we are your *murungu* [or boss, in this instance] as you get paid through the teaching of our children.' We told him that 'even though you get paid by the government it was because you were teaching our children. But now you ask, the children whom you are teaching, to burn the house of our employer, what does this mean?'

For such workers, other workers collaborating with the war veterans were traitors, betraying farm labourers and the white employer.

As their white bosses tormented them for failing to confront and even resist the war veterans and other occupiers, farm workers who chose to resist farm occupations in solidarity with the white farmer were criticised by the occupiers as 'anti-land reform' and as reluctant to liberate themselves from the exploitative farmer (Rutherford 2001b, 2013). Their interests and identities were considered as "set against those of the black majority" and being "under the influence of the farmer and sharing his interests – calling it false consciousness" (Fisher 2012:165). This resonates with the way in which farm workers were blamed for aligning with the white Rhodesian forces during the liberation war (Daimon 2011, Fisher 2012).

Of course, all this took place within the context of the party-political contestations between the MDC and ZANU-PF, both before and after the national elections of June 2000. Any farm worker (real or perceived) support for their white boss was politicised and encapsulated within the confines of highly-antagonistic partisan politics. ZANU-PF's politicisation of the occupations (and of fast track) involved the construction of a discourse in which all those considered as anti-land reform were unpatriotic and imperialist enemies of the state and, by necessity, MDC supporters

(Muzondidya 2007). As a minority remnant and reminder of the colonial legacy, white farmers in particular signified the enemy within, considering their well-publicised funding of the MDC (Rutherford 2004). The MDC's party treasurer and one of its outspoken founding members, the late Roy Bennet, was a white farmer; and a number of farmers stood as opposition candidates in the 2000 local and parliamentary elections (Justice for Agriculture 2008). Simply existing as labourers within the contours of white farmers' domestic government, let alone perceived as defending the farmers during the occupations, was tantamount to defending the land legacies of colonialism.

In siding with the white farmer, labourers were subjected to significant pressure from the farmers, who urged and even forced their workers to become members of, support and vote for the opposition MDC (Rutherford 2001b, 2008, UNDP 2002, Norwegian Refugee Council 2004, Kalaori 2011, Bhatasara and Chiweshe 2015). In this sense, many became pawns in the political maneouvring of the white farmers, who at times drove them in large trucks to MDC rallies in nearby towns. This gave them a visibility for becoming easy targets for the occupiers and their violence (Muzondidya 2007, Daimon 2014), as evidenced in the following quotation from Rutherford (2013:847):

> Rallies were held for ZANU(PF) on many of these controlled [occupied] farms. Farm workers and those with whom they lived were compelled to attend and forced to burn any signs they may have of the MDC (membership cards, T-shirts, hats, pamphlets, etc.). Farm workers were singled out as likely opposition supporters for a variety of reasons, but a significant one was the presumed hold over them of their white bosses, who were by now viewed as strong supporters of the MDC, whose tag as 'the worker's party' was being publicly questioned as it developed more explicit links to a variety of classes and groups who were joining it under an anti-ZANU(PF) banner. As supposed pawns of the white farmers who supported the MDC, it was assumed that farm workers would be coerced into voting for the opposition party in the June parliamentary elections.

After invading farm spaces, occupiers would set up 'bases' on the farms, usually away from the farm compounds and the farmers' houses and in 'the bush', signifying a reenactment of the guerrilla war fought in the bush. Dusk-to-dawn meetings (*pungwes* in Shona) would take place amid singing and dancing, as well as indoctrination of farm workers into ZANU-PF's ideology. This epitomised war veterans 'baptising' farm workers into ZANU-PF (Rutherford 2001b, 2008, Sachikonye 2003). This baptism of fire was usually accompanied by "physical beatings, burning

down workers' houses in the compounds, and humiliation of senior leaders in the workforce" (Rutherford 2013:858). The trauma of these experiences for farm labourers, added to which was deep fears about the future, was such that "this period was characterised by high levels of insecurity, confusion, tension and stress for the … workers[;]…some… reporting becoming ill at that time" (Hartnack 2005:180). Those farm workers known to be staunch MDC supporters, or who did not succumb to the intimidation, received death threats.

Over time, many farm occupations dragged on for weeks, months and even over a year, in an effort to intimidate and eventually force farmers off their farm, which typically was the end result (Justice for Agriculture 2008). The fact that the government, by 2002, was giving notices of eviction for hundreds if not thousands of remaining white farmers added to the compulsion to vacate the farms. In the meantime, agricultural activities were disrupted by occupiers, and maizemeal and animals (especially cattle) stolen from the farmer to feed the occupiers and even remaining farm workers (Waeterloos and Rutherford 2003, Sachikonye 2003). In this respect, after initially being vengeful against farm labourers, Waeterloos and Rutherford (2003) argue that in many instances occupiers then became the new 'patrons', offering farm workers 'protection' from 'exploitative' farmers.

The farm occupations exposed farm workers to extreme vulnerability, with no authority showing any real interest in the workers' welfare, especially in the early stages of the occupations. The state as well as the media ignored them, as they seemed 'invisible' in the midst of dangers they faced (Mayavo 2002, Hartnack, 2005). There was a limited publicity about the plight and even deaths of farm workers; instead, media coverage concentrated on the violence and comparatively few deaths of white farmers. Both local and international media failed to highlight that a sizeable number of farm workers (more than 2000) lost their lives during the violent occupations (Kalaora 2011, Rutherford 2013), though the exact number remains unknown. Hughes (2005: xi) for instance indicates that ten individual white farmers were killed but, for farm labourers, he reports that a "large, but unverifiable, number of black farm workers" were killed. By as early as June 2000, 26 farm workers had been killed, 16,000 assaulted and eleven raped (Mayavo 2002:56). However, despite these realities, farm workers were virtually 'unseen'. As Hartnack (2005:354) argues:

> International newspapers and news broadcasts were full of images of the bruised and bloodied faces of white farmers, and the names of the farmers who were killed were broad cast across the globe. Seldom were individual farm workers shown; black workers were killed, beaten and displaced more

> than white farmers…On the other hand, the state media downplayed the plight of workers, concentrating rather on the fact that white farmers were the main targets and that their defeat meant the defeat of colonial control of the economy.

Those behind the attacks on farm labourers (and white farmers) received state impunity, with the police dismissing reports of violence as a "political matter" (Justice for Agriculture 2008:7). Some government agencies and security units also allegedly committed such acts, including the Zimbabwe Airforce, Central Intelligence Organisation, the Zimbabwe Republic Police, the Zimbabwe National Army, District Administrators and Provincial Governors (Justice for Agriculture 2008).

Humanitarian and non-governmental organisations only intervened late in the occupation process, attending to farm workers' immediate needs after their displacement. They distributed food and clothes to the displaced workers but this was implemented under intense state surveillance (Kufandirori 2015). Churches and some political leaders, and even war veterans, also came to 'assist' the evicted farm workers, often seeking to gain mileage in the process, either through political loyalty or new forms of patronage (Rutherford 2001b, Hartnack 2017). Help was availed with hidden motives, often bordering on manipulation tendencies. Even for religious leaders, destitute farm workers formed the basis for garnering moral and social capital (Hartnack 2005).

3.6 2000 Onwards: Fast Track and Farm Workers

Farm occupations intensified in the latter part of 2000 and continued thereafter, flaring up at times in different areas of the countryside in 2002 and 2003. More importantly, the FTLRP slowly but surely was implemented, leaving few white farmers left on the land. The occupations had complex but profoundly negative effects on farm workers in general and farm workers of foreign origin in particular.

Significant literature now exists on the conditions of farm workers in post-FTLRP Zimbabwe (Sachikonye 2003, Hartnack 2005, 2009, Magaramombe 2010, Moyo et al. 2001, Kufandirori 2014, James 2015, Chambati 2017, Scoones et al. 2018). Overall, as Hartnack (2005: 357) rightly argues, "there is no particular farm-worker IDP [internally-displaced person] experience, but a whole range of experiences and reactions to displacement." As a heterogeneous grouping, farm

workers' experiences in the light of FTLRP vary, just as they did during the occupations, with important variables such as gender, nationality, skills, and political and social capital.

While certain authors note that some former farm workers benefitted from the FTLRP (Scoones et al. 2018, Scoones 2017, Chambati 2017), the literature tends to point to the negative effects of the FTLRP (Rutherford 2001, 2003, 2008, Sachikonye 2003, Hartnack 2005, 2009, Chiweshe and Chabata 2019). Certainly, fast track disrupted the lives of farm labourers, "resulting in the loss of homes, property, jobs, social networks and access to resources" (Hartnack 2009:352). A case study on the impact of the FTLRP on farm workers in Matepatepa area (north-east of Harare) demonstrates the precarious lives of farm workers because of land reform (Kufandirori 2015). Chiweshe and Chabata (2019: 59) point out that, while many black settlers were beneficiaries of fast track, farm workers were mainly "losers". Sachikonye (2003) argues likewise. In his study of former farm workers in a squatter camp near Harare, Hartnack (2005: 189) highlights that the vast majority were "left in a desperate situation".

The FTLRP resulted in the internal displacement or at least loss of employment for an estimated "450 000 full time (farm) workers who together with their families make up about 2 million people or 20 % of the country's population" (Sachikonye 2003:13, Mabvumira et al. 2012:223). Approximately one-half of these workers were physically displaced (Hartnack 2017:276), sometimes moving on their own volition, but many new fast track farmers (particularly A2 commercial farmers) chased away old farm workers opting to hire new ones. They feared that the old farm workers would influence new workers or compare the new A2 farmers unfavourably with the old white farmers (Hartnack 2017). In a study done in Kwekwe and Goromonzi districts 17 years after the FTLRP began, only 25 percent of farm workers on fast track farms were pre-fast track employees (Chambati 2017), and the rest were new workers.

But the other half remained on the farms, if only due to limited options elsewhere (Sachikonye 2003, Chiweshe and Chabata 2019). They have been displaced in-situ (on the fast track farms) in the sense that they have lost their wage employment (their status as a worker), even though they still have access to some kind of farm-based accommodation (Magaramombe 2010), now delinked from full-time employment. This took place on a wide-scale under the small-scale A1 fast track farm model (Hartnack 2017). Whether they still qualify to be labelled in terms of a 'farm worker' identity seems questionable (Scoones et al. 2017). The majority of those who stayed on the farms

are those of foreign origin, since they had limited social, financial and political capital to move elsewhere (Kufandirori 2015, Chiweshe and Chabata 2019).

Reinventing life and livelihoods after the exodus of white farmers has been difficult for farm labourers (including migrant farm workers) who now lead precarious lives on the (now) fast track farms (Daimon 2014, Scoones et al. 2018, Chiweshe and Chabata 2019). At most A1 fast track farms, farm workers were left only with their compound houses, as they were dispossessed of any and all agricultural plots once accessed under the white farmer. One former farm worker expressed deep frustration over this, arguing that "land was supposed to be taken from whites not us because we are all blacks" (Kufandirori 2015:52). As well, due to reduced farm productivity on A1 farms, and the absence of full-time let alone part-time employment opportunities with the A1 new farmers, ex-farm workers have turned to tenuous livelihoods and risky survival strategies such as illegal gold panning, prostitution, piece work, selling firewood and petty trade (Sachikonye 2003, Hartnack 2007, Magaramombe 2010). The gendering of livelihood opportunities on the fast track farms results in most women engaging in transactional sex and firewood trade, further exacerbating their precarity and poverty (Hartnack 2015).

Although no longer living within the confines of domestic government (now on A1 farms) and while, in the main, free to choose their own forms of livelihoods, the new mode of belonging (on A1 farms) for these ex-labourers is likely more insecure compared to 'domestic government' belonging. In fact, on most A1 farms, there is an expectation that former farm workers must offer their labour (mainly on a casual basis) in return for access to residential spaces and perhaps small plots of land as well (Kufandirori 2015, Hartnack 2017, Chiweshe and Chabata 2019). Because of this, their presence on these farms entails a mediated conditional belonging, with their stay on fast track farms conditional on labouring for A1 farmers (Chiweshe and Chambati 2019). This also ensures the availability of a farm-worker labour reserve for A1 farmers (Chambati 2017).

Of course, the deepening of the fragility of the present and future lives of farm workers was their large-scale exclusion from the fast track programme. This was a long-term problem, given that farm workers were never seriously considered as potential beneficiaries of earlier land redistribution initiatives in Zimbabwe as well (Moyo et al. 2001, Sachikonye 2003, James 2015), including the one in the 1980s focusing on the 'poor and landless' – a category in which farm workers clearly fell. Indeed, the post-colonial government inherited a colonial "dual economy

thinking which viewed access to land simply in terms of proletarians and subsistence cultivators" (Moyo et al. 2000), with the former (including farm labourers) not requiring land access.

Those ex-farm workers who received fast track land were often offered poor portions of land usually on the margins of the farms, buffering new settlers' plots from wild animals and bush fires (Daimon 2014). Nonetheless, despite such constraints, some have recorded success stories. Scoones et al. (2018) thus document how ex-commercial farm workers in Mvurwi (Mashonaland Central Province), including even those of foreign origin, benefited from fast track plots. These ex-labourers ended up becoming farmers in their own right after acquiring land through social networks. They claim that they are now enjoying freedom from the despotic 'domestic of white farmers. Not all of these workers (now farmers) received plots officially. Co-operation with land occupiers during the land occupations sometimes paid dividends for farm workers, as they accessed land as a gratuity from the war veterans and new settlers (Hartnack 2005, Kufandirori 2015). In such cases, these land 'beneficiaries' were never granted official offer letters from the government (Scoones et al. 2018). This implies a precarious future, particularly from late 2018 after government announced that farm occupants without offer letters were supposed to vacate the farms and return to 'wherever they came' prior to the fast track. Since this announcement, hundreds of families have been evicted from fast track farms, possibly triggering attempts to move into communal areas.

Many ex-workers (both local and foreign) moved into peri-urban illegal settlements (Hartnack 2005). Some autochthonous farm labourers moved in with relatives in urban spaces. In these cases, some ex-labourers fared better than others (Chambati 2010, Scoones et al. 2018), given the heterogeneous character of the farm labouring population. For instance, Hartnack (2005) notes that skilled farm workers found it easier to find gainful employment, while unskilled labourers struggled to access formal employment and turned to the informal economy. As women tended to be amongst the unskilled labour force, they were more disadvantaged than men with regard to formal employment.

Other ex-labourers initially rented communal land near white commercial farms (for residential purposes only) in anticipation that their white farm bosses would one day return to the farms, thereby paving the way for them to return to work (Chimhowu and Woodhouse 2008). By 2002, though, it was becoming clear that this would not take place. In that year, the government passed

Statutory Instrument 6 which obligated farmers to compensate all farm workers (who lost their jobs due to the farm occupations) by way of a retrenchment package. Many farmers claimed financial unviability in paying out the packages, and there were many delays as a result. This heightened any existing tensions between farmers and labourers (with occupiers supporting the latter in such cases). In some cases, farm workers became hostile towards farmers by, for instance, barricading employers in their homesteads to ensure payment (Waeterloos and Rutherford 2003). These barricades were usually instigated by war veterans and at times GAPWUZ (Hartnack 2017). Farm worker insecurity and uncertainty resulted in war veterans and GAPWUZ and ZANU PF even extorting part of workers' severance packages in compensation for compelling farmers to pay out the retrenchment packages (Sachikonye 2003, Waeterloos and Rutherford 2003, Justice for Agriculture 2008, Rutherford 2008).

Many autochthonous farm labourers sought relief by moving into their communal areas of origin on a permanent basis. However, many Zimbabwean farm workers who returned to their communal areas faced ridicule from fellow villagers. In fact, Zimbabwean-by-descent farm workers have always been stigmatised by communal area villagers, labelled as lazy in lacking the desire to improve their communal homes or seek better jobs in the cities (James 2003, Hartnark 2005). Because of this, some of these ex-workers, after spending years labouring on white farms, were not comfortable to go back to their rural homes. They felt humiliated in not accumulating a significant level of wealth to justify their years of labour on commercial farms (Magaramombe 2010).

3.6.1 Foreign Farm Workers

Overall, allochthonous farm labourers no doubt experienced greater uncertainty than autochthonous labourers because of fast track. Migrant farm workers are "still viewed, especially in nationalistic discourses, as 'foreigners' who do not deserve the same rights and entitlements as other citizens of Zimbabwe" (Hartnack 2009: 351), including access to land in both fast track and communal areas.

As Kufandirori (2015:52) adds, migrant labourers were simply "more vulnerable during the FTLR than other social groups because most of them did not have communal homes to fall back on". In an analysis of the politics of belonging to Zimbabwe with specific reference to Malawian farm worker migrants, Daimon (2014:145) likewise argues that "[f]or many Malawian descendants, the

land reform process destroyed the only home and source of income they had ever known in Zimbabwe". In this sense, fast track likely further alienated foreign workers from their already limited belonging to the Zimbabwean soil. In the main, the 'foreign' label bestowed on migrant workers and their descendants prevented them from being accepted as fast track beneficiaries, with ZANU-PF using 'citizenship politics' in the process (Daimon 2014). Stringent requirements for land resettlement (such as Zimbabwean National Identity and Birth Certificate cards) disqualified the multitude of migrant farm workers from fast track, as they do not typically possess these cards.

The nationalist discourse thus highlighted that only autochthonous Zimbabweans had an outright entitlement to land and not those Africans of foreign origin. One politician even argued: "They are non-citizens, what other country in the world allows non-citizens to get land?" (quoted in Rutherford 2001a:226). One director from the office of the Vice- President also claimed that giving land to farm workers was a responsibility of farmers, not the government (Rutherford 2001a). Consequently, autochthonous political elites, war veterans and communal villagers became the focus of fast track (James 2001, Hartnack 2009, Kufandirori 2015), as was the case specifically in the Shamva District (Matondi 2001). This implies that the Zimbabwean government never considered it a moral or historical obligation to offer land to migrant farm workers. As Daimon (2014: 146) notes, the FTLRP:

> [W]as discursively monopolised and over-simplified by ZANU PF as a disciplinary and exclusionary device and as a means of marginalising oppositional groups as well as demarcating those with a 'legitimate' claim to land according to race, ancestral origin and political authenticity.

Beyond this, returning to their 'ancestral lands' was also not a priority for former agricultural workers, as indicated earlier. A joint survey conducted by the Ministry of Labour and the International Office for Migration, following the listing of the approximately 1,500 farms for compulsory acquisition (in 1997) revealed that only 3 percent of foreign workers preferred repatriation. Their ties with 'home', in many cases over decades, had become "very weak at best and non-existent at worst" (Magaramombe 2010: 363), though some attempted to maintain connections with their relatives in Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique (Scoones et al. 2018:7).

A small number of farm workers of foreign descent did migrate to communal areas under difficult circumstances without any intention of migrating elsewhere thereafter (Chadya and Mayavo 2002,

Chimhowu and Woodhouse 2008). These workers, with specific reference to Shamva district, are the focus of this thesis.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has offered a historical account of farm labourers from their colonial creation up to the fast track land reform programme. It traced and highlighted the historical dynamics around the colonial creation of farm workers of foreign origin in particular and their subsequent exclusion from the nation-state over a number of decades, and how this continues to form the basis of their othering in post-colonial Zimbabwe. Farm based domestic government likely provided some form of farm based conditional belonging for farm labourers, but at the expense of a broader project of belonging and citizenship. The historical association of farm workers of foreign origin with white farms and white farmers (apparently, as sell-outs), and their bounded lives under domestic government, led not only to a physical distance but a social distance from autochthones living in Native Reserves/Tribal Trust Lands. The end of colonialism did not lead to significant changes in this regard for these farm labourers: domestic government continued, as did the post-colonial government's marginalisation of (and even disdain for) them. This all came to a head with the land occupations in the year 2000 and fast track land reform, dramatically disrupting the lives of farm labourers in the context of intense party-political contestations. Suffering from on-site or off-site displacement, many farm workers of foreign origin sought to rebuild their lives in communal areas, a fraught process which is the subject of this thesis.

CHAPTER FOUR: COMMUNAL AREAS – HISTORY AND BELONGING

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of communal areas in Zimbabwe. As with chapter three, which started by providing an examination of the fundamental character and dynamics of white farms (i.e. domestic government), this chapter does likewise with reference to communal areas. Thus, in section 4.2, I detail the structural arrangements (including land tenure, agricultural production, custom, chiefly authorities and gendered relations) which constitute what is specific about communal areas (and the former Native Reserves/Tribal Trust Lands). I then offer a periodisation of the history of these areas, namely, under colonialism, the early post-colonial period (1980 to 2000) and then the post-2000 period. In doing so, the discussion brings to light the intertwined history of white commercial farms and communal areas, despite their existence as two distinct spaces across the countryside. The (arid) communal areas were created primarily to cater for autochthonous Africans whose land was appropriated by the white settlers, as they paved way for the creation of commercial farms in fertile arable lands.

4.2 Understanding Communal Areas

Post-independence communal areas (formerly Natives Reserves, and then Tribal Trust Lands) emerged during colonialism, with rural Africans expected to live in these colonially-constructed areas under so-called communal tenure and with land divided into residential, arable and grazing lands (Moyo 2000, Ingwani 2015). Cousins (1993:21) defines 'communal tenure' as "a historically variable form of communal property which in the Communal Lands of Zimbabwe currently includes both individual proprietorship over arable land and homestead site, and common property with respect to grazing, woodland, water and other resources". Hence, the only communal dimension of communal land tenure has involved collective access to grazing land and natural resources, as usage of homestead sites and arable land (for crops) is on a household basis. Ultimately, these areas fell within the realm of state-land.

Colonial Zimbabwe practiced a dual, bifurcated legal system where there was customary law for 'subjects' and civil rights for 'citizens' (Mamdani 1996). At that time, all citizens were exclusively white, and all Africans (urban and rural) were in effect subjects as they were unable to become

rights-bearing citizens. In addition, Africans in rural areas (specifically those falling within Natives Reserves/Tribal Trust Lands, and not on white farms) were subjects in a second sense – subjected to the enforcement of customary law. Customary law, as administered through chiefs (as recognised by the colonial state), became a basis for indirect rule, built around the auspices of community, tribe, culture and tradition (Mamdani 1996:18). This became the Native Reserves/Tribal Trust Lands version of domestic government on white farms. As a result, it functioned as the state's hegemonic "mediated-centralised-despotism" for rural ethnicised subjects (Mamdani 1996:17-18).

The colonial state in Zimbabwe reconfigured the notion of tradition and custom (including customary authority, law and arrangements), and then imposed it on rural African subjects in Native Reserves/Tribal Trust Lands (hereafter, NRTTL). In pursuing this centralised reordering of pre-colonial African societies, certain ethnicities, clans and kinship-groupings became associated with particular NRTTLs from the perspective of the colonial state, as if they had a primordial relationship of belonging to these areas with their own peculiar customary arrangements (Cousins 1993, O'Flaherty 1998). However, these were in large part contrived relationships between specific ethnicities and clans on the one hand and territorial boundaries on the other, which became clearer with the unfolding of colonialism and the forced removals of African subjects to NRTTLs on an ad hoc basis.

Nevertheless, some version of pre-colonial land and tenure systems, with the colonial state's backing, continued on into the colonial era, as outlined by Moyana (1984:13):

> [There were] vested land rights in a corporate group which had overriding rights over those of the individual… The traditional land tenure system also accepted that land rights were inalienable. Land belonged to the living and to the unborn as well as to the dead. No member of a group could sell or transfer land to an outsider as land was considered a natural endowment in the same category as rain, sunlight and the air we breathe… in short, land had no exchange.

These arrangements existed in the NRTTLs, meaning that land had an uncommodified character and was imbued with intense spiritual connotations. Land belonged to the pioneering ancestors or *mhondoro* spirits, "who allegedly first settled that land" (Cheater 1990:190). As an intermediary between the living and the ancestors, a 'traditional' leader (for example, chief) could distribute land among his subjects (Matondi and Dekker 2012). Possession and use of communal existed

under the principle of usufruct rights (O'Flaherty 1998, Munro 1998), including the right to grow and harvest crops, access natural resources and make permanent improvements (Moyo et al. 2000:182). Ultimately, the existence of usufruct rights was at the discretion of the head of state, though there was a significant level of tenure security as land was passed down over generations.

After 1980, the NRTTLs continued to exist but became known as communal areas, representing a fundamental continuity with the colonial era. By the year 2000 (the time of fast track), communal land covered 16 million hectares of land, occupied by more than 6.5 million people (over half of Zimbabwe's population) (Moyo et al. 2000: 182). Zimbabwe's present-day communal lands are administered through a panoply of legislation which includes the Communal Lands Act (CLA) of 2002, Traditional Leaders Act (TLA) of 2001 and the Rural District Council Act (RDCA) of 2002.

As with the situation under colonialism, freehold title does not exist in today's communal areas as they remain as state land, with power vested in the state president to permit the occupation and use of communal land as per the CLA. However, with independence, civil authorities were introduced into communal areas. In this respect, the CLA further empowers the Minister of Local Government to administer communal land in consultation with the Rural District Councils (RDCs), the local state civil authorities prevalent throughout rural Zimbabwe. In addition, a system of chiefly authority continues to exist in communal areas though, for many years, the Zimbabwean state refrained from strident official recognition of the chiefly system. The central state appoints chiefs as state functionaries. Today, RDCs must consult with traditional leaders (i.e. chiefs, headmen and village heads) with reference to the administration of communal areas.

Because of this, there is a dual (civil and customary) authority and a dual legal system within post-1980 communal areas, about which there is considerable overlap in responsibilities and ensuing competition if not conflict (Matondi 2001, Rutherford 2008). This incorporates elected politicians (local councilors), local government (notably District Administrators and Lands Officers) and traditional authorities (represented by headmen, kraal heads and chiefs) (Mukura-Paradza 2010, James 2015). One of the most contentious issues in terms of the rightful authority occurs in relation to the granting of access to communal area homesteads and plots. Hence, 'traditional' authorities, including historically as well, tend to object to any (civil) state intrusion into communal land administration, and they may usurp the state's power in the process (Chimhowu and Woodhouse

2008). As such, village kraal heads, headmen and chiefs are still distributing land in the communal areas, often without the knowledge or blessing of District Councils.

Despite the fact that communal areas tend to be associated with subsistence farming, social differentiation exists and always had (Ranger 1988, Cheater 1990, O' Flaherty 1998). Inequalities in land holdings, agricultural production and animal husbandry are pervasive (Arrighi 1967, Drinkwater 1991, Mushonga and Scoones 2012). For instance, there are households considered 'rich' (comparatively speaking) (Adams 1991, Cousins 1993, Mushonga and Scoones 2012) which can afford to hire the labour of other villagers on a temporary or semi-permanent basis (Adams 1991). Ranger (1988) refers to this privileged rural class as 'petty commodity producers'.

Communal inequalities exist in relation to land size (Anderrson 1990, Cousins 1993), as land is not evenly divided. (Chimhowu and Woodhouse 2008). At times, there is a correlation between land size and household income, with 'better-off' households possessing the purchasing power to rent or buy extra land for agricultural purposes. Households with income-earners in urban centres (and receiving remittances) might also purchase land and labour (Drinkwater 1991, Chimhowu and Woodhouse 2008). 'Poorer' households might live in perpetual hunger and poverty and they regularly occupy smaller and less fertile pieces of land. In many cases, such households are sources of communal on-farm labour, neglecting their fields for piece-work labouring in richer families' fields (Mudege 2007, Stein 2011).

Further, even though the state through the state president is the *de jure* owner (or trustee of the land), communal area lots are vigorously protected from intruders, yet encroachment into other villagers' fields takes place (O'Flaherty 1998, Anderson 1999), leading to land boundary disputes. The 'traditional' authorities are involved in litigation sessions around (sometimes sporadic, sometimes entrenched) land dispute and resolution cases (Marowa 2015), often through a headman and his *Dare* (court), which reflects the local recognition of chiefly authority. Communal land shortages are also prevalent, given that the next generation requires its own access to fields and perhaps separate homesteads as well. This makes it difficult for others to move into today's communal areas.

Though communal land seems inalienable and not subject officially to commodification, as if the existence of usufruct rights makes land sales illegal, market sales do take place and have for some time (Cheater 1990). Formally, when there is some exchange value involved, it is supposed to be

mere compensation for infrastructural improvements made on the land (such as physical structures) and not for the land itself. However, there is evidence of clandestine communal land transactions for cash or kind involving individuals, government workers, politicians and, in most cases, traditional leaders (Anderson 1999, Nyambara 2001, Ingwani 2019). Chimhowu and Woodhouse (2006) refer to these elusive transactions as entailing a 'vernacular' land market. Traditional authorities sell land under the guise of accepting 'tokens' (such as chickens or goats) from 'outsiders' (or communal land seekers) (O'Flaherty 1993). Levels of poverty amongst traditional leaders (especially village heads) have made the sale of communal lands lucrative in post-colonial Zimbabwe (Andersson 1999, Chimhowu and Woodhouse 2008). Steen (2011), however, notes that those who pay for communal land (i.e. strangers) risk losing it to those autochthones who can claim birthright in cases of land disputes since the land purchase is illegal.

Overall, then, the practicalities of land and land access in communal areas are fraught with a range of complexities and contestations. As Nyambara (2001:772) argues:

> In practice, land tenure rules have remained ambiguous, and rights in land are subject to ongoing interpretation. It is a mistake to assume that unified, internally consistent and well-defined systems of rules and practices exist. Rather, multiple, overlapping and sometimes internally inconsistent sets of rights and means of access and control demonstrate the politicisation of tenure, and the extent to which social relations shape strategies of agricultural production and investment, and thus patterns of rural differentiation.

Although these inconsistencies and tensions exist, communal land tenure remains reasonably secure at least for autochthones (Moyo 2000). Incidences of displacement are relatively low, though certain large-scale development projects have caused major disruptions. These include the pegging of Marange diamond fields in Manicaland and the construction of the Tokwe-Mukosi Dam in Masvingo Province (Matondi and Dekker 2011).

4.2.1 Communal Land and Gender Regimes

The colonial creation of communal areas and reconstruction of 'tradition' in Zimbabwe was embedded in the patriarchal construction of land whereby land and men often share an intimate and almost natural identity (Cousins 1993, Makura-Paradza 2010, Andersson 2011). Patriarchal structuring of land and authority over land was pervasive in pre-colonial time and was reinforced under colonial conditions, and this continued into post-colonial Zimbabwe (Makura-Paradza

2010). Land is seen as part of a lineage's history and identity therefore, if a man acquires land, he does so with his lineage in mind (especially his future generations to come) (Steen 2011). Communal land is thus inherited by men as part of their birth right in patriarchal-based kinship systems (Andersson 1999). Sons acquire land through their fathers and, in most cases, fathers share land among their sons, particularly when they enter into marriage (Moyo 1994, Mushonga and Scoones 2012). In the context of land shortages, this becomes problematic as an extended family's land becomes subdivided over generations. Young couples tend to build their own home or *musha,* and normally within their village of origin.

This makes it difficult for women to access land in their own right. Women are not allocated land rights as primary 'owners' by the 'traditional' authorities but, instead, women's rights to communal land are mediated through men, and hence is indirect, secondary and insecure compared to men's land rights (Cheater 1990, Steen 2011). This exists despite the reality that women constitute 65 percent of the rural populace in Zimbabwe (Steen 2011:155). With the official and cultural construction of land access revolving around men, women's indirect access to communal land takes place through their husbands, brothers and fathers under specific gender regimes (Anderson 1999). Because of this, marriage serves as an important survival strategy for most women (Andersson 1999, Muzvidziwa 2001). However, to access land via husbands, wives are supposed to remain 'dignified' by 'honouring their husbands' (Steen 2011:104). As such, communal villagers may reason that prostitutes, alleged witches and 'bad' women should not be allocated land at all (Makura-Paradza 2010, Steen 2011). It is also often argued that, when women have autonomous control over land, they lose their morals (Steen 2011).

Women's conditional belonging to communal land, under patriarchal arrangements, implies that there are rarely land disputes between husbands and their wives (Steen 2011). In most cases, husbands simply allocate small gardens for vegetable farming to their wives on a unilateral basis (Matondi 2001). Unlike in the larger fields, where men are the decision-makers around agricultural production activities, women usually control the small gardens including determining what to grow there. However, husbands may retain overall authority over the gardens, including where to plant various vegetables (Steen 2011).

When land was still in abundance, men would practice polygamy in order to access more land. However, due to land shortages, polygamy has now resulted in increasing pressure on land within

polygamous households, particularly where there are many young men entitled to a portion of the overall land held (Steen 2011). It is no longer productive to have many wives, as men are also now forced to divide their limited land (for multiple garden plots) among their wives. Despite this problem, men are still practicing polygamy as a basis for claiming access to more land.

Widows and divorcees often, but not always, retain their land in the event of divorce or husband's death (Cousins 1993). Widows used to remarry their husbands' brothers as a way of retaining their marital status and claim to their late husbands' clan or lineage land, but this tradition has since withered away in part due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic (Makura-Paradza 2010). Since women are expected to bear children, especially sons, claims to land for widows and divorcees are often anchored on their sons. Thus, if her husband dies, a woman stays on the land with her sons, who are expected to eventually take over the lineage land. In such instances, a son becomes a legitimate reason for a widow to occupy communal land, thereby demonstrating that women ought not occupy communal land in their own right. In some cases, where divorced or widowed women are denied land in their husbands' lineage land, they are given land in their village of origin (i.e. their father's lineage land) (Steen 2011). However, the land is often smaller compared to that given to their brothers.

Even though this is often difficult, some women have managed to acquire communal land in their own right. Steen (2011) for instance highlights that some women originating outside Chiweshe have been able to access land in Chiweshe communal areas, even sometimes purchasing it. Hence, although customary law does not recognise women as legitimate 'owners' of communal land, this has not deterred a limited number of women from accessing communal land (Makura-Paradza 2010). Additionally, men at times access communal land through marriage (Nyambara 2001). In both the colonial and post-colonial eras, local and foreign men have accessed land through marital unions to local women (Nyambara 2001, Makura-Pardadza 2010). Such men settle within their wives' villages. This is culturally convenient to migrants especially those of matrilineal Malawian origin whose culture allows a man to join her wife's family upon marriage (Andersson 1999). In this sense, migrant men access land not necessarily directly from their wives but through their male in-laws.

4.3 Colonial Construction of Native Reserves

As discussed earlier, Zimbabwe's colonial condition involved the dual (yet inextricably linked) creation of (African) communal and (white) commercial farm land which led to complex processes of semi-proletarianisation and full proletarianisation of Africans while ensuring a viable and productive white-driven colonial economy (Rutherford, 2001). In doing so, the settler colonial administration forcefully displaced Africans from fertile lands into Native Reserves, institutionalising several legal instruments that effectively ceased land from Africans. An important initial measure was the Lippert Concession of 1889, which preceded the actual 1890 colonial occupation of would be Rhodesia (Chimhowu and Woodhouse 2008). It effectively allowed white settlers to annex land from the indigenous people after the original colonial administrator (British South African Company, BSAC) bought concessions from the British Monarch.

At first, the Reserves emerged as a "temporary makeshift" arrangement in anticipation that the African peasantry would be eventually absorbed into the European settler economy (Drinkwater 1991:38). The first reserves created were the sandy, tsetse fly infested Gwaai and Shangai Reserves following the 1894 Matabeleland Order in Council (Drinkwater 1991). Subsequently, the Native Reserves Order in Council of 1898 formed the basis of the creation of all future Reserves – for autochthonous black Africans (Mujere 2012). By 1914, with whites accounting for only 3 percent of the population, Africans occupied 24 million acres (Native Reserves), the BSAC (48 million acres), individual white settlers 13 million acres, and private companies 9 million acres (Government of Zimbabwe n.d.). Over time, a permanent racially based land system would emerge.

Further, the Native Affairs Department (NAD) was set up in the 1890s and it was responsible for overseeing rural communities in the Reserves. Native Commissioners (NCs) were the local representatives of the department and they were initially authorised to allocate land in the Reserves. But the 1920 Order-In-Council conferred the allocation authority to the Colony High Commissioner's Office (Drinkwater 1991). However, the allocation powers were reinstated to the Native Commissioners through the 1951 Land Husbandry Act (Cheater 1990). As per the overarching colonial project, Native Commissioners employed a system of 'benevolent despotism' embedded in a white 'civilisation' and 'protection' mission over blacks (Munro 1998:55). As a

general tendency, traditional (chiefly) authorities were responsible for everyday administration and management of subjects in the Reserves under the auspices of customary law.

In trying to garner a level of moral legitimacy over their rural colonial subjects, NCs asserted their direct rule and authority through traditional chiefs and headmen who in many cases were willing to cooperate. As the Chief Native Commissioner (CNC) remarked in 1954, traditional African leaders' "mere presence has a stabilising effect upon their people and this in itself is of great value" (quoted in Munro 1998:56). However, the relationship of NCs with traditional leaders varied from close alliances to enforced compliance in their quest to maintain order (Drinkwater 1991). At times, NCs removed uncooperative chiefs and appointed compliant ones. The role of traditional authorities included but was not limited to assuming a policing and monitoring function, reporting "such occurrences as crimes and offenses, deaths, suspicious disappearances, diseases, and epidemics" (Munro 1998:56). In return, African traditional leaders received payments from the NAD.

Chiefs, headmen and village heads, and particularly chiefs, were in an awkward position during the days of colonialism. They often belonged to a royal lineage that, in most cases, was a descendant clan from the autochthonous group within the area. They were descendants of the *mhondoro*, the land spirits, which claimed primordial relationship to the land. Hence, their connection to the land spirits made them the legitimate custodians of culture and the land. Traditionally, they oversaw land allocations as well as jurisdiction over customary arrangements. To the rural populace, chiefs represented the moral if not supreme custodians of law, land and culture. At the same time, under colonialism, they were privy to the demands of the state under the supervision of the NCs. They were supposed to implement state policies and legislation (including around land) which were often very unpopular with the peasantry. Traditional leaders therefore found themselves in an ambiguous position where they had to satisfy both the state (as subordinate subjects of the state) and their own subjects.

An open market for certain tracts of land existed outside Native Reserves. As well, Africans could rent European land under the provisions of the Private Locations Ordinance of 1908 during the early stages of colonialism (Rennie 1978). However, land prices and rentals coupled with discriminatory practices meant that Africans could not access considerable portions of land in these ways. By 1920, Africans had only managed to purchase 49,996 acres compared to 31,000, 000

acres for whites (Europeans) (Youe 2002:575). In the early 1930s, segregationist legislation reinforced the permanence of Native Reserves by way of the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, based on recommendations of the Morris Carter Commission appointed by the new Responsible Government (which took over control of the colony from the BSAC in 1923). This piece of legislation subdivided African land into Native Reserves and Native Purchase areas under freehold title (21 million acres and 8 million acres respectively), while allocating the European population 49 million acres (Nyambara 2005:280). Cognisant of the segregationist thrust of the Land Apportionment Act, a Rhodesian politician (Humphrey Wightwick) was in the 1950s quoted as saying: "to the south of us we have a country that practices a thing called apartheid. Here, in Southern Rhodesia we do not speak Afrikaans, so we pronounce it 'Land Apportionment Act'." (quoted in Youe, 2002:576).

The act effected the forced eviction of Africans from newly demarcated fertile European land, including to tsetse fly infested Reserve areas acting as buffers for white land and to forest areas where marauding wild animals existed (Nyambara 2005, Marowa 2015). In general, the reconfigured Native Reserves were deliberately located in arid areas under harsh climatic conditions, making it difficult for Africans to practice agriculture. This ensured poor agricultural yields, forcing Africans to provide labour (as proletarians) to white settlers in farms, mines and urban areas (Arrighi 1966, Makamure 1992). Fear of growing competition (which was evident in the 1920s) between emerging white farmers and African farmers in terms of supplying agricultural markets added to the concerns of the colonial state (Cousins, 1993). The colonial state provided only minimal infrastructure and services in the Reserves (Marowa 2015).

Besides establishing and reconfiguring the areas designated as Reserves, the state sought to reorganise the Reserves internally through 'modernisation' or the "rising tide for development" (Drinkwater 1991:39). This in large part entailed the introduction of 'centralisation' schemes on a coercive basis, including up until the 1950s. In 1927, the Native Affairs Act was passed and it enabled NCs to promulgate natural resource conservation and to improve grazing and cropping land in the reserves (Youe 2002). In reorganising homestead, cropping and grazing areas through 'technical' land use management, the centralisation schemes were supposed to increase the population-carrying capacity of the Reserves, thereby warding off Africans' demand for more land.

Centralisation was “the first state policy to intervene directly in the nature of the lineage tenure system”, and it effectively introduced the rigid demarcation and separation of grazing, residential and agricultural plots in the Reserves (Drinkwater 1991:55). This involved a process of forced relocation of people within the Reserves in line with the official demarcations, with homesteads centralised in villages and not dispersed and apart. This also meant that any shifting cultivation in the Reserves ground to a halt, with sons accessing land from their fathers’ demarcated plot. The land reorganisation left ‘rich’ agricultural entrepreneurs with smaller plots, thereby effectively reducing their production capacity. This invited calls and demands for more land from the autochthonous villagers (Cousins 1993).

The so-called conservation dimension of the centralisation schemes involved regularising the use of land and natural resources through the introduction of scientific and technical planning and management in the Reserves. The technical management programmes of the 1940s for instance involved the compulsory construction of contour lines and rain drainage strips for containing soil erosion (Munro 1998, Fontein 2011). As well, Africans were forced to destock their livestock in a move that was supposedly designed to control overgrazing. These moves were loathed by Africans who found themselves looking for employment in order to complement their agricultural activities and meet the prevailing tax obligations.

Later, in terms of the Native Land Husbandry Act (NLHA) of 1951, the colonial government pursued land rezoning and centralisation even more vigorously, leading to further destocking and limitations on land plot sizes (Brown 1959). By 1956, because of dwindling cattle stock, African farmers “had no means to manure the land” (Drinkwater 1991:71), while over 100,000 African households in Reserves were left landless (Chimhowu and Woodhouse 2008) because, for various reasons, they were excluded from the land demarcation exercises. Meanwhile, with the increasing transition to wage-labour on white farms, squatter and share-croppers were being forcibly removed to Reserve areas (Nyambara 2005). The implementation of NLHA was unevenly applied across the countryside, and it fueled African resentment, leading to organised political movements against the colonial government. Thus, “the irony of the [N]LHA is that it began as a mechanism of social control and ended as a catalyst of liberation” (Munro 1998:98). In response, the settler government sought to make use of the chiefly authorities to counter and contain the resistance, albeit

unsuccessfully, with implementation of the NHLA abandoned in 1961 and replaced by the more 'conciliatory' Tribal Trust Lands Act in 1967.

Under this legislation, the colonial state tried to reinforce the hold of chiefly authorities, as trustees of the land, in and over the now-called Tribal Trust Lands (TTLs), as a strategic move to ward off the growing tide of nationalism. These Tribal Land Authorities, known in the vernacular as *majengetavhu* (custodians of the soil) and comprising chiefs, area headmen and others nominated by the chief, were granted control over the use and occupation of land in TTLs (Nyambara 2001). In supposedly recognising the supremacy of traditional authority over land, this legislation thus bestowed tribal authority with powers over allocation of land for agricultural or residential purposes. Any land shortages in the TTLs became the responsibility of these local authorities. In places, this led to some 'squatters' and 'aliens' taking advantage of the land allocation process by purchasing land from traditional authorities (Chimhowu and Woodhouse 2008:21).

Traditional jurisdiction in TTLs was further embedded by the African Law and Tribal Courts Act of 1969, which granted judicial powers over customary law to traditional authorities. The colonial state's 'traditionalism' formed the basis for the 1969 Land Tenure Act which replaced the 1930 Land Apportionment Act by further strengthening the segregatory approach to the racial land divide. This act became the state's "last-ditch constitutional stand on racial land apportionment" (Munro 1998:162). Along this 'traditionalism' was a paradigm shift away from centralisation to an (officially) participatory, self-help approach to rural-based community development in the TTLs without any coercive undertones. This coincided with the emergence of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in 1962, as the successor to the Native Affairs Department, with development officers assigned to facilitate TTL socio-economic development.

All these initiatives were disrupted in the 1970s with the emergence and intensification of the guerrilla war, which prevailed across most of the countryside. In mobilising rural villagers as part of the guerrilla war strategy, the TTLs became the centre of guerrilla activity from which attacks were launched on white farms and rural infrastructural installations more broadly. Spirit mediums, through whom the ancestors communicated with the living, became involved in mediating the relationship between villagers and guerrillas and in offering legitimation (on behalf of the ancestral chiefs of the past) for one key aim of the guerrilla war – namely, the return of land dispossessed under colonialism (Cheater 1990).

While the colonial state sought to recognise and install chiefly authorities in Reserves/Tribal Trust Lands, spirit mediums never received such recognition. However, they became more significant than chiefs with the rise of nationalist fervour in the 1960s and into the 1970s, with colonially-reconstructed chiefs often marginalised in the process. Overall, then, the living chiefs lost significant legitimacy in the eyes of TTL villagers. Though at times coerced by the guerrillas, TTL villagers supported the guerrillas throughout the war, supplying them with food, clothes, morale and intelligence (Lan 1985). Just as during the fast track land occupations, farm labourers on white farms were caught between the warring factions during the guerrilla war, sometimes victims of guerrillas and at other times supporters or at least sympathisers.

4.4 Communal Areas in Post-Colonial Zimbabwe (1980s and 1990s)

The new post-colonial government was expected to prioritise the reclamation of land dispossessed over a period of a century. Land redistribution to autochthones in particular would address the major grievance of land which sparked the liberation war in the first place, therefore fulfilling the promises made during the war to TTL villagers (Cheater 1990). Part of the land redistribution strategy was also to decongest the (now) communal areas (Moyo 2001). The communal land population surged from 1.1 million in 1930 to 6.5 million by the year 2000, thereby creating a significant need for land redistribution (Moyo et al. 2000). The 1982 census also revealed that 75 percent of Zimbabwe's population resided in the rural areas (Munro 1998:228).

In pursuing its mandate, the new Zimbabwean state sought as well to bring about local government reforms which would incorporate the communal areas into the post-colonial dispensation. This would entail introducing liberal-democratic civil forms of governance which, simultaneously, involved doing away with the colonially-reconstructed chieftainship system (Moyo 2000). As Murisa (2018:3) argues, this involved the creation of "a modern unified state linked from village to national level; to replace traditional/customary authority with democratic institutions; to create an entirely new basis for rural authority; and to institutionalise development".

The Communal Land Act of 1981 (amended in 2002) was enacted to formally change the colonially-constructed Tribal Trust Lands into 'communal' areas. Together with the District Councils Act of 1982, the Communal Land Act entrusted communal land and all unimproved resources on it to local democratic government (District Councils), marginalising traditional

leadership in the process (O'Flaherty 1998). Effectively, the District Councils Act formally transferred authority to allocate rural land from 242 African Councils (customary chiefs) to 55 elected Rural District Councils (RDCs) (Munro 1998:245). The move was politically convenient and significant for the new black government since it enabled the end of what the ruling party deemed as the white settler government's traditional chiefs, many of whom were blamed for supporting the white Rhodesian Front government and its security forces during the 1970s (Drinkwater 1991, Nyambara 2001). By weakening the power and authority of traditional chiefs and replacing them with District Councils, the government hoped to maximise social control in communal areas through its own party structures alongside ZANU-PF-controlled district councils. By almost totally usurping the authority of the 'tribal' chief, the government intended to also "introduce new social relations of production that are not defined by belonging to a lineage grouping" (Murisa 2018:5).

However, in practice, chiefs remained of some significance in the everyday lives of communal area villagers, though not recognised officially. The uneven and sometimes incomplete implementation of the new system of local government provided a degree of leeway for unsanctioned traditional authorities to continue exercising jurisdiction over communal land, even reducing the District Council's office in many instances to a mere rubber-stamper of locally-made decisions at village level (Munro 1998). Chiefs thus continued to wield considerable power and authority over 'their subjects', if only in a clandestine manner. Further, communal villagers often chose to approach traditional courts on land related matters, ignoring the District Councils.

Likewise, communal land seekers continued to approach traditional authorities when it came to trying to access land in communal areas. As Marowa (2015:133) argues, "In the traditional setup, authority over the land is claimed to be shared between *mambo* (chief) and the *mhondoro* (lion spirit) ... Policy [around local government reforms] cannot give them a spiritual and emotional attachment to the land, it cannot make the landscape symbolic but cultural beliefs do". The ongoing spiritual connections between land and chiefs had a vibrant cultural embeddedness amongst communal villagers, which tended to trump any local government arrangements emanating from the central state.

Despite this, the District Councils Act did give some (partial) recognition to chiefs and customary law (Nyambara 2001). In this regard, the legislation was arguably constructed with exclusionary

undertones in mind (with reference to allochthones), as it directed local authorities to "have regard to customary law and grant land only to those people who have a customary right to it" (Cousins 1993:11). This meant that 'foreigners' (including the former farm workers of foreign origin) were not eligible to access communal area plots since their tribal/ethnic origins deprived them of such customary rights.

In a bid to bring about government decentralisation, the Prime Minister's Directive (of 1984-1985) provided for the formation of hierarchically-arranged elected representative bodies at different community levels, including at village level (comprising of 100 families and an estimated 1,000 people), ward levels (comprising of 6 villages) and district level (Drinkwater 1991). These led to the establishment of Village Development Committees (VIDCOs), Ward Development Committees (WADCOs) and District Development Committees (DDcs). The development committees were composed of elected members who were responsible for defining local development needs (Alexander 2006). The formation of these elected committees (under the guise of 'modernisation' and 'development') reinforced the replacement of traditional chiefs, who were now viewed as being equivalent to traditional 'feudal' lords who had no place in a 'post-colonial modern' nation-state (Andersson 1999, Nkomo 2014). The new government claimed that tribal authorities were incapacitated when it came to handling complex technical issues pertaining to land allocation, therefore opting for 'educated' technocrats in line with its modernisation drive (Alexander 2006).

In practice, these local development structures facilitated the deeper penetration of the ruling party (ZANU-PF) into communal areas on a partisan and insidious basis. Hence, VIDCOs and WADCOs were to become the "nexus for control and consent between the state and peasant communities in the construction of a land-based yeoman democracy" in the countryside (Munro 1998: 247). For Nkomo (2014: 44), "this was part of a process to rid the new government of anti-nationalist [meaning, anti-ZANU-PF] remnants". For instance, at one time in some districts such as Makoni, "all councilors, from VIDCOs to WADCOs to the RDC, were ZANU PF members" (Nkomo 2014:44).

However, VIDCOs and WADCOs never became fully functional and effective as decentralised development agencies. As well, like in the case of District Councils, their responsibilities were sometimes practically usurped by traditional authorities thereby creating two parallel governance

structures (Alexander 2003). Even in the original demarcation of VIDCO and WADC) boundaries, communal villagers claimed that the government was "trying to press them into artificial social and political units" with minimal local meaning, as they disregarded kinship ties as developed over time (Munro 1998:246).

Overall, chiefs regularly blocked or resisted government's attempt to withdraw their power over communal land, expressing their discontent about the government in effect hijacking their authority (Nkomo 2015). This in part explains the fact that chiefs, headmen and village heads became notorious for engaging in illegal land markets, including allocating land to 'outsiders' in exchange for money (Munro 1998). In seeking to defend their authority over land matters, chiefs received significant support from communal villagers. After all, though chiefs became incorporated into the colonial state's indirect rule governance, not all chiefs were colonial collaborators. In fact, many chiefs defied the colonial state over extended periods, including during the war of liberation. Chief Njelele of Gokwe, Chief Rekayi Tangwena of Nyanga, Chief Mangwende of Murehwa District, and Chief Mutambara and Chief Gudyanga in Manicaland, are just some examples of 'disobedient' chiefs (Moyana 1984, Alexander 1993, Nyambara 2001, Nkomo 2014). Even for communal villagers, the post-colonial government's decision to alienate traditional authorities in land administration became controversial.

The advent of independence in 1980 also saw the new nationalist government allowing freer movement in both rural and urban areas and in the process reversing colonial restrictions. In the context of the confusing mix of governance structures emerging in communal areas, waves of internal migration took place as indigenes migrated to communal areas they deemed more fertile and less congested. This entailed migrating to districts or villages which were not considered their place of 'origin'. Marowa (2015) reports for instance that Mavhitori or Karangas from Masvingo Province migrated as far as Rengwe communal areas in Mashonaland West Province soon after 1980. Additionally, Ndebeles, Karangas and other indigene groups migrated to Gokwe after 1980 (Nyambara 2001). The movements resulted in significant land clearance for agricultural and residential purposes on grazing land, thereby creating even more pressure on communal land. In other instances, a squatter problem arose in communal areas, with the in-migration squatters claiming that they were occupying land because their ancestors were buried there.

Even within particular communal areas, some landless or land short autochthones took advantage of the new found 'freedom' to move onto grazing lands (designated as such by the 1951 NLHA). A smaller number of farmworkers including those of foreign origin sought land as well in the communal areas and were resettled on these grazing lands, a move which sparked controversies and local land disputes (Drinkwater 1991). Overall, this resulted in ethnically-mixed and even polarised communal areas as the politics of belonging amongst autochthonous newcomers led to a series of contestations (Marowa 2012). By 1985, government reports were inundated with discussions about communal land shortages due to "population pressure, increased land degradation, the reduction in commons, growing numbers of livestock and continuing subdivision of land through inheritance" (Drinkwater 1991:91).

Increased alarm about communal land scarcity, squatter problems and environmental degradation emerging from unplanned and chaotic land management resulted in land-use reform internal to communal areas. In response, colonial-style reorganisation took place, specifically the villagisation programme whereby agriculture extension officers demarcated residential, grazing and arable land (almost in the same NLHA fashion albeit with less use of coercion) (Munro 1998). This villagisation programme might have momentarily eased pressure on the need to acquire and redistribute white commercial farms, but the squeeze on communal land continued unabated (Drinkwater 1991).

Though at first seeking to undercut the authority of chiefs, by the late 1980s the government had started to rethink its treatment of 'traditional' centers of power in communal areas. Nkomo (2014) calls the late 1980s to late 1990s period as a time of 'courtship' between the government and traditional chiefs. Realising the political capital of chiefs, the ZANU-PF government went on a charm offensive, referring to chiefs as "guardians of our culture', 'pillars of social cohesion and stability', 'partners in development' and 'custodians of the land'" (Nkomo 2015: 47). Government even apologised for withdrawing chiefly power over land administration, and it gradually restored traditional authority over land. Thereafter, whenever new chiefs were installed, soil was poured on their hands and the new chief would hold the soil in his hands to signify that the "chief was now in control of the land which he held in trust of his people" (Nkomo, 2014: 56). In an effort to formalise and institutionalise traditional authorities, and their role in land allocation, the government passed the Traditional Leaders Act of 1998 which recognised the role of traditional

leaders in land allocation. Traditional chiefs' land allocations were, however, subject to approval by the District Council, implying that the Council still officially transcended the chief's authority. Lists of people in need of communal land, as formulated by chiefs, were often ignored by District Councils (Munro 1998). In the end, then, this reassertion of chiefly power did not end challenges of cooperation as well as conflicts between chiefs and elected councilors (and District Councils).

During the 1980s, under a strong developmental thrust, the government sought to reconstruct the war-torn communal areas and to modernise these areas. The state offered significant support to small-scale farming in communal areas through a number of parastatals such as the Grain Marketing Board (Masuko 1998), and rural infrastructure was prioritised through the District Development Fund (DDF). Developmentalism was in large part abandoned under the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme of the 1990s (ESAP). Because ESAP increased levels of unemployment and poverty in urban areas, urban-to-rural remittances declined. A contraction of state support and subsidies focusing on small-scale agriculture in communal areas took place, thereby deepening levels of rural poverty (Mudege 2007). The devastating effects of ESAP resulted in urban migrants returning to their communal areas, placing further pressure on communal land (Makura-Paradza 2010). This also caused the further transformation of grazing land into cropping land. Over twenty years, from 1980 to 2000, cultivated communal land area expanded from just below 1 million hectares to 1.5 million hectares (Moyo 2000:33). All this was taking place without the Zimbabwean state undertaking a meaningful land redistribution programme.

4.5 Communal Areas Post-2000

By the year 2000, communal areas (now with the support of chiefly rulers) had become a critical support base for the ruling ZANU-PF party, despite the negative implications of ESAP (Sithole et al. 2003). This significance of this strategic political constituency was brought to the fore with the emergence of the MDC in late 1999, and the possible threat it posed to ZANU-PF rule. It soon became clear that the MDC was gaining a stronghold foothold in urban areas as well as in large swathes of rural Matabeleland. As the MDC arose on the political front, the ongoing challenge of land shortages in communal areas was being expressed throughout much of the second half of the 1990s, with a diverse array of isolated occupations by communal area villagers of white farms and other landholdings.

With the emergence of the nation-wide land occupations in early 2000 and the subsequent fast track programme from mid-2000, alongside the strong performance of the MDC in the June 2000 elections, ZANU-PF sought to consolidate its power within the communal areas. Because the vast majority of new fast track farmers were ZANU-PF supporters, the ruling party considered it necessary to focus on retaining its hold over communal areas, including by inhibiting the penetration of MDC into these spaces. This entailed a fluctuating combination of intimidation and violence as well as patronage (Makura-Paradza 2010) through the manipulation and politicisation of state resources (including even drought relief and humanitarian assistance more broadly). In the worst scenarios, clashes between opposition and ruling party supporters resulted in beatings, torture, destruction of property and acts of arson (much like what was happening on white commercial farms (Steen 2011).

In the meantime, the state arranged to consolidate its hold over chiefs via political patronage. For instance, in January 2000, chiefs' allowances were increased from $2000 to $10,000 Zimbabwean dollars, per chief, an unprecedented 400 percent increment (Nkomo 2014). As Murisa (2018:5) notes, as a broader tendency: "Indeed, ever since the reforms the chiefs have been beneficiaries of state largesse. Besides a monthly wage, chiefs were provided with brand new vehicles and their rural homes were given first priority in the rural electrification programme." This was a calculated political act, rather than a genuine cultural-nationalist stance on the part of ruling party. To Nkomo (2014:90):

> The government was not really concerned with the well-being of chieftaincy or the related spiritual and cultural aspects. It was worried about the immediate need to mobilise against opposition forces. It manipulated chiefs in order to make them feel obliged to the party for the continued existence of their institution.

Seats in the Zimbabwean Senate are also reserved for chiefs. In this context, chiefs have openly declared their allegiance to the ruling party. At times, they block opposition forces from gaining entrance into communal areas, in particular during election times (Chimhowu and Woodhouse 2008).

In terms of the power struggles between District Councils and chiefly authorities, it would appear that (in many communal areas) the balance of power has swung heavily towards chiefs in terms of control over land. For instance, in Svosve communal lands, "in late 2005 the VIDCOs had

disappeared and each 'village', or more precisely 'kraal' of 20-25 households, was governed in land matters by an appointed 'kraalhead'" (Chimhowu and Woodhouse 2008:9). Additionally, in the context of fast track restructuring of rural spaces, traditional authorities have been trying to bring fast track areas under their control, which sometimes leads to conflicts between chiefs claiming ancestral rights to the same area within which particular fast track farms fall. Chiefs though are not the only patriarchs governing in rural areas, as war veterans and ZANU-PF youth have also asserted their quest for recognition – not only during the occupations on white farms, but also within communal areas. At times, war veterans have taken it upon themselves to interfere in land allocation in communal areas (Sithole et al. 2003, Makura-Paradza 2010).

Though fast track reform was expected to decongest the communal areas, this has not taken place on a significant scale if at all, with ongoing communal land population pressure (Steen 2011). In some areas, such as Mazvihwa communal areas, average communal land holdings have decreased 6.5 hectares to 3.1 hectares (per family), over a 20-year period from 1986 to 2006 (Mushonga and Scoones 2012:1250). Fast track itself led to massive deindustrialisation in urban Zimbabwe, and low-income workers found it difficult to survive without employment in the commodified urban economy. Other disruptive events such as the 2005 Operation *Murambatsvina* (Clean Up Campaign), which involved the destruction of illegal housing and business structures in urban centres, also undercut the lives of low-income working people. These events led to internal displacement and, in seeking some form of refuge, migration from urban to communal areas occurred on an unprecedented scale (Steen 2011, Ingwani 2015). More generally, the government has used communal areas as a "dumping ground for squatters, vagrants, informal sector workers and prostitutes rounded up in urban areas" (Makura-Paradza 2010:74). Ongoing decline of the national economy, including record breaking inflation in 2008, has compelled indigenes movement back to their communal homes (Steen 2011). This excludes of course the tens of thousands for former farm labourers seeking an alternative place of belonging.

It is also the case that many of those who benefited from FTLRP did not abandon entirely and permanently their communal homes. They have established split families with some members still residing in communal areas and others on fast track farms (Sithole et al. 2003). Insecure fast track land tenure regimes (particularly on A1 farms) made communal homesteads a reliable safety net to fall back on in the event of evictions from fast track farms or failure to farm productively. Thus,

some A1 beneficiaries left either children or relatives to mind their homesteads including some of their livestock (Matondi and Dekker 2012). Indeed, some of these fast track beneficiaries have since returned to their communal areas for a variety of reasons (Makura-Paradza 2010). As well, some beneficiaries (albeit in small numbers) have permanently abandoned their communal stands, paving way for new land seekers but mostly from the same family or village (Matondi and Dekker 2012). Overall, these processes contribute to increasing land pressure in communal areas countrywide. Further, they show that communal areas remain important sites of production and protection for autochthones, even considering fast track. This makes it particularly difficult for farm labourers to access communal area plots, notably foreign workers.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a thematic and historical discussion of Zimbabwe's communal areas, including a focus on the main characteristics of these areas as well as the historical processes underpinning their contemporary existence. The colonial administration created the Native Reserves (as they were first known) strictly for autochthonous Africans and this was institutionalised through various policies and legislation. Ethnicising Reserves/Tribal Trust Lands was convenient for the colonial administration as it sought to impose indirect rule over Africans in these areas through tribal chiefs. These areas were constructed within the realm of ancestral and ethnic belonging into which outsiders (even at times autochthones) usually found it difficult to enter. The post-colonial government maintained these areas (as communal areas), using ethnic chiefs to assert partisan control especially in the face of growing opposition in the country from the year 2000. These reconfigured partisan modes of belonging arose at the time of fast track, as ex-labourers of foreign origin sought to move beyond their conditioninal belonging on white farms and discover new ways of belonging, including in communal areas. How, and if, these former farm workers blended into communal areas in the midst of these troubling dynamics is the subject of the empirical chapters, with specific reference to Bushu.

CHAPTER FIVE: FOREIGN FARM LABOURERS AND BELONGING IN COMMUNAL AREAS

5.1 Introduction

In the context of chapters three or four about farm labourers and communal areas respectively in Zimbabwe, this chapter hones in more specifically on questions around belonging in relation to communal areas and former farm workers of foreign origin. In this sense, it provides a review of prevailing scholarly literature on relevant matters about this key focus of the thesis. Communal land issues of belonging and politics of belonging are discussed, highlighting that communal lands have been construed within exclusionary autochthonous claims. African migrants including ex-farm labourers' institutionalised and social othering and their contested belonging is likewise detailed. This chapter brings to light that migrant farm workers have made attempts to access ethnicised communal lands through various ways in pre-fast track Zimbabwe, albeit under uninviting circumstances. Through these discussions, the significance of the thesis in contributing to the existing literature will become clearer.

5.2 Autochthones and Communal Area Belonging

This section thematically discusses communal areas in relation to (ethnic) belonging. I discuss the historical dynamics that produced and cultivated a sense of ethnic belonging in Zimbabwe's communal areas while arguing that the ethnicised forms of belonging were, to a larger extent, part of the colonial project. In doing so, I trace how Zimbabwe's ethnic politics of belonging became pronounced through colonialism, Christianity and urbanisation including how ethnicised forms of land and belonging translated into the otherising (or othering) of those purported to be outsiders or strangers, including Africans of foreign origin. Communal areas' modes of autochthonous belonging, including their (re)configuration throughout Zimbabwe's history are also discussed and in the process identifying possible sources of exclusion of allochthones from communal areas including the former farm workers of foreign origin.

5.2.1 Communal Areas and Ethnic/Ancestral Belonging

As set out in Chapter Two, belonging is usually intimately connected to a specific landscape and, in Zimbabwe, land and belonging with reference to communal areas has a strong ethnic and kinship dimension (Muzondidya 2007, Magosvongwe 2013) as traced historically. As Ingwani (2015:380)

argues: “In the minds of many land users in Zimbabwe, communal land belongs not to single individuals but to a vast family of which many are dead, few are living and countless numbers are still unborn”. Beyond this, also in the case of communal areas, belonging has pronounced national (if not nationalistic) connotations, with belonging to communal areas interconnected with belonging to the nation: “[N]atives’ rights overrode those of all other subject groups, particularly in Native Reserves [communal lands], viewed as the preserve of indigenous Africans - the ‘aboriginal natives of Southern Rhodesia’” (Muzondidya 2007:328).

Thus, understanding belonging in relation to communal areas also calls for a consideration of Zimbabwe’s territorialised ethnic dimension. In general, both the colonial and post-colonial governments recognise the Ndebele and Shona ethnic groupings as autochthonous Zimbabweans (Muzondidya 2007). However, both are further subdivided into subethnic clusters: the Ndebele consisting of the Zanzi, the Hole and the Enhla (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009), and the Shonas incorporating the Karanga, Korekore, Manyika, Ndau and the Zezuru. In the case of the Shona, the subethnic groups – as a product of colonial classification and naming – refer primarily to topographical delineations and not to any culturally-defined ethnic or tribal classification (Ranger 1984). Because of this, cultural homogeneity might not exist within each subethnic category. For instance, the name Korekore simply means Northerner and refers to residing in a northern plateau location. Zezuru means Highlander as inspired by the area’s location at the head of the Mazowe valley (Beach 1980). Some subgroups, however, derive their names from powerful 18th century chiefs such as the south-eastern Karanga and the eastern Manyika chieftaincies. As well, these Shona sub-ethnicities are comprised of various sub-dialects (Doke 1931) with the Zezuru for instance comprised of the Harava, Nohwe, Hera and the Gova. Pre-colonial Bushu (in Shamva district) was dominated by the Gova (Doke 1931).

Diverse missionary efforts to standardise the Shona language into one official dialect contributed to categorisations and contestations revolving around the five Shona categories (Ranger 1984). Catholic missionaries for example, in translating the bible, ended up unintentionally erasing a diverse range of dialects, with a Zezuru dialect becoming (in their work) the official prototype dialect for the Shona. Other missionaries pursued similar ventures in translation and privileging a particular dialect (for example, within Karanga), contributing to the emergence of subethnic categorisations and politics among the Shona. Simultaneously, migrant workers in towns and cities

amplified sub-ethnic categorisations as they classified themselves based on their rural ethnicised origins.

The British political conquest starting in the last decade of the 19th century furthered this process, as the emerging colonial government adopted the missionary-inspired categorisations with the clear intent of ethnicising the indigenous population, including by linking and binding particular ethnic and subethnic groupings to specific geographical places (Ranger 1984). By the 1930s, ethnic and subethnic categorisations had become part and parcel of the self-identity of indigenous Africans. From the perspective of the colonial state, this was a political project for purposes of divide-and-rule.

In colonial Zimbabwe, and now in post-colonial Zimbabwe, Africans' identity card bears a set of numbers that confirm their district of origin, including particular details of their traditional kraal head. Even Zimbabwe's current ten administrative provinces tend to be geographically demarcated on ethnic lines. For instance, Manicaland Province is home to the Manyikas, and Matebeleland is for the Ndebeles. These provinces bear the ethnic names of 'autochthonous' Zimbabweans, that is, those who occupied the area before the conquest of the 1890s. Provincial names officially define ethnic belonging and those who cannot identify with those provinces by way of ancestral origin remain as allochthones. Land, territory and ethnicity are therefore intertwined in Zimbabwe. In this context, Alexander (2007:183) notes:

> Land is about identity as well as production and class formation; it is about aesthetic values and spiritual meaning, as well as being central to the construction of the institutions of state; it fires political struggles and violence alongside the literary imagination; and it is the basis for both building and breaking a host of social relationships. In all of these guises, the meanings and value of land are neither fixed nor uncontested.

The present politics of communal land belonging can be understood within the prisms of the colonial legacy and land segregation policies, which effectively made communal areas the 'birthright' lands for autochthones (Cousins 1993, Andersson 1999). Even in their arid, crowded and highly unproductive character, communal landscapes became both symbolically and territorially important to the 'autochthones'. Although they initially resisted the establishment of the Reserves, Africans gradually and, in most cases, permanently moved into the Reserves, together with other Africans who were evicted forcefully from European lands to the Reserves. In

the process, autochthones from different regions of the colony were settled in the same Reserves despite their ethnic differences (Nyambara 2001). For example, most communal land villagers in Shamva district are from the Korekore and Zezuru ethnic groups, with many forcibly removed from the fertile Mazowe and Bindura areas in the 1920s to pave way for white settler agriculture (Doke 1931, Matondi 2001). With time, this would lead to contestations around who belonged where, and whose ancestors belonged to a particular communal area.

Nevertheless, by residing in a Reserve, new modes of belonging and identity were constructed and the 'foreign' land was turned into a home. As Marowa (2015:125) points out: "New territories and chiefdoms were created … and were given political meaning. Boundaries were created and shared between chiefdoms and from them ethnic identities, social belonging and distinction were made known and contested". In settling in the Reserves, Africans at first had differences among themselves and these were reinforced by ethnic differences. Marowa (2015), for instance, highlights how people who were evicted from the Zambezi Valley discouraged intermarriages with the different ethnic groups they met in the newly created Native Reserves. Indeed, they would blame 'others; for witchcraft and sorcery. However, years and decades of interfacing gradually resulted in processes of othering being reconstructed and deconstructed.

Common identities based on shared memories of eviction and the likelihood of prolonged co-existence were formed, without necessarily smothering all difference. As diverse ethnic groups moved into the Reserves, they tried by all means to establish a territorial identity and a sense of belonging. Strategies such as place naming, based on their places of origin, took place. For example, some Tonga groups who were removed from Gota area in the Zambezi Valley named their new place of settlement in Rengwe communal area as *ku*Gota (Gota place). Reserves became places of historical memory, identity and social belonging. They became a space "where ancestors are buried" and where people are given "a totem and clan identity" (Fisher 2010:110). Thus, even today, communal lands remain intertwined with people's land-based identities and "sense of belonging and self-knowledge" (Magosvongwe 2013:3), and are intimately called '*kumusha*' (simply meaning 'home').

Occupying particular pieces or plots of communal land for generations has resulted in particular clan members developing historically-rooted, emotive attachments to territory (Magosvongwe 2013). Therefore, claims to ancestral lands remain strong for indigenes in post-colonial Zimbabwe.

A village is usually headed by a kraal head or known as a *sabhuku* (book holder) and, in most cases, he will be the eldest patrilineal clan member of the dominant family within a village (Anderson 1999). On a regular basis, villages are named after clan names or surnames and such families became almost 'owners' of the village, its land and all its natural resources (Holleman 1952). Smaller families that live in these clan led villages are often related to the dominant family. 'Outsiders' can become part of the clan especially immigrants who join autochthonous clans through intermarriages. Their children '*vazukuru'* (a sister's child) often become essential clan members, at times leading in ritual activities such as rain making ceremonies (O' Flaherty 1998). Intermarriages are therefore essential in establishing and cementing kinship relations and belonging in communal areas.

In terms of belonging, communal land and ethnicity have been intertwined to construct an imagined hegemonic autochthonous Zimbabwean community as '*vana vevhu*' (sons and daughters of the soil) (Muzondidya 2007:325). In some cases, a politics of forgetting seem to have gripped communal villagers as they have since conceptualised communal lands as 'ancestral' territories; at the same time, "land in white commercial farms is not usually viewed as theirs in contrast with the narrative of the Independence movement" (Mlambo and Mwatara 2016: 91). In other words, colonial displacement resulted in autochthones coming to believe that communal areas are their ancestral lands when in fact fertile commercial farms also form part of original 'ancestral' lands for the indigenes, as expressed in many of the fast track land occupations. As one observer noted, "Sense of belonging to a particular piece of land seems to be shaped by recent memory rather than a remembrance of how the land was originally taken" (Matondi 2001: 92).

Resultantly, recent memories have helped to shape communal land belonging for most (autochthonous) Zimbabweans. The attachment of indigenes to communal land has subsequently made it difficult for some people to permanently evacuate communal lands even in instances where they acquire land in fast track resettlement areas or properties in the urban areas (Sithole et al. 2003, Matondi and Dekker 2011). As such, even though the government justified fast track as a means of decongesting the communal areas, many villagers simply are not willing to permanently leave the communal areas for moral and historical reasons. Issues such as reluctance to leave their forefathers' graves have helped forge a perpetual relationship between communal villagers and their land (Magosvongwe 2013).

At the same time, certain events and dynamics emerge whereby a politics of deep remembering informs narratives on land and belonging on an explicit basis. Steen (2011) for instance asserts that when faced with land shortages and contestations, Zimbabwean indigenes in communal areas often resort to storytelling, narrating their purported legitimate ancestral claims to certain lands. They will tell anyone about how their ancestors originally owned a particular area of land, how they were disposed of it including due to colonial dispossession, and how it is their moral obligation to seek restitution by reclaiming it, as some did during the land occupations.

Thus, self-proclaimed autochthones occupied farms on the basis of their pre-colonial claims to land (Fontein 2011). For example, in Masvingo Province, Chief Svosve led his people in farm occupations on autochthonous claims, arguing that his people were unjustifiably dispossessed of their ancestral land during the colonial era (Chimhowu and Woodhouse 2008). As well, on two major occasions, firstly soon after independence in 1980 and secondly in 2002 at the height of fast track, Chief Murinye led his people to occupy Boroma Hills in Masvingo province on the pretext that the land belonged to his ancestors who were unfairly displaced by the colonial regime (Fontein 2011). In such narratives, the need to recover 'stolen' commercial farms justified the war of liberation (Moyana 1984). Hence, at times, selective memories embedded in politics of remembering and politics of forgetting are instrumental in informing land-based politics of belonging, in communal areas and beyond.

5.2.2 Communal areas as a Community of Social Belonging

Though belonging to communal areas is strongly linked to land, interpersonal relationships and social interactions are also vital in developing and reinforcing belonging. The notion of 'common interest' prevails in communal areas and this is instrumental in fostering a sense of belonging among villagers (Cousins 1993). Shared activities and lifestyles inculcate a sense of 'community' and a 'mechanical solidarity' in communal areas. Customs, rituals and traditions that are supposed to be observed by all villagers within communal areas generally mould people together into a single social unit, despites social differentiation and fault lines. Shared rules, norms and values such as observing *chisi* days (when no agricultural work is permitted) and agreeing on the days when animals are to herded after planting sometimes bring villagers together (Cousins 1993). Newcomers are therefore expected to observe such shared norms, values and practices.

Shared resources such as grazing lands and community boreholes connect villagers together. After seemingly seeking to individualise villagers in the Reserves through the Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951, the colonial administration reversed this for ideological reasons based on instilling a notion of shared belonging (Munro 1998). Thus, the colonial Tribal Trust Land Act of 1967 was crafted in an endeavour to foster a communal sense and a notion of common belonging among autochthones (Nkomo 2015). In defense of the Tribal Trust Land Act, the colonial government, through the words of the then Secretary for Internal Affairs (Nicolle 1966 quoted in Nyambara 2001:799) reasoned that:

> In an African tribal system, the life of an African is communal not individual. His personality, his attitude to life is bound up with a sense of identification with 'family', and that is a family so extensive that it is more accurately called a kinship system ... Thus it is that a tribal African lives in an intricate network of kinship bonds, of rights and duties assigned by that network and he does not exercise his freedom of choice as an individual to make his own self-interest, judgements and choice. The traditional African society has never emphasised the free individual. It has comprehended individuals only in the context of the community, protecting them within a cocoon of finespun relationships.

The post-colonial Communal Land Act of 1982 is based on the same fundamental principle.

5.2.3 Communal Areas and Politics of Belonging

Though communal lands remain state land officially, the fact that certain clans and families have occupied particular pieces of land for generations has given them a sense of entitlement over the land. Hence, self-acclaimed autochthones have made it their mandate to guard the land from 'outsiders' (Cousins 1993). This communal area politics of belonging also resonates with continuous land shortages in the communal areas (Stein 2011). Demand for communal land has in some cases forced traditional authorities to opt for drastic measures that have further perpetuated land conflicts. For instance, in Murambinda and Svosve communal areas, some chiefs, headmen and kraal heads resorted to resettling land seekers in grazing lands, sparking disputes between long-established villagers and the traditional leaders themselves (Andersson 1999). The transformation of grazing lands into residential and arable plots has in turn led to an increase in the cumulative size of arable lands at the expense of grazing land and in defiance of communal land use planning.

As such, communal land conflicts have become a perennial issue, with villagers confronting traditional and local civil authorities. Locals blame authorities for unilaterally allowing the immigration of 'outsiders' or 'foreigners' and, in the process, causing communal land shortages (Chimhowu and Woodhouse 2008). Though autochthonous Zimbabweans from other districts may also be included amongst the purported 'outsiders', the 'outsiders' usually refer to foreign Africans of foreign and their descendants (Moyo 1994). In these cases of land conflicts, rival autochthonous groups usually "seek to oust such settlers by claiming it as their ancestral land, first tilled before the colonial interlude by their grandfathers or great grandfathers", thereby amplifying autochthonous claims to land (Cheater 1990:198).

In other cases, communal land politics of belonging are encapsulated in land management and control regimes pitting villagers against traditional authorities, 'development' partners, market forces and the state (Spierenburg 2005). Autochthonous claims to land are offered as a justification for refuting and even resisting government, market-based or 'developmental' interventions especially any 'development projects' that interfere with traditional resource management and land-based livelihood systems (Dzingirai 2003). At times, traditional leadership and villagers enter into alliances for this purpose. Traditional leadership in Dande communal areas for instance resisted government rural development and irrigation projects citing *mhondoro* spirits' opposition to the projects. The projects were consequently aborted (Spierenburg 2005). Most CAMPFIRE programmes have also failed due to disputes involving villagers, traditional authorities and the state (Dzingirai 2003). Such events may serve to show that communal land (including its resources and usage) may be subject to an imagined spiritual jurisdiction of autochthonous Zimbabweans (combined in the body of villagers and traditional leadership (Munro 1998).

5.3 Migrant Farm Workers, Autochthones and Communal Area Belonging

This section provides a thematic overview about migrant farm workers (and their descendants) in relation to belonging, historical otherness and strangerhood, with particular reference to communal areas. Fast track placed farm workers of foreign descent in an ambivalent position where their belonging was bound to be contested. However, despite the highly exclusionary arrangements that militate against communal area belonging, Africans of foreign origin have been and are still moving into the highly-ethnicised communal areas.

While the Rhodesian colonial government deliberately excluded autochthonous Africans as citizens and hence they were mere 'subjects', the situation was worse for non-autochthonous Africans as they failed to qualify even in the category of subject (Mamdani 1996). Insofar as they belonged at all within the territory of colonial Zimbabwe, they belonged to the white farmers. Alternatively, Muzondidya (2007) refers to them as 'minority subjects' under colonialism (together with Asians and coloureds), not fitting into the dominant colonial dialectic of whites and indigenous Africans. The post-colonial government inherited and reproduced part of this exclusionary system by denying a certain category of Africans (namely, aliens) from belonging to the post-colonial nation (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008). Both the colonial and post-colonial regimes intentionally disqualified non-autochthonous Africans from being Rhodesian and Zimbabwean (Muzondidya 2007, Daimon 2011, 2014).

This national-level politics of non-belonging for foreign Africans resonates down to the level of the micro-politics of belonging, in that self-acclaimed autochthones have used derogatory labels and systems of othering in their interfaces with African migrants, constructing and placing them at the fringes of (or even outside) the community (Magaramombe 2010, Mashiri 2005, Daimon 2014). This situation became particularly troublesome for farm workers of foreign origin, as they were confined to white farms under domestic government, socially and physically remote from communal area Africans and in large part invisible and unknown to the latter.

5.3.1 Migrant Africans, Citizenship and Belonging to the Nation-State

As discussed earlier in the thesis, citizenship status is one of the parameters that determine an individual's belonging to a nation-state (Yuval-Davies 2006, 2018). In terms of a set of exclusionary dynamics, migrant farm workers' citizenship existed as contested terrain in both colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009) argues that belonging and citizenship in post-colonial Zimbabwe have been crafted with an ethnic twist, constructed within an imagined primordial existence of the Shona 'tribes'. Such a discourse has been used to deny any other ethnic (even local) group the right to make autochthonous claims to Zimbabwe. More broadly though, as Muzondidya (2007) argues, the post-colonial state embraced the colonial construction and categorisation of the Shona and Ndebele as the authentic autochthonous groupings in the territorial boundaries of Zimbabwe, since they existed prior to European colonisation. In this regard, the post-colonial state is complicit in furthering the colonial project of

ethnic segmentation of Africans and the hegemony of specific ethnic categories (Mlambo and Mwatara 2016), whether Shona alone or Shona and Ndebele combined.

In both colonial time and post-colonial times, Africans of foreign origin have been subjected to an institutionalised othering through citizenship marginalisation, thus officially stamping their unbelonging to the nation-state (Daimon 2014, 2018). When the colonial administrations facilitated the in-migration of labour into the country starting from the 1890s, they never physically or institutionally integrated them within any indigenous category. Instead, Africans were divided into Natives/indigenes and non-Natives/non-indigenes, with this division transformed into a wholesale biological, cultural and geographical compartmentalisation of Africans in colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe (Muzondidya 2007). Immigrant labour continued to be confined within white commercial areas and was denied outright citizenship accorded to native Africans within "the contours of autochthony, belonging, ethnicity and political affiliation" (Daimon 2014: 138).

In the words of Moyo et al. (2000: 186), foreign farm workers lived in Zimbabwe as "stateless migrants or 'unrecognised citizens'". They were not considered as 'citizens' but as 'Aliens', making them the 'other' or 'strangers', despite the fact that many of them were born in Zimbabwe. In the colonial period, their 'Alien' status was institutionalised by their identity documents which were literally marked 'A' for Alien, a label that was to continue in post-colonial Zimbabwe (insofar as they could acquire these documents); while those for autochthones are marked 'CIT' for citizens (Muzondidya 2007). To Daimon (2014), the official alien label given to migrant Africans marked their 'otherisation' and formed the basis for their exploitation and marginalisation within the colonial and post-colonial context. Effectively, African migrants were "collectively called 'colonial boys', 'alien natives' or simply 'colonials' by the colonial state" (Muzondidya 2007:326). In an attempt to confirm the conditional belonging of non-autochthonous Africans, the colonial government in 1957 passed the Foreign Migratory Amendment Act which was meant to phase out migrant labour since local labour was now sufficient. The Act was inconvenient to migrants to say the least, as they had established a home in the colony with some having lost their entitlement to ancestral lands in their countries of origin due to many years of absence (Muzondidya 2007). Resultantly, most migrant farm workers resisted and disobeyed the Act.

The post-colonial administration continued to recognise this colonial system of institutionalised exclusion of Africans of foreign origin, even though a significant number of migrants and their

descendants were born and lived in the country for almost a century. This "subject minority…and their descendants, [are] estimated to be over two million and forming about 15 per cent of the national population" (Muzondidya 2007:326). Most Africans of foreign origin residing in Zimbabwe lack official identity documents such as birth certificates, Identity Cards and international travelling passports (Hartnack 2005, Daimon 2014, Kufandirori 2015). Bureaucratic demands and costs have made it difficult for farm workers of foreign origin to access official citizenship. For instance, for foreigners to get a birth certificate, they require their parents' identity documents and this makes it impossible for descendants of foreign migrants since most of their parents do not have the identity documents themselves. This implies that people of foreign origin have a potential of reproducing generations without Identity Cards (Daimon 2014).

Lack of official citizenship came as an economic convenience to white farmers who took advantage of foreign farm workers' precarity to exploit them, knowing that they had nowhere else to go within the country (Mayavo 2002). Additionally, until late 1997, farm workers were not eligible to vote in local government elections as they lacked the status as property-owning ratepayers or rent-payers (Muzondidya 2007). Today, the inability to produce identity cards has formed the basis for social, political and economic exclusion since identity documents are a requirement in most developmental, social, civic and political programmes. Voting, education, medical treatment, travelling and almost any other 'official' activity requires identity documentation. Most importantly, land in the communal areas is accessed through Identity Cards which bear an individuals' district of origin as well as their kraal head (Muzondidya and Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2008). Hence, when individuals lack those official requirements, it implies that they are automatically disqualified from gaining access to communal land and any of its benefits.

5.3.2 Migrant Farm Workers and (Un)Belonging in the National Discourse

The post-colonial government justified its exclusion of Africans of foreign origin in part on the pretext of disloyalty and lack of patriotism on their part. Over time, due to their 'foreign' label, migrant Africans particularly (former) farm workers in some instances have been constructed as enemies of the state (Daimon 2014, 2018). During pre-colonial times, the Maravi people from Malawi were blamed for contributing to the 1590s' fall of the powerful Mutapa State, that existed within the present-day territory of Zimbabwe (Daimon 2018). They supposedly fought against and weakened the great Mutapa empire of the Karangas and connived with the Portuguese in doing so. Some Maravi people settled in present day Zimbabwe after defeating the Karangas. Such pre-

colonial activities thus earned African migrants' labels such as "militarily astute, cannibalistic, aggressive and brave, and above all, 'sell-outs'" (Daimon 2018:1100).

During Zimbabwe's war of liberation in the 1970s, a substantial number of foreign Africans chose to conscript into the colonial Rhodesian Security Forces chiefly for economic and security reasons. They were also fingered for voting for the recommendations of the Pearce Commission in 1972 which sought to extend white minority rule in then Rhodesia (Daimon 2018). During the 2000 election campaigns, ZANU-PF officials reportedly reviled Africans of foreign origin, calling them 'totem-less non-citizens' because of their supposed support of the opposition MDC party (Daimon, 2014: 142). As well, as indicated earlier, foreign farm workers were blamed for sympathising with white farmers during the FTLRP. For example, in 2000, at a rally in Harare's oldest black suburb, Mbare, the then president, Robert Mugabe accused the "undisciplined, totem-less elements of alien origin" for supporting the MDC (Daimon 2018:1095). All these historical dynamics therefore constructed Africans of foreign origins as being "largely on the wrong side of Zimbabwean history" (Daimon 2018:1114). As a result, the ruling ZANU-PF party conveniently accused alien farm workers as war time 'sell-outs' notorious for collaborating with the white colonial forces during the liberation struggle, and siding with white farmers during the fast track occupations, all at the expense of African liberty (Daimon 2018, Fisher 2012).

Since the year 2000, the Zimbabwean state has used citizenship as a "stick and carrot", almost in a catch-22 situation, whereby foreigners are promised full citizenship rights on condition that they support the ruling party (Rutherford 2001b:639, Daimon 2014:142). In extreme situations, Africans of foreign origin are constantly threatened with deportation if they fall short of supporting ZANU-PF (Daimon 2014, 2018, Rutherford 2001b). In this regard, ruling party patronage has arguably informed the conditional belonging of Africans of foreign origin in Zimbabwe (Daimon 2018), as becoming a beneficiary of this patronage requires Zimbabwean citizenship and voting for the ruling party. For instance, following the events of 2000, the government of Zimbabwe in 2001 passed The Citizenship Amendment Act with the aim of effectively disenfranchising white Zimbabweans and farm workers who were purported to be opposition supporters (Muzondidya 2007). Through the Act, the government claimed that it sought to deal with 'half-hearted citizens' once and for all, by making populations with actual or potential foreign citizenship chose between being a Zimbabwean or a foreign citizen (Daimon 2018).

In an attempt to abide with the new regulations, many Zimbabweans of foreign origin tried to navigate the bureaucratic structures to renounce their foreign citizenship but this proved difficult for the majority of them (Daimon 2014). As Daimon (2014) notes, farm workers of foreign descent were particularly affected since they lacked the official documents required for renunciation. Some did not know the correct offices to approach while others could not afford to meet the expenses incurred in the process, such as transport costs. Consequently, farm workers (especially those who had been displaced during the FTLRP) were unable to confirm their Zimbabwean citizenship, thus preserving their alien label. As well, individuals born of a Zimbabwean mother and a father of foreign descent have had their citizenship prejudiced by the hegemomy of patriarchy in the country, since they cannot directly claim their mother's citizenship (Daimon 2014).

Those who failed to renounce their citizenship failed to vote in all elections between 2002 and 2013 and most of them have been victims of politically motivated violence. However, the present Zimbabwean constitution (from 2013) under Section 43(2) attempts to protect aliens from being stateless. It clearly states that children born of Southern African Development Community (SADC) citizens and ordinarily resident in Zimbabwe on 22 May 2013 are automatically conferred citizenship by birth and descent. The new constitution further recognises multiple citizenship since it states that multiple citizenship is not grounds for taking away Zimbabwean citizenship, unlike the dictates of the 2003 Citizenship Act (Kufandirori 2015). Despite the new constitution provisions, acquiring citizenship remains a practical challenge for aliens and their descendants (Daimon 2014). The reluctant acceptance of African migrants and their descendants (including (former) farm workers) as Zimbabweans therefore implies that this population potentially remains 'non-citizens' or 'denizens' in both Zimbabwe and their countries of origin (Daimon 2014:138). Further, their persistent othering possibly renders them perpetual farm people: their belonging remains attached to the white farm and not the nation state, even subsequent to the end of domestic government on (former) white farms and their displacement from these farms.

Rutherford (2005:139) summarises the precarious citizenship situation of African migrants and their descendants in Zimbabwe in the following manner:

> In addition to their uncertain citizenship status, farm workers have also been on the margins of the imagined community of the Zimbabwean nation due to their low-status work and their having worked for 'whites' whose own belonging to the nation has been increasingly questioned by a narrowly

> defined African nationalism... Therefore, although farm workers fall under the category of 'African' when opposed to 'Europeans' in the version of African nationalism deployed by ZANU (PF), they are, at other times, excluded because of their ambiguous citizenship.

As Daimon (2018: 1098) highlights more concisely, "[q]uestions of belonging and citizenship have thus left many migrants, including Malawian immigrants, at the mercy of autochthonous hegemonic power and living on the margins in states of unbelonging". Citizenship has thus marginalised Africans of foreign origin in Zimbabwe, turning them into subjects and not citizens in post-colonial Zimbabwe.

As already discussed, the Zimbabwean countryside historically was characterised by a 'dualistic space' between white commercial farms and communal areas, with the latter occupied by predominantly autochthonous communal farmers (Rutherford 2001). Subsequent to fast track, a dualism continues, though with a different content: fast track farms on the one hand, and communal areas on the other. Non-autochthonous ethnic groups have failed to belong to either of these two categories, and find themselves in a situation of non-belonging. They were therefore subject to an identity crisis, "betwixt and between the figures of European farmers [now fast track farmers] and (autochthonous) African peasants" (Rutherford, 2011: 231). They were strangers in both places.

5.3.3 Autochthones, Migrant Farm Workers' Otherness and Politics of Belonging

Since the beginning of white capitalist agriculture in Zimbabwe, farm labourers have been represented negatively in various discourses within Zimbabwean society (Rutherford 2003). The 'foreigner' history that dominates story-telling about farm workers has helped to construct an 'other' perception in the eyes of autochthones, who consider Africans of foreign origin as not belonging with or to them. Hence, farm workers are reduced to a people whose origin "evolved from a mixture of Malawian, Mozambican, Zambian and Zimbabwean traditions (into) a sub-culture that is specific to the farms" (Auret 2000:3). As a result, they are foreign 'farm people' regarded as strangely different from the mainstream Zimbabwean autochthonous community.

In the day-to-day micro-politics of belonging amongst autochthones, non-autochthonous Africans belong elsewhere other than Zimbabwe, thereby not belonging to the nation, state and landscape (Mashiri 2005, Daimon 2014, Ndhlovu 2018). In the use of verbal slurs, autochthones refer to Africans of foreign origin as '*Mabhurandaya'* (Blantyres[4]); '*Manyasarande'* (those from

[4] Blantyre is the capital city of Malawi.

Nyasaland); '*Vatevera Njanji'* (those who came following the railway line); '*Vabvakure'* (those who came from afar); '*Mabwidi'* (those without rural homes); the 'totem-less ones" (Daimon, 2015:3, Ndhlovu 2018:91) or '*makarushi'* and '*mamoskeni'* (referring to Mozambicans) (Muzondidya 2003). In extreme cases, vernacular discourses have turned violent as has been witnessed in xenophobic attacks on so-called *makwere kwere*[5] in South Africa. Though these slurs have been used typically in a non-violent manner in Zimbabwe (Mashiri 2005), such vernacular discourses have at times incited social actions against allochthones. Generally, in calling fellow Africans names, autochthones are passing on their colonial 'subject' otherness, in this case to fellow Africans in postcolonial Africa (Ndhlovu 2018).

A social distance prevails in Zimbabwe between the autochthones and migrants in general (and former farm workers of foreign origin in particular) which, in turn, leads to challenges when attempts are made to bridge this distance. For instance, intermarriages between the two are usually frowned upon. Even novels discouraging intermarriages between the two groupings have been written and taught in schools, thereby perpetuating migrant stereotypes and their alienation from the world of autochthones (Mashiri 2005). At times, there has been fierce competition for women between the two groups, with autochthones accusing foreigners of snatching their women, while foreigners accusing Zimbabwean men of lacking the necessary romantic skills for attracting women (Mashiri 2005, Daimon 2018).

Migrant farm workers have been held in such low social regard that they have been accused by autochthones of anti-social behaviour ranging from promiscuity to witchcraft (Kufandirori 2015). They are blamed for a diverse array of social ills including deforestation, illegal gold panning, drunkenness, gambling and being 'greedy'. Rutherford (2013:847) thus speaks of "[d]ominant public representations" which associate foreign "farm workers with being foreign, lazy, uneducated, oppressed, under the control of white farmers". In this way, they become depicted as social misfits unfit for the moral community of the autochthones. In fact, even Zimbabwean farm workers tend to be portrayed in this manner, as "inferior, gullible and simple" (Hartnack 2005:352). As lazy and unproductive people, they are simply unable to make any significant contribution to communal area development (Auret 2000, Rutherford 2001, James 2015). From

[5] *Makwere kwere* is a derogatory term used in South Africa to refer to poor African foreigners from countries purported to be economically and culturally backward compared to South Africa including Zimbabwe.

the perspective of autochthones, then, labouring on commercial farms is understood negatively – farm labourers are backward and simple 'farm people', and they tend carry the 'farm worker' tag (and all its negative connotations) with them wherever they go (Hartnack 2017).

5.3.4 Migrants and Politics of Belonging: Contestations and Subversion of Hegemonies

Despite the existence of various deliberate exclusionary dynamics that militate against their belonging, African migrants including (former) farm workers and their descendants have asserted their agency. They devise means and ways to handle and address the 'otherness' that they face in the hands of the autochthones. For instance, in the context of institutionalised marginalisation tactics, some migrants have tried, with some success, to gain Zimbabwean citizenship by maneouvreing through bureaucratic structures (Daimon 2014). Likewise, some foreign Africans have managed to access residential stands in communal areas and are co-existing with autochthones under customary tenure (Nyambara 2001, Rutherford 2003). Against all odds, former migrant farm workers even became FTLRP beneficiaries, albeit in insignificant numbers (Scoones et al. 2018). These though are the exceptions (Daimon 2014).

African migrants including farm workers also seek to subvert dominant hegemonies through creating their own 'us' and 'them' binaries, whereby autochthones become the 'other' while migrants become 'us'. One way of doing this is through the preservation of their 'foreign' culture (Daimon 2007). For instance, most Malawians from the Chewa ethnic group still use *Chewa* as their first language and the local vernacular *Shona* as a second language, even though they may be second or third generation migrants having never set a foot on Malawian soil (Mashiri 2010). They have been at pains to preserve their language, though the language as used in Zimbabwe has "lost its purity and originality as a result of the acculturation, assimilation as well as absorption into the dominant Shona and Ndebele languages" (Daimon 2007:4).

As well, migrant Africans have preserved their identity by maintaining their clan names. Surnames such as Mbewe, Banda and Phiri have their roots in countries surrounding Zimbabwe yet they are very common in Zimbabwe (Muzondidya 2007). For migrant Malawians in Zimbabwe, the preservation of cultural symbols and rituals such as the *Gule Wamkhulu* dances has been pivotal in asserting their identity and distinguishing themselves from non-Malawian groups (Daimon 2007). Nonetheless, modernisation, religion, acculturation and urbanisation have corroded the survival of this and migrant cultural traditions.

Additionally, foreign Africans have confronted autochthones' derogatory verbal slurs by creating their own versions for the indigenes. In his study of Chewa identities in Zimbabwe, Mashiri (2005) points out that the Chewa of Malawian origin in Zimbabwe are fully aware of the derogatory slurs used by autochthonous Zimbabweans in reference to Malawians. The Chewa in turn call Zimbabweans names such as '*masambadovi*' and "*Zuzuru"*, which connote laziness, cowardice and stupidity on the part of the autochthones (Mashiri 2005:13). Songs (and poems) have been composed by Chewas to depict their pejorative perception of autochthones especially the Shona, and songs are often sung by the Chewas within their own circles. One such song used by the Malawians living in Zimbabwe included the following lines (Machiri 2005:15):

1. MaZuzuru kusadziwa	The Zezuru (Shona) do not (know)
Kunena	(how) to talk properly (of other people)
Chisimu chakuti mabwidi	Their way of talking calling us Mabwidi
Ndicho chimene Chobangiza kupusa kwawo	It is a way of showing their stupidity
2. Mazuzu ndiwopusa	The Zezuru (Shona) are stupid
Wovara sutu	They wear suits
Alibe kusamba	Without washing.

This use of ethnic verbal slurs reveals a subtle politics of belonging between the two groups, with each side attempting to stamp its own hegemony or at least to interrelate with each on their own terms.

5.4 Farm Workers of Foreign Origin in the Communal Areas

Created with the clear intent of resettling autochthonous Africans, communal lands (dating back to colonialism) have persistently been imagined as an exclusive place for autochthones (Munro 1998). Communal land access has been defined primarily through ethnicity, implying that non-autochthonous Africans (as 'subject minorities') cannot legally access that land. Denying non-autochthonous Africans' access to land in an agro-based economy is not merely a form of economic exclusion, as it raises questions of belonging and non-belonging as a social, cultural and political phenomenon (Muzondidya 2007). Both the colonial and post-colonial governments have

denied Africans of foreign origin (including foreign farm workers) the right to belong in the communal areas.

From the early days of colonialism, some Africans of foreign origin especially those thought of as being 'intelligent and progressive' (such as the educated Basotho from South Africa) were given the opportunity to purchase land, including in the Native Purchase Areas (Mujere 2012). These Africans were able to forge a sense of belonging in freehold areas almost in the same manner that the indigenous Africans did in Purchase Areas and the Reserves. However, pressure and protests from local African forced the colonial administration to limit the selling of land to allochthonous Africans, particularly those who came into the country after 1931 (after the Land Apportionment Act) (Mujere 2012). Autochthonous land claims were thus used as the basis for (un)belonging among foreign Africans even during colonial times.

The colonial government made it clear from the very onset that Native Reserves were not to become home to migrant farm workers. Laws and notices were passed and these effectively restricted migrant farm workers from accessing Reserve land. The Government Notice No. 223 of 1898 decisively prohibited the settlement of non-autochthonous Africans in African villages. As Muzondidya (2007:327) notes:

> Under Government Notice No. 223 of 1898, which prohibited the settlement of 'colonial natives' in African villages, the state sub-categorised 'natives' into 'aboriginal natives of Southern Rhodesia' and 'colonial natives', the latter being defined as 'all members of the Zulu, Bechuana, and Zambesi tribes, all kaffir tribes of the Cape colony, and any native not being the descendant of an aboriginal of Rhodesia'; and the former as Shonas and Ndebeles and any other groups regarded as indigenous to the land.

The Land Apportionment Act, which divided the country into black and white landscapes, also made it illegal for non-local Africans and their descendants to possess land, thus institutionalising the marginalisation of migrant Africans from land tenure in colonial Zimbabwe. The Tribal Trust Land Act of 1967 also clearly stated that land should not be occupied by non-autochthonous Africans, but should be used and occupied exclusively by 'tribesmen' (or 'aboriginal natives') (Cheater 1990, Nyambara 2001). As Daimon (2018:1099) notes, "'authentic' …Zimbabweans are those whose ancestors were born in Zimbabwe, lived in a rural area or at least were entitled to land in the rural areas".

The denial of access to (now) communal land thus formed the basis of African migrants' strangerhood and otherism in their (limited) interaction with autochthones. Lack of access to communal land has constructed former migrant farm workers as unbelonging to Zimbabwe. Thus, when they interacted with autochthones in social settings such as beer halls, migrant Africans labouring on commercial farms (or in mines and urban areas) they were often ridiculed for lacking a village home (Mashiri 2010). Mashiri (2010:7) provides one example of this. In the 1940s, while having drinks at a beerhall, a certain man of Malawian origin was told: "'Brother, come here dull-face so that you buy us beer because you have no rural home to spend money on. Do you want a rural home? We could allocate you a home in our village then you stop flying to Malawi at night in your magic winnowing-basket'."

However, migrant workers devised various strategies to access land in the communal areas, even during the overtly exclusionary colonial era. For instance, they would marry autochthones. In other cases, they would try their luck by directly applying for communal land through the Native Council's office or approaching the traditional authority. However, their applications were often thrown away (Nyambara 2001, Rutherford 2001). Some migrants though were successful, as there were exceptions to the general rule. A few who were thought to be 'loyal' to the Rhodesian administration were sometimes granted the privilege (not right) to settle in the communal areas alongside autochthones. Nyambara (2001) cites an example of one Zhuwao of Malawian origin who was granted permission to settle in Gokwe Tribal Trust Lands in the 1960s, as a token for his participation in the Second World War alongside British forces.

The post-colonial 'black majority' government inherited the exclusionary stance with regard to allochthones accessing land and belonging in the communal areas (Muzondidya 2007, Daimon 2014). African migrants are still constructed by way of the outsider 'foreigner' label by state administrators and are still excluded when it comes to land-based belonging (Moyo et al. 2000, Daimon 2001, 2018). Thus, acquiring land in communal areas remains a significant challenge for Africans of foreign origin due to a politics of exclusion. As early as 1982, barely two years after gaining independence, the then Minister of Agriculture, Kumbirai Kangai, declared that farm workers of foreign origin could not be accommodated in the communal areas (Mayavo 2002). By the year 2000, when the FTLRP took centre stage, up to 180,000 farmworker households (of foreign origin) lacked access to land in communal areas on this basis (Moyo et al. 2000: 196).

Before and after the FTLRP to a lesser extent, a significant proportion of the farm labouring force were autochthonous Africans. As well, communal villagers have been a stable supply of temporary and seasonal farm labour in neighbouring farms and, in the process, they came into contact with migrant farm workers (Rutherford 2001, Chambati 2017). However, there is a dearth of literature regarding social relations and the politics of belonging with reference to Zimbabweans by descent farm workers and migrant farm workers. Undoubtedly, though, migrant farm workers on white farms did interact with communal villagers. For example, farm workers would participate in communal area activities and rites, if only at the pleasure of their white bosses. They took part in traditional rain making ceremonies in communal areas including in Bushu (Mudege 2007, Fontein 2011). This admittedly irregular contact between communal area villagers and foreign migrant workers might have facilitated foreigners' in-migration into the communal areas, or increased the possibility of doing so.

In the light of fast track, some farm workers of foreign origin have secured communal 'homes'. Nonetheless, accessing a plot of land in the communal areas does not guarantee 'outsiders' an entitlement to belonging and acceptance. As Muzondidya (2007:329) explains, in relation to colonial times:

> [T]he few immigrants who acquired land in the Native Reserves still had to deal with the problem of the insecurity of both land tenure and residency for themselves and their descendants in an environment hostile to their claims to both residency and land. In the cultural discourses of Shonas and Ndebeles, immigrants remained *'vabvakure/amadingandawo'* (outsiders) without ancestral rights over land, subject to eviction by 'locals' at any time.

The following empirical chapters discuss, in the case of Shamva District, how some migrant farm workers moved onto communal land (post fast track) and the many complexities entailed in seeking to forge belonging with and alongside the autochthones.

5.5 Conclusion

The chapter emphasised thematic issues surrounding communal areas and belonging in Zimbabwe while, at the same time, offering an analysis of the exclusion of Africans of foreign origin in general and farm labourers of foreign origin in particular from both the nation-state and communal areas. Communal areas as a colonial creation bound together groups constructed as autochthonous

to Zimbabwe and ethnic belonging emerged the definitive component of 'ancestral' communal areas. This involved othering and strangerhood of the ex-farm labourers of foreign origin and an ethnic politics of belonging between the autochthones and Africans of foreign origin. In some cases, macro politics of belonging were transformed into micro politics of belonging when the two groups interfaces at local levels. Lastly, as discussed, strangerhood of the ex-farm labourers of foreign origin particularly in relation the communal areas has been a norm not easy to overcome. The following four chapters focus on the actual experiences of the former farm workers who moved to Bushu communal areas post fast track.

CHAPTER SIX: SHAMVA'S BUSHU COMMUNAL AREAS

6.1 Introduction

This first empirical chapter offers an overview of Shamva District, particularly Bushu communal areas, thereby setting the scene for the three following empirical chapters. It discusses general issues pertaining to, for instance, forms of authority and administration, and agricultural and climatic conditions, in Bushu. I also discuss questions around land, identity and belonging in Bushu including Bushu's autochthonous families, lion spirits and spirit mediums. This entails a consideration of processes of possibly becoming a Bushu autochthone, as I seek to identify and weigh the possibilities of the former farm workers belonging to Bushu as new autochthones. In this light, I briefly document the historical movement of former farm workers of foreign origin into Bushu communal areas.

6.2 Situating Bushu Communal Areas in Shamva

Shamva is one of seven districts constituting Mashonaland Central Province, the other ones being Mazowe, Mount Darwin, Rushinga, Guruve, Bindura and Muzarabani (for the precise location of Shamva District, see Figure 1.1). The district is made up of the arid Madziwa and Bushu communal areas, old resettlement areas (established soon after independence and prior to the fast track), fertile fast track A1 and A2 farms and a few remaining white and black owned commercial farms, alongside mining claims and Shamva town. Shamva district therefore represents all of Zimbabwe's land tenure systems.

Politically, Shamva district has two parliamentary constituencies, that is, Shamva North and Shamva South. The northern constituency covers Madziwa communal areas and some old resettlement area. The southern constituency is home to the remaining (pre-fast track) commercial farms, old resettlement sites and fast track A1 and A2 farms. The constituency also includes Bushu communal areas and gold claims including the temporarily closed Shamva Metallion Gold Mine[6]. Shamva South has a population of over 40,000 people.

[6] The interview with the Shamva District Development Co-ordinator revealed that the mine's closure is tempoarary awaiting structural issues to be resolved before normal operations resume. Interviews with other district leaders alleged that political issues caused the closure of the mine. I could not verify the legitimacy of the claims.

Shamva district's borders have changed several times during both the colonial and post-colonial eras. Established in the colonial era, autochthones occupied Bushu communal areas subsequent to eviction by force from the rich soils mainly in nearby Mazowe and Bindura districts to create space for settler commercial farms. In the 1930s, Bushu (then called a reserve) fell under Mazowe district together with the Chiweshe reserves, while Madziwa communal areas fell under Mt Darwin district. Up to the mid-1950s, Shamva district covered a very small area comprising of commercial farms, Shamva town and the Bushu reserve.

The Madziwa reserve became part of Shamva district in 1957. Some areas of Shamva (including Goora and Mupfure) were transferred back to Mount Darwin district in 1980 but were returned later to Shamva in 1988 in line with the post-independence amalgamation of rural district councils. The amalgamation of rural areas took place to end the dual colonial racial administration structure that separated white commercial areas and black communal areas in the rural areas. The colonial separation had resulted in Bushu and Madziwa having its administrative centre at Madziwa township, while white commercial farms had Shamva town as their administrative base. Following the amalgamation, the new Shamva district's administrative centre moved to Bushu communal areas' Chakonda township, under the new name of Chaminuka Rural District Council (CRDC). The council offices have since moved back to Shamva town albeit a sub-office is still located at Chakonda.

The Bushu communal areas like many other communal areas are overpopulated. Sandy and infertile soils unproductive for purposes of sustainable agriculture characterise Bushu, in contrast to former commercial farms and resettlement areas. For this reason, precarious livelihoods exist in Bushu, though some social differentiation prevails, with some households better off when compared to others in terms of possession, including agricultural plots, animals owned and overall sources of livelihoods. Despite these challenges, agricultural productivity in Bushu communal areas is higher in relation to many other communal areas in Zimbabwe (James 2015).

Crops grown in Bushu include maize, groundnuts, round nuts and sunflower and, in addition, most residents have small gardens usually located in wetlands known as *dambos* in the vernacular. Maize remains the dominant crop grown in Bushu, and it is the staple crop for the making of *sadza* (a thick corn porridge made of maize flour). In the *dambo* gardens, which are an important dimension of livelihoods and nutrition, villagers grow leafy vegetables and tomatoes, usually taken

as relish for *sadza*. The vegetables are for household consumption, albeit households may market some of their produce locally to complement family income.

Further, households raise domestic animals notably cattle, goats and small livestock (particularly chicken) for home consumption and may sell them, again to complement family income. Most households therefore rely on agriculture even though the trend has been shifting to off-farm and non-farm activities. Gold panning has become increasingly important in sustaining livelihoods in Bushu (and Shamva more broadly) especially from the early 2000s. Households also rely on remittances from household members working or plying different trades outside Bushu.

Shamva is a political hotspot where partisan party-politics shapes land and belonging in important and often dramatic ways. The political significance of the district traces back to the war of liberation in the 1970s where intense conflict took place, resulting in most farms deserted by white farmers trying to escape the wrath of guerrilla fighters. Shamva is home to a number of old resettlement areas (from the early 1980s) as some commercial white farms remained vacant following the liberation war. Although a long-term stronghold of ZANU-PF, white farmers in Shamva district showed significant and open support for the MDC from its formation in late 1999, so that an intertwining of the fast track land occupations and party-political conflicts arose.

The district's political volatility including in Bushu communal areas has persisted throughout the post-2000 period. Political violence between the ruling party and the opposition have characterised the district (including Bushu) and these have been documented elsewhere (Dodo et al. 2014, James 2015). In some cases, this violence involved bodily harm, death and destruction of property particularly during election times as political parties (and specifically ZANU-PF) intimidate villagers in an effort to solicit votes (Dodo et al. 2014).

6.3 Bushu, Autochthones, Strangers and Belonging

In terms of traditional leadership, a chief rules over Bushu communal area. An interview with Chief Bushu on 13 February 2020 revealed that Bushu chieftaincy predates the colonial era, with the Bushu royal family belonging to the Samanyika Mbizi totem and originating from Zimbabwe's (now) Manicaland Province. Their ancestors became the rulers of the area after a war of conquest with the then occupants. The foundational premise of the autochthonous claims of Bushu villagers therefore dates back to precolonial wars of conquest. Most households residing in Bushu, prior to

colonisation, migrated from surrounding areas. These include the Kambiris of the Shava Ziruvi totem who migrated from the nearby district of Mt Darwin, as did the Dzudas of the Nzou Mukotami totem. As well, the Sarinyos of the Soko Murehwa totem came from the nearby Murehwa District. Some of these families have since changed their surnames adopting the first names of their fathers or grandfathers as their surnames. They still identify themselves by their totems that, unlike surnames, do not change. The majority of Bushu autochthonous families are Zezuru speakers with a few especially those adjacent to Mt Darwin district being Korekore.

Precolonial and colonial intermarriages between these families and the Bushu royal family resulted in many men from these families being installed as village heads in Bushu. In the process, the intermarriages produced and cemented kinship ties between the chiefly family and the former strangers who originated from other districts. Thus, village headmanship, that subsequently accompanied these kinship ties, made strangers from other districts and provinces part of the Bushu ruling elite. Intermarriages with the Bushu royal family were instrumental in ensuring a process of becoming autochthonous and royal elites in Bushu. Intermarriages amongst non-royal autochthonous families (including those originating outside Bushu) also consolidated processes of belonging in Bushu. Overall, most households in Bushu are tied through kinship, except for some that migrated into Bushu later (notably, the post-2000 households including former farm workers of foreign origin).

Chief Bushu highlighted that intermarriages involving Bushu royal family members were though restricted to ethnic Shona households, either within or outside Bushu. Intermarriages between ordinary autochthonous Bushu villagers and non-Shona ethnic groups such as the Ndebele were also discouraged at least up until 1980. Resultantly, intermarriages between Bushu villagers and Africans of foreign origin were also strongly discouraged. However, as discussed later, some intermarriages between former farm workers of foreign origin and Bushu autochthones have been taking place since the 1980s, but with social contestations often arising because of them.

In addition to the aforementioned families that resided in Bushu before colonialism, there are other households evicted forcibly from Bindura and Mazowe during the colonial era to create space for European settler farmers. These families have since become a part of the Bushu autochthones. For such families, becoming part of Bushu has been a process involving intergenerational occupation of Bushu communal areas. As discussed later, these families have easily realised autochthonous

claims to Bushu since they are of Zimbabwean origin. This is regardless of them coming from other Zimbabwean districts outside Shamva, unlike the case of former farm workers whose origins are not traceable to pre-colonial Zimbabwe.

Following the relaxation of migration laws soon after the country's independence in 1980, more families from Zimbabwe's other communal areas migrated to Bushu. They have come from as far away as Manicaland and Masvingo provinces and a few from Midlands Province, but (like earlier in-migrants) assert autochthonous claims to Bushu based on their ancestral roots within what is now Zimbabwe. Overall, then Bushu therefore became home to Zimbabweans of different ethnic origins and identities. In most cases, as an identity marker to autochthonous Zimbabweans across the country totemism (or association with a particular totem) provides a basis for making autochthonous claims to Bushu belonging, in addition to surnames that sound Shona and Ndebele. In contrast, Africans of foreign are easily identifiable by their surnames that are non-Shona or non-Ndebele.

Bushu autochthonous families (or households) thus comprise of various sub-ethnic groupings of Shona-speakers who claim ancestral origin from somewhere within Zimbabwe's historical past, before European occupation of the territory. Regrettably, my interviews failed to identify the original inhabitants of the Bushu area, with some interviewees hinting the area (as with other parts of Southern Africa) being occupied originally by the Khoisan people. Failure to establish the earliest inhabitants likely exists within the framework of a lack of precolonial written histories, a case that characterises the bulk and dearth of African history. To that effect, my study conceptualises Bushu autochthones as the Shona families that occupied the now Zimbabwean territory in precolonial times. This includes the Bushu royal family that victoriously waged precolonial wars of conquest to establish itself as the rulers of the Shamva area up to colonisation. To reiterate, though, all Shona families now settled in Bushu, either voluntarily or through compulsion, and in both colonial and post-colonial times, consider themselves (and are recognised as such) as autochthonous inhabitants. In fact, most African studies on autochthony classify ethnic groupings occupying those countries before colonisation as autochthonous (Kibreab 1999, Lentz 2007, Gescheire 2011, Zenker 2011, Meiu 2019), including in the case of Zimbabwe (Muzondidya 2007, Daimon 2011, 2014). This nationalist conceptualisation of autochthony, however, does not

deny the existence of localised ethnic and sub-ethnic conceptualisation of autochthonous belonging, as discussed later. An ethnic politics of belonging is pervasive in Zimbabwe.

6.4 Bushu Lion Spirits and Belonging

Interviewing Chief Bushu revealed that the *mhondoro* or lion land spirit of Bushu (known as Dzimbahwe) owns the land and is responsible for the fertility of the area. Rain making ceremonies take place each year in August and September to appease Dzimbahwe, which involve the brewing and drinking of beer in honour of the land spirit. The making of beer is a gendered ritual. A girl yet to reach puberty fetches water from the river in order to soak millet and rapoko used for the brewing of the beer. Old women who have reached menopause are responsible for beer brewing. Women of child-bearing age are not part of the beer brewing process as their fertility may profane Dzimbahwe's own powers of fertility. It is expected that all villagers will participate in the rain making ceremony, though some now refuse to participate on religious grounds. Former farm workers (including those of foreign origin) also used to participate in beer brewing ceremonies together with the white farmers before fast track. Hence, many of them were familiar with the ceremony when they migrated into Bushu communal areas.

In the past, villagers would consult Dzimbahwe on land matters within Bushu including those that pertain to land seekers. However, when I conducted my fieldwork, Chief Bushu highlighted that communication with Dzimbahwe had become difficult since the medium spirits (*svikiros* in the vernacular) had become dormant. The area was waiting for the ancestors to give them another spirit medium since the death of the last *svikiros* (Nyamhandara and Mhurume Nyashava). Spirit mediums act as intermediaries concerning land matters between the lion spirit of Dzimbahwe and the living in Bushu. Hence, village heads now had to ask their ancestors to protect newcomers in Bushu, with the village heads then taking the matter to Dzimbahwe.

Presently, village heads were thus instrumental in helping newcomers and strangers (including the former farm workers of foreign origin) to become a part of Bushu. This spiritual dimension to belonging to Bushu has become crucial in fostering belonging in Bushu for the former strangers.

6.5 Bushu Communal Areas and the FTLRP

Shamva communal residents actively participated in farm occupations leading up to fast track. Shamva fast track farm occupations took a predominantly violent twist, characterised in many

instances by clashes between occupiers and farm workers. The antagonism animated tensions between the two groupings, accounting for the reluctance of some farm workers to migrate into Bushu communal areas. The Bushu communal area is located near many former white commercial farms and, as such, it was easy for these poorly resourced communal villagers to access those farms. In fact, most Bushu villagers benefitting from fast track accessed smallholder A1 farms adjacent to Bushu communal areas. Even though Shamva communal area residents dominated the A1 beneficiaries in farms adjacent to Bushu, other groups also emerged as significant A1 beneficiaries. These include old resettlement villagers, civil servants and communal villagers from other districts.

People from districts beyond Shamva occupied most commercial farms in Shamva located some distance from the communal areas, particularly those with transport and other resources required to reach the farms. Most of those farms were redistributed under the commercial A2 model and are said to have been eventually occupied by Shamva district's 'elite', including former police chief Augustine Chihuri (said to have acquired several farms in the district under fast track), former ZANU-PF National Commissar Saviour Kasukuwere and former minister Nicholas Goche. Communal villagers were in large part excluded as recipients of the A2 farms.

Interviews I held with autochthonous Shamva communal villagers, who participated in the farm occupations, revealed that some of them ended up losing out as they failed to raise bribes demanded by some land allocating authorities. Such villagers had to return to their communal plots especially around 2002. Thus, despite actively participating in the farm occupations, only 22 percent of Shamva communal areas residents benefitted from the FTLRP and 91 per cent of these beneficiaries came from Bushu (Sukume n.d.:111). However, most communal residents in Shamva failed to access fast track plots.

It therefore remains clear that, though some Bushu villagers benefitted from the FTLRP, the scheme failed to decongest Shamva communal areas in any significant manner. A myriad of complex dynamics in Bushu, in relation to fast track, explains this. On the one hand, some of the communal fast track beneficiaries never had communal farming plots to give up as a way of decongesting communal areas. Bushu communal areas had been facing land shortages for many years prior to fast track, thus some occupiers joined the farm occupations as a way of acquiring farming plots for the first time (Matondi 2001, James 2015). As such, many communal villagers

in Shamva remain with no access to farming plots due to land scarcity. Such households (notably young families) only have access to residential plots, thus limiting their participation to on-farm livelihoods. Shamva communal areas carry an access of two-thirds of the existing households, with a few households with access to land having an average of 6 acres of cropping land (Sukume n.d.).

On the other hand, those fast track beneficiaries with plots to give up left them for their relatives or children with no possibility to pave way for the former commercial farm workers of foreign origin to take over. An interview with the District Development Coordinator (DDC) for Shamva revealed that despite the allocation of more fertile and bigger acreages, most A1 farmers from Bushu communal areas decided to secure their communal residential and arable plots in this way. The villagers argued that they needed to reserve the land for their children and descendant clan for generations to come. Some Shamva autochthones who benefitted from fast track also claimed that they could not permanently leave their communal lands because they needed to stay connected to their families' graves.

Even though some fast track beneficiaries from Bushu are now burying their departed in the fast track farms, most people continue to inter their departed in the communal areas, even though they died at the farms in some instances. Thus, the attachment to communal areas remains strong, leading to a form of dual belonging. To most A1 FTLRP beneficiaries from Bushu, the former commercial farms remain 'commercial' (like urban areas) in the sense of earning a living, but communal areas remain a 'home' where belonging becomes more permanent and secure. Thus, fast track failed to decongest Shamva's communal areas. Instead, fast track amplified Shamva communal land shortages by its formation of a new category of destitute (former) farm workers who had to find a viable alternative to labouring on the farms, including through accessing land. Such dynamics defeat one of the Zimbabwean government's justification for taking land from the white commercial farmers, namely, decongesting communal areas and thereby resolving land shortages in these areas.

At the same time, in a few cases, A1 FTLRP beneficiaries abandoned their plots, which were lying idle or left under the trusteeship of the village heads. Most of this abandoned land was, in most cases, designated for landless autochthonous villagers who were already living in Bushu villages and not necessarily for the new land seekers particularly in the form of the former farm workers. As such, no Bushu communal land was in effect lying fallow waiting for the former commercial

farm workers to occupy in it. Rather, unoccupied land could in some instances result in disputes between previous occupiers and the new land seekers, who might be allocated these idle plots during the absence of the purported owners.

During the time of the interviews (September 2019-March 2020), the DDC highlighted that his office was dealing with cases of communal land dispute in Bushu. As discussed later, some of the cases involved autochthonous FTLRP beneficiaries coming back to reclaim communal plots that they once clandestinely sold when they moved to the fast track farms. The beneficiaries were now confessing ignorance of their illicit land transactions. In such cases, the District Land Committees would rule in favour of the autochthones while recommending alternative allocations for the aggrieved land buyers. The District Land Committee does not recognise any sale of communal land except for the establishment of business centres. Communal land buyers therefore stand to lose.

Two former farm workers reported having been part of Bushu communal land sale wrangles. They lost out in both cases. They ended up receiving plots in *Sango raMambo* resettlement scheme within Bushu, discussed more fully later. One of them spoke about two of his friends (former farm labourers) being duped in this way and departing Bushu for good. The recurrent land disputes partly explain why some land seekers (including former farm workers) were settled in grazing lands, where no specific individual or household would attempt to (re)claim ownership. Autochthones, however, complained about the idea of settling people in the common grazing areas as this prejudiced them of the much-needed forage for their animals.

The closure of Shamva mine in 2018 exacerbated the pressure on Bushu communal land in particular and Shamva communal areas in general. The Shamva Mettallion Gold Mine, just like commercial farms, used to be a home and a livelihood source for many Africans of foreign origin. Its closure resulted in destitution on the part of its (former) workers in terms of housing and livelihood source. The DDC noted that the former mine workers were also actively seeking communal residential and agricultural stands in Bushu. Communal land allocation for the former mine workers had begun by the time I conducted my interviews, with the DDC's office starting to allocate land to the former mine workers. This again was causing land pressure in Shamva. The closure of the mine was beyond the concern of this study, although it took place at a time when some former farm workers were still actively seeking land in Bushu communal areas.

6.6 Farm Workers and Historical Communal Land Access in Shamva

There was an unprecedented number of farm workers migrating into Bushu within the fast track context. However, evidence gathered in this research shows that some former foreign farm workers settled in Bushu communal areas before and soon after independence in 1980. Most moved to Bushu during the liberation war because of the intensity of the war fought by guerrillas, who are now called war veterans. Guerrillas targeted most farms in Shamva, destroying farms and forcing some white farmers and farm workers to vacate the farms.

Guerrilla fighters evicted farm workers from white commercial farms on grounds that they were sell-outs. One of the former migrant farm workers displaced during that time (Nero) pointed out that the targeting of workers on Shamva farms arose because farmers were "housing Malawian white man spy boys" (Interview with Nero, 5 November 2019). Hence, the removal of farm workers from farms was one way of containing Rhodesian security forces and their loyalists. The guerrillas claimed simply that they were getting rid of the 'foreign' spies in the farms. Nero admitted that there were indeed Rhodesian forces' spies among the farm worker community.

However, Nero added that sell-outs were also a reality among the autochthones in the communal areas (then Tribal Trust Lands) in the 1970s. As well, to drive his point even further, some farm workers of foreign origin were actually spying for the guerrilla forces, just as in the case of many autochthones. He therefore reasoned that there was no need for ethnicising spies during the liberation struggle, since spying for whatever fighting force was a personal choice (though perhaps emerging from compulsion). For Nero, both autochthones and allochthones had spy elements within their midst, thus placing all spies under the foreigner label was an attempt to 'otherise' the farm workers.

At the same time, there was significant ambivalence amongst the liberation fighters. Notably, they claimed that they wanted to liberate the farm workers from rampant white exploitation and ill-treatment on the commercial farms. In an interview with Snodia (10 November 2019), another ex-labourer displaced during the war, it was claimed that the guerrillas did indeed liberate them from the colonial white farmers, at least to some extent. She however questioned why their liberators would also burn their belongings and accuse them of being sell-outs, on the grounds of their foreign origin. Thus, like Nero, she believed that the sell-out label was the guerrilla fighters' attempt to

ensure that farm workers particularly those of foreign remained as perpetual strangers in the country.

During the 1970s, most of the displaced farm workers in the Shamva area were placed temporarily in a keep near Kajakata business centre in Bushu before being settled in the communal areas. Keeps were infamous protected villages put under surveillance and designed for counter insurgency during the liberation war, to where a significant proportion of the Tribal Trust Lands population were moved by force in many parts of the Rhodesian countryside. Other farm workers experienced displacement to areas outside Shamva District. Snodia said that she last saw some of her former farm workmates (especially those rumoured to be sell-outs) on the very day of displacement. Some returned to the commercial farms after the war, but others like Nero and Snodia chose to settle permanently in Bushu communal areas. Some of those who permanently settled in Bushu communal areas pursued other livelihoods other than farm labour, while others like Nero continued with farm employment while keeping their communal homes (much like the autochthonous farm workers). Some of those who managed to settle in Bushu communal areas in the 1970s accessed land suitable for subsistence agriculture. Nero highlighted that, back in the 1970s, land was not as scarce as it became from the early 1980s.

This serves to show that Bushu communal areas did not start accommodating displaced (former) farm workers only after the emergence of the FTLRP. However, the displacements took place within different contexts though with some similarities. In particular, the displacements during the 1970s and from the year 2000 both involved involuntary displacements, violence and accusations against the farm workers, particularly those of foreign origin. The two displacements also took place within different contexts in relation to the ongoing presence of white commercial farmland ownership. Although guerrillas occupied some white farms during the war (after the departure of the farmer), most farms simply experienced hit-and-run attacks by guerrilla forces. In the end, white farmers and farm workers stayed on (or returned to) their farms after the war and resumed operations. The fast track though arose from nation-wide farm occupations and most farm workers and farmers left the farms on a permanent basis, i.e. never to return. Further, the war displacements happened when land scarcity in Bushu communal areas was still minimal, while fast track took place within a context of post-colonial land pressure.

Interviews revealed that unlike those displaced by fast track, the farm labourers displaced in the 1970s have managed to forge belonging in the communal areas. There was an insistence on the part of those displaced earlier that they no longer felt like foreigners, as was not the case with their fast track counterparts. They attributed the absence of strangerhood to the number of years spent in Bushu as well as the social relations and mutual trust developed with the autochthones over these years. They emphasised, however, that the first years in Bushu were hostile and interfacing with autochthones was difficult. This might imply that the ex-labourers displaced under fast track may forge a solid sense of belonging in Bushu eventually.

Some farm workers of foreign origin acquired communal land stands in Bushu during the period between 1980 and 2000, under quite different contexts compared to the 1970s and the post-2000 period. Interviews with chief Bushu and ordinary autochthones reveal that in the early 1980s, soon after independence, a number of autochthones sought work in neighbouring commercial farms. In in the main, they stayed in Rhodesian Forces' keeps in Bushu's Chishapa, Jiti and Gono villages during the latter part of the 1970s. As they worked on the farms post-1980, they formed friendships and other social networks including intermarriages with farm workers of foreign origin. These kinship and broader social relations formed with Bushu autochthones on the farms facilitated access by foreign farm workers to Bushu communal stands.

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of Bushu communal areas with a specific focus on issues that define autochthony, allochthone and belonging in Bushu. In doing so, I have identified families that are considered autochthonous to the area as well as their brief histories, including how they forged belonging. These relate to strategies of belonging including intermarriages among autochthones and the Bushu chiefly family and how these have resulted in some of the autochthonous families being installed as village heads. In this chapter, I also discussed land issues in relation to belonging in Bushu, with specific focus on territorial spirits and various cultural practices that define land and belonging in Bushu. The last sections gave an analysis of the historical movement and penetration of farm workers in Bushu, as this helps to capture the specificities of the ex-farm labourers who migrated into Bushu post fast track in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN: FORMER FARM WORKERS OF FOREIGN ORIGIN, FAST TRACK DISPLACEMENTS AND ENTERING INTO BUSHU

7.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the ex-farm labourers' fast track displacement experiences and perspectives, which led to the option of settling in Bushu communal areas post fast track. In doing so, I give an extended narrative of one former farm worker showing how his experience resonates with those of most of my other farm worker interviewees; and, in the process, demonstrating how the displacement experiences might have shaped lived experiences once in Bushu. I also explore and identify the various reasons that prompted the ex-workers to migrate to Bushu in the face of the fast track displacements, as well as the strategies they employed to secure plots in Bushu communal areas – these strategies, as I show, might have implications for fostering belonging in Bushu. Finally, the chapter focuses on the livelihood strategies pursued by the former farm workers since coming to Bushu and shows how, in trying to make a living, the ex-farm labourers have either enhanced or compromised their belonging in Bushu.

7.2 Occupations, Displacements and Moving to Bushu

The land occupations and subsequent fast track programme began in 2000, resulting in the displacement of tens of thousands of farm workers and their families across the country. This is not to suggest that all farm labourers left the commercial farms, as many continue to live on fast track farms under very precarious conditions. In this section, I provide a broad sketch of the occupations, displacements and movements into Bushu communal areas, after which (in section 7.3), I offer a life history of one ex-labourer (James) to illustrate some of the complexities involved, without claiming that James' experiences represent the experiences of all.

Most of my interviewees now living in communal areas left (the once) white commercial farms for Bushu communal area between 2000 and 2002 when fast track was at its peak. A few left between 2002 and 2007, while the number escalated in 2008 as farm takeovers resurfaced around the time of the presidential elections in that year. Some came to Bushu after 2010. By 2020, when I was conducting my fieldwork, some former farm workers of foreign origin were still seeking access to communal land stands, twenty years after the onset of fast track. These included farm

labourers still residing on former white commercial farms (now fast track farms), as well as farm labourers residing on the few remaining white commercial farms in Shamva who feared the likelihood of more occupations in the near future.

Most interviewees indicated that farm occupiers in Shamva began by targeting white commercial farms owned by purported MDC supporters, or those most vocal in their support. They highlighted how white farmers in Shamva had increasingly shown their loyalty to the newly formed MDC, hoping that the MDC could help them secure their farms in the face of ZANU PF's farm takeovers. This political contestation between MDC and ZANU-PF deepened the complexity of the Shamva occupations, and heightened the levels of violence. Most farms in Shamva district experienced some degree of violence during the occupations (Matondi and Decker 2011), leading some farm labourers to flee the farms soon after the occupiers arrived, though returning later. As well, many farm labourers remained on the farms despite the violence, as they had no immediate place to move. In fact, the farmer typically expected them to continue with their agricultural labouring insofar as the occupiers did not inhibit the farmer's operations.

In the case of Shamva, the evidence suggests that the character of particular farm occupations conditioned – but certainly did not determine – the manner in which farm workers vacated the farms and even the possibility of seeking plots in nearby communal areas and doing so successfully. Where there was a high degree of violence and intimidation alongside political accusations made against farm labourers (as supporters of the political opposition), they were reluctant to consider moving into communal lands. This is because a large proportion of the Shamva occupiers came from communal areas in the district (such as Bushu), and labourers dreaded the thought of trying to co-exist with long-established villagers in these areas. For the limited number of farms taken over with minimal violence, and without any significant political accusations, searching for communal land by farm labourers became less intimidating.

Prior to fast track, farm labourers had on occasion sought communal land in Bushu, but this land seeking intensified from the year 2000 as farm workers faced displacement. In this sense, one unintended consequence of fast track was the movement of former farm labourers into communal areas, as fast track facilitated the conditions animating the possibility of this movement. In fact, national and local government authorities at times encouraged the accommodation of former farm workers in communal areas, including through the Shamva District Development Co-ordinator.

On this basis, communal-based land authorities including ward councilors, chiefs and village heads received instructions to avail unoccupied plots to these land seekers.

However, acceptance of farm labourers by these authorities in the communal areas would be a difficult process. Within the context of volatile political contestation, Bushu land (chiefly) authorities intentionally sought to avoid sheltering purported opposition supporters in a territory well-known for its ongoing support of the ruling ZANU PF party. However, in instances where there was minimal violence and accusations during occupations, chiefly authorities were more willing to offer land to these farm labourers, as their presence was less threatening. As well, the individual agency of former farm workers became crucial to the negotiation of entry and access to communal land. As a result, the practical access of communal land for farm workers within the fast track context was not a given. Despite the fact that fast track did not significantly undo the mounting land pressure in communal lands, some former farm workers managed to secure communal land using various strategies.

The Shamva DDC reported that a majority of fast track displaced former farm workers seeking land in Shamva were settled in *Sango raMambo* (meaning the 'Chief's forest') resettlement area under Chief Bushu. During the colonial era, the area was designated as a grazing area for commercial farmers, but was later annexed by the chief after the liberation war of the 1970s. It was then designated as a grazing area for communal area cattle, but was rarely used owing to its remote location. In 2004, it was made available for resettlement (for purposes of homesteads and arable land). As it was virgin land, the area demanded the arduous task of land clearance, which the land settlers (beneficiaries) dreaded. Both autochthonous land seekers and former farm labourers received plots in *Sango raMambo*, from 2004. The chief had arranged for displaced and destitute farm workers to be settled in the area, along with autochthones, to cushion them both from homelessness. I did not conduct my research in *Sango raMambo* because it is a relatively new settlement area. Rather, I turned to more established communal area sites in Bushu (Chishapa, Zhanda, Kajakata and Chakonda), which in fact were hosts to most of the displaced farm workers.

The majority of former farm workers lost their possessions during the violent occupations in Shamva. Most reported that the occupiers burned down their houses together with most of their possessions. Some had their possessions stolen by the occupiers. Hence, for those moving into Bushu, they arrived in extremely troublesome conditions, even completely empty handed in a few

cases. A few, notably those whose farms did not involve violent occupations, were able to migrate into the communal areas with their full possessions. These included blankets, clothes, stereos, kitchen utensils and some furniture that mainly included a bed, chairs and a pushing tray. Some ex-labourers, particularly those who managed to salvage gratuities from their former employers, also had some money. However, part of this money was spent on food before coming to Bushu, or for costs of transporting possessions to Bushu. In certain cases, whatever money remained was of significance for bribing land authorities to access a communal land plot. Any money left over went into building a homestead while, those with no funds at all, turned to building mud-and-grass thatched houses. Over time, the ex-labourers have improved their homesteads, with some building brick and zinc or asbestos roofed houses. However, memories of the early days in Bushu focus on having to re-invent their lives within a pauperised and precarious context.

I now make use of the story of two farm workers (who I call James and Nandipa) to illustrate broadly the farm occupation experience and the movement to Bushu. Though these two stories do not portray in full the complexities of all former farm workers, their cases relate to some of my participants' life histories including around farm occupations and communal area access experiences.

7.2.1 James' Story

Though both of his parents were farm workers from Malawi, James was born in Zimbabwe at a farm in Nyanga in 1969. He grew up at the farm where he received his basic primary school education. There were no other schools at nearby farms and so he could not proceed to secondary school. He worked at the farm as a boy helping his father according to the dictates of domestic government on the farm. He subsequently worked as an unskilled agricultural worker in his own right as a teenager until he was in his twenties. In 1992, he moved to Shamva and found a job at Caladen farm where he met his wife, Celo. Interestingly, Celo was a daughter of a Bushu communal farmer. She used to work at nearby farms including Caladen, performing piece work on a seasonal basis. When Celo became pregnant, they lived together at Caladen. They moved to a farm I call Mfoya in 1996 where James considered work conditions better than at Caladen. Celo became a temporary worker at Mfoya and then a permanent worker in 1997.

James paid initially a small part of the bride price to Celo's parents in accordance with autochthonous Shona customs, and he still contemplates paying the rest of the bride price

especially cattle. His in-laws (wife's parents) expressed concern about the limited bride price paid by James, particularly the absence of cattle as this forms a significant and symbolic part of the Shona bride price. James maintains that his wife's parents do not look down upon him on the grounds of his poverty (or ethnic background), but some of his wife's relatives and neighbours in Bushu did at first and they still do. As James narrates this:

> Yes, at first her parents had issues. They were shocked to learn that I was not from some communal area in Zimbabwe. When we went to pay part of Celo's bride price, the first thing the in-laws asked was where I come from, referring to my rural home. It was difficult. My parents always told me that communal areas are difficult. I never really knew what my parents meant until that day. I learnt it the hard way. So, I told my in-laws that I came from Nyanga. When they heard my full story, one of Celo's patriarchal relatives exclaimed, "So you are from Malawi, and right now you live in the farms? Look we want to know your rural home. Do you even have a totem?". I had to explain to them that it was my parents who came from Malawi. I told them I was born in Nyanga, Zimbabwe. I am Zimbabwean. But up to now, some of them still call me *Munyasarandi* ['One form Nyasaland']. I have learnt to live with it but sometimes it irks me. (Interview with James, 12 October 2019).

Despite the perpetual strangerhood that he encountered from some of his wife's relatives, James managed to consolidate his marriage. The couple had four children together including a disabled third born son. His young children also used to help him with his farm piece work. Although he used to take his family for visits to his in-laws in Bushu communal areas, James never attempted to seek a communal stand for himself, at least until fast track. He pointed out that the reception he received from some of his in-laws when he went to pay for his lobola had deterred him from seeking a communal home. To him, the in-laws' insistence that he came from Malawi (and remained a Malawian) made him believe beyond doubt that the autochthones were very particular about who they wanted living among them. James therefore continued to build his life on and around the commercial farm. The farm was indeed the centre of his world, his place of belonging.

One of the first farms occupied in Shamva was Mfoya. The white farm owner was known locally for his avid support of the opposition MDC, and he encouraged and even forced his workers to join the opposition party. As James explained:

> He had hoped the MDC would save him and his farm. He loved that farm. We hear he had no other businesses even though he had a few nice houses in Harare. So, he wanted Mfoya badly; that's why he had to join MDC. He used to have friends in ZANU PF. Some of them used to visit him at the

> farm. But, their friendship ended when he decided to join the MDC. He also told us that joining the MDC would protect our jobs and homes. I had to join. You know, those white farmers wanted people who listen to them. Some of us had only lived on farms, so we had to listen for us to continue staying there [to remain employed]. But this MDC thing ended up costing the farmer and us as well. We could not win. We lost. But you see other white farmers like Michael [not his real name] are still on their farms because they knew the right party to support then (Interview with James 12 October 2019).

From James' perspective, his former boss's political miscalculation cost him his farm. It made him one of the main targets of the war veterans and ruling ZANU PF party supporters who led occupations in Shamva commercial farms. His political manoeuvres also ended up costing his workers their employment (and livelihoods). The farmer compelled James and other farm labourers to join the opposition in line with the expectations placed upon labourers under domestic government. James had no choice but to abide by the demands of the farmer, including acquiring a MDC membership card and attending MDC meetings and rallies with the farmer providing transport. Like most farm workers, he did not hold any party leadership position. However, his mere association with the opposition made him reluctant to migrate to Bushu communal areas. He reasoned that he would once again face ZANU PF persecution in the communal areas, particularly given that it was known widely that, in Bushu communal areas, partisan political clashes were taking place during this period.

When the occupiers arrived at Mfoya farm, in April 2000, a few of the farm workers had already left the farm swiftly after receiving impending violent occupation tip-offs through informal social networks. However, James and other labourers either had ignored or were unaware of the impending-occupation rumours. In the case of James, he knew about the occupation intentions from one of the part-time labourers and friend (who I call Jesphat) who came from (and resided in) Bushu communal areas. James still suspects that Jesphat was one of the insiders who connived with the occupiers around the occupation of Mfoya. As James pointed out:

> It's because he [Jesphat] had all the details. He told me about the exact time they were coming including the names of the leading occupiers. He laughed and said, "I have always offered to help you secure your own [communal] stand and you refused. Now your hours at Mfoya are numbered. Where will you go?" Where else would he have learnt about the occupation if he was not part of the [occupying] team? (Interview with James 12 October 2019).

When the occupiers arrived, some of the farm workers were caught off-guard, while others were well-informed if not occupiers' accomplices themselves. It is however worth noting that several farms had been occupied already in the district before Mfoya. Thus, to some extent, farm workers and the farmers (including those at Mfoya) knew that occupations would come their way. It was just a matter of time, of waiting for the inevitable.

As was the case with most Shamva farms, the Mfoya occupation took a violent twist. As James narrated, farm workers were beaten including the farm manager. The occupiers arrived during the farmers' absence. He had reportedly travelled to Bindura town (the provincial capital located about 35 kilometres from Shamva town) together with his wife. He did not return to the farm that afternoon. However, his old and frail mother was at the farm when more than 100 occupiers broke into the farmer's compound (which was located roughly one kilometre away from the workers compound) later that evening. The spirited occupiers chanted liberation war songs and party slogans. Most farm workers went into a panic mode. In James' words;

> We heard them shouting and singing just metres from the farmer's house. A majority of them arrived in a packed lorry. They were singing war songs and shouting [ZANU- PF] party slogans. That is when we noticed that not all was well. There was panic. People started to run in all directions. Men were looking for their wives. The wives were looking for their children. Everyone just wanted to run away. Others just picked up whatever they could salvage from their houses. Everything happened so fast. They [occupiers] shouted the farm owner's name. They said, "come out together with your Blantyers [Malawian]. You will now go to Tsvangirai [the then opposition MDC leader] or to Britain". Before we knew it, the whole place was set on fire. It was something else (Interview with James 12 October 2019).

The occupiers set the farm workers' compound on fire after confiscating some of the workers' possessions. This was despite the fact that Mfoya farm workers did not attempt to resist the farm occupation as in the case of other farms. James pointed out that the terrible fate of some workers, who had been overpowered elsewhere (i.e. on nearby farms), was enough to deter resistance at Mfoya.

The occupiers beat the farm workers as well as the farm manager and the farmer's mother. They stated that they were beating the farm workers in order to "remove demonic British spirits bestowed on them by the British white farmer and their puppet MDC party" (interview with James,

12 October 2019). James could recognise only some of the occupiers, including local war veterans which his friend Jesphat had already told him about prior to the occupation. Some were villagers from the Bushu communal areas including two of Celo's relatives. He pointed out that Celo was unaware that some of her relatives were on a mission to occupy the farm.

The farmer returned the following day and tried to negotiate with the occupiers. The occupiers released his mother after these negotiations. He left for Harare that very day after being ordered to pack all his belongings in a small van. The van could only carry a few possessions. Later, he was granted just three days to take all his belongings and leave for good, on condition that he gives his workers their end-of-employment gratuities. In the meantime, as was the case with most Shamva occupations, some of his grains, machinery and animals were taken or destroyed by the occupiers. While on the farm, the occupiers slaughtered some of the farmer's cattle as food for the two weeks that they camped on Mfoya. They also killed his dogs "because they were accused of protecting the farmer. They [occupiers] said the dogs' death were their punishment for protecting an imperialist" (Interview with James, 12 October 2019). When he came back to the farm to collect his belongings, some of his workers demanded the gratuity that the government had ordered the farmers to compensate their workers. James and his wife managed to get theirs. He does not remember the exact amount that he received, but it was less than what the government had stipulated. The farmer indicated that he was not in a position to give the workers the stipulated amount due. He attributed the shortage of funds to the short notice coupled with the exorbitant stipulated amount.

Some farm workers who had elsewhere to go, particularly those of Zimbabwean origin, left the farm forever from the very first day of the occupations. Those who had nowhere to seek refuge, notably those of foreign origin, remained on the farm and were forced to join the occupying force against the farmer. Others who had fled the farm returned days later hoping to forge new relations with the new occupiers. James managed to escort his wife and children off the farm on the first day. They salvaged a few kitchen utensils, his stereo and some clothes before their house was set on fire. James told his wife to go to her parents' homestead in Bushu communal lands, which was located 50 kilometres from Mfoya. She had to walk on foot together with her children. James stayed on because he wanted to make sure that he received his gratuity, together with that of his

wife. He also needed to ascertain if the farmer was indeed leaving Mfoya, before he too would leave. James reports that a part of him wanted to stay with the farmer. As he narrated:

> Yes, we might have had differences with him [the farmer]. But he was better than my first employer here in Shamva. Reminiscing about my childhood and life at the Nyanga farm where I grew up, I can say for certain that my Mfoya boss was the best. So, you see, though things were hard, a part of me really felt for him. Somehow I just felt the urge to protect him. But it was difficult. Unlike in most farms, at Mfoya we never fought the occupiers. We were too afraid. We didn't even attempt to do so (Interview with James 12 October 2019).

After two weeks of camping at Mfoya, some occupiers proceeded to occupy nearby farms while others remained on the farm claiming that they were the new owners. They then told the farm workers to go back to their countries or origin or remain on the farm. Those who wished to remain on the farm were to do so on condition that they provided labour for the new black farm owners. However, the original occupiers were later on forcibly evicted by the police. This paved the way for a government official to take over the farm, who still occupies the farm under the A2 fast track scheme. The eviction of the original occupants by ruling party and government chefs ('big men') occurred frequently across the Zimbabwean countryside.

After spending days on the farm (now occupied by the occupiers after the farmer had left), James reports that he felt there was nothing else left for him at the farm. Before leaving Mfoya, James resolved that, if the farmer was to return ever to Mfoya, he would rejoin him. However, left with no other option in the short-term, James followed his wife and children to Bushu. He stayed with his in-laws for two years, which James reports was one of the most difficult times of his life. He indicates that he did not feel at ease or comfortable living with his father-in-law. In his words:

> You see, as a son-in-law, you can never feel free in a father-in law's house. You will always feel inferior. I remember one of Celo's brothers asking her if she regarded herself as the only child by staying with her parents, when all of her siblings were living at their own stands. That's when I realised that it was eating her up too. We had to move out. However, our efforts of finding a [communal] stand kept hitting dead ends. But, we kept trying. (Interview with James 12 October 2019).

James' father-in-law later on negotiated for a stand with the village head on his behalf. It was in 2002 that James finally secured a two-hectare plot in Bushu communal area, two years after leaving

Bushu. James' case is similar to most of my interviewees in that securing a communal stand took time. Only a few ex-farm labourers managed to secure communal stands only months after leaving the farms. For most farm workers, securing a stand took at least one year. For two ex-labourers, it took 10 years to secure finally a communal stand in Bushu.

7.2.2 Nandipa's Story

Nandipa was born in 1976 in Manica province of Mozambique where she also grew up. She left her country of birth as a teenager in 1991 during the height of the Mozambican civil war, after losing both parents and a brother in the civil war. She ran away from the war together with her older sister and crossed into Zimbabwe as refugees. Thus, unlike the majority of farm workers of foreign origin, who had been living in the country for years and across generations by the onset of fast track, Nandipa presents a somehow peculiar twist.

Upon entering Zimbabwe together with a group of Mozambican refugees, Nandipa worked as a young farm worker near the eastern border city of Mutare. In 1997, she married a young man of Mozambican origin, with whom she had in fact crossed the border in 1991. In 1998, two years before fast track, the couple moved to a Shamva farm after their farm employer secured a joint farming venture in Shamva. After a disagreement with one of the Shamva farmers, the couple lost their jobs. Nandipa's husband later secured another full-time farm job at a nearby black-owned commercial farm. The farm belonged to a local autochthone whose lineage claimed chieftaincy in the area.

When fast track came, the farm owner voluntarily gave his farm for resettlement under the A1 model, claiming redistribution on autochthonous grounds. He reasoned that his farm's resettlement exercise was a road towards reestablishing and confirming his family's local chieftaincy. The farm owner then invited land seekers to occupy his farm as villagers, as well as offering land to his farm workers as part of the beneficiaries. The farm's fast track experience offers a different twist again to Shamva fast track occupations, which took a predominantly violent style. This can be explained by the race and political connectedness of the owner. Unlike the predominantly white Shamva commercial farmers, he was black and an active ZANU-PF member who encouraged occupation of his farm.

When the call for resettlement plots at the farm took place, Nandipa's husband managed to secure a plot. However, his plot and those of other former farm workers were small compared to those

received by beneficiaries who were considered autochthones. For two years, Nandipa and her husband (and now two children) stayed on the farm amid growing tensions. These tensions were ostensibly fueled by the autochthonous beneficiaries who felt that farm workers (particularly those of foreign origin) did not deserve to benefit from the resettlement programme.

Nandipa lost her husband in death in 2003, after securing their plot at the farm. More and more land seekers, notably from Shamva and Bindura, continued to pile on pressure for land on the farm. Zimbabwean by descent beneficiaries demanded that former farm workers (again, particularly those of foreign origin) vacate their plots to pave way for Zimbabwean by descent land seekers. As land scarcity tensions between former farm workers and Zimbabwean by origin resettlement beneficiaries at the farm escalated, Nandipa felt an increasing need to vacate the farm despite having no alternative place to live. It was when her son felt sick under suspected witchcraft circumstances that she finally had the courage to leave the farm. In her words:

> Life at the farm was becoming difficult every day. Those who came [Zimbabwe by descent beneficiaries] would blame us former farm workers for everything bad that happened at the farm. If fire broke out it was us, if anything went missing it was us who stole … They even blamed us for the 2002 drought. But was it our fault? No. They are the ones who would call us names. A lot of them approached me and they would say I have a relative or friend who wants the land you were given. You have to leave. So, when my son developed a problem with his legs I knew it was because of them: the witches who wanted my plot. My prophet from my church confirmed it. He said I had to leave or risk losing my son. The choice was easy. I had to protect my son. After losing their father, my children became the centre of my world. That's how I ended up looking for land in Bushu. (Interview with Nandipa 15 February 2020).

As a young widow, Nandipa opined that her precarity made her vulnerable to men who wanted to capitalise on her destitution. She reasoned that, instead of considering herself a victim, she could also take advantage of her situation. As she narrated:

> I realised that a lot of men knew that I was vulnerable. You know how these men think. So, some of them knew that I was being pressured to leave yet I had nowhere to go. That's when this man came and offered to find a stand for me here in Bushu. He said that if I accepted his help, I would become his second wife. I accepted. I didn't want to stay at the farm, neither did I want to go back to Mozambique. There is nothing for me there. Only sad memories. So, this man helped looked for a place for me but I also paid some money for the stand. I would not have secured the stand had I

> looked for it on my own. I didn't want him to take advantage of me by claiming that he bought the stand for me. So that's how I ended up in this village (Interview with Nandipa 15 February 2020).

Nandipa only managed to secure a residential stand in Bushu (in 2007) and up to now she does not have an agricultural plot. After settling in the village, she jilted the man who had helped her secure a stand, because she felt she had achieved her goal of securing a stand. The man then tried to force her off the stand but that did not materialise, as some villagers and the headman stood for her. Nandipa felt she did not want to be a second wife. She also reasoned that if fellow villagers knew that she took someone's husband, she would never have peace particularly from other women. She believed as well that her children might be uncomfortable with a stepfather around. Nandipa finally managed to register the stand in her older son's name. She however stated that life has been difficult since moving to Bushu, with livelihood strategies being quite limited for her and her children. Her case remains unique compared to most of my female respondents, who typically had to secure stands through their husbands. Intriguingly, Nandipa informed me that most widows shunned the communal areas opting to stay on the farms or move to resettlement areas, citing "*communal politics*" as the main problem (Interview with Nandipa 15 February 2020).

7.3 Why We Came Here

This section discusses the reasons why former farm workers of foreign origin migrated to Bushu communal areas in the context of fast track. As the case of James shows, some farm workers initially had reservations about moving into communal areas. James for instance believed that he would not fit into the communal areas because of his ethnic origin, and his Malawian parents had even warned him about the possibility of being regarded as a stranger. This is despite his marriage to a local communal area woman. At the same time, scholars like Rutherford (2001) highlight that some foreign farm workers yearned for a *musha* (communal home), or a place they could call their own, before fast track, but they failed to do so successfully for various reasons. Understanding why, subsequent to fast track, certain former farm workers of foreign origin opted for ethnicised communal areas – and not for urban or other rural sites – thus becomes the focus of this section.

7.3.1 'We Had Nowhere Else To Go'

Some farm workers reported that communal areas were their only option after being chased away from the farms. They believed that all other options, including peri-urban squatter camps, old resettlement areas (from the 1980s) and remaining on the farms, simply were not viable in terms

of re-establishing themselves in terms of pursuing livelihoods. Some pointed out that they were just too old and exhausted to remain on (the now) fast track farms, particularly considering that this would require establishing new relations with the occupiers. The fact that the occupiers (or emerging A1 farmers in many cases) demanded that ongoing residence on the farm was conditional on labouring for them exacerbated this option.

Migrating to urban areas as well as peri-urban squatter camps proved difficult for those without social capital or networks, in particular kinship relations. Kith and kin often assisted as points of entry into urban spaces as they could provide temporary shelter and other necessary social safety nets for the displaced farm workers and their families. As a result, displaced farm workers without relatives (and friends) in urban spaces found it difficult to navigate in and through the urban landscape. Starting a new life in the city was also problematic because the former farm labourers had lived a rural existence most if not all of their lives, and they were unfamiliar with urban livelihood strategies. The monetarised character of the city and the daily expenses this entailed (such as rent and food) were beyond their means, given their vulnerable and indeed precarious financial status on leaving the farms. They also knew of autochthones who left the cities – either for reasons of unemployment or for retirement purposes.

In the case of the communal areas, villagers do not pay rentals. Though an illegal vernacular land market tends to exist, access to communal land officially occurs outside of the domain of the market. Further, shelter potentially is free, if built with materials available from the land. In addition, the former farm labourers spoke about the possibility of growing their own foodstuffs, such as the staple crop (maize) even if on a subsistence basis only. Though inferior in terms of fertility and productivity compared to former commercial farms, it is known locally that Bushu communal area has the capacity to yield a sufficient maize crop at least when adequate rain falls (James 2015, Sukume n.d.). Communal areas certainly seemed the place where they could retire gracefully.

For many farm labourers, returning to their countries of origin was not an option, an issue documented previously in the case of foreign workers in Zimbabwe (Chadya and Mayavo 2000). In the case of Shamva, first generation migrants explained that they had lost complete contact with their relatives in their countries of origin. Peter and Augusto were born in Malawi and Mozambique respectively. They both came to Zimbabwe as young bachelors, married and established their

families and lives in Zimbabwe. Augusto, for instance, pointed out that he arrived in (then) Southern Rhodesia in 1961 and only visited Mozambique twice in the 1960s. Since then and up to the time of the interview (September 2019), he had never returned to Mozambique. Despite having fond childhood memories of Mozambique, his life centred on Caladen and Painona farms where he has spent his entire adult life. His late wife of Malawian origin (who he met at Caladen farm) and two of his children were buried in Zimbabwe, and all of his surviving children live and work in Zimbabwe. He therefore considers himself as a Zimbabwean, not a Mozambican. As such, he argued that he would not return to Mozambique since, in his own words, "there is nothing much about me there" (Interview with Augusto 18 September 2019).

Most second and third generation interviewees highlighted that, though they were born of foreign parents, they had never visited their parents' countries. They were born and bred on the farms. For example, Martha, Jasphet and James were all born of Malawian parents, yet they had never set one foot in Malawi. All second and third generation ex-farmers had no contact with relatives outside of Zimbabwe. They also considered themselves as Zimbabweans, like the first generation. However, compared to the first generation, estrangement from their countries of origin was more intense, and they argued that they would experience less strangehood in Bushu communal area compared to these countries. They conceptualised the forging of relations and a sense of belonging in Bushu as, relatively speaking only, unproblematic.

Though some interviewees indicated that they would be willing to farm under fast track, their failure to secure A1 resettlement plots forced them to opt for communal areas. The Zimbabwean state intimated a willingness to avail A1 plots to ex farm labourers. However, for the Shamva ex-workers, this appeared as rhetorical, with corruption and their overt marginalisation (owing to their foreign origins status and farm worker label) made it difficult to secure plots. Those who remained on A1 farms (and received plots) ended up in disputed and contested areas such as grazing lands. This was the case with a fast track farm near Bushu communal area. Known as New Line, this small resettlement farm housed former farm workers whose plots were located away from the autochthonous A1 beneficiaries. Conditional and precarious belonging was evident in this case, as the former farm workers faced constant threats to vacate the farms if they refused to work for the new occupiers. Former farm workers interviewed at New Line also highlighted that they were constantly considering communal areas as an option, as the perpetual threats became increasingly

unbearable. Thus, the hostile environment in the resettlement areas continued to force some former farm workers to consider communal areas as their last option.

7.3.2 'Our Very Own Are Cruel to Us'

The constant threats and intimidation from the new black farm occupiers (soon transformed into A1 farmers) led the majority of ex farm labourers to conclude that the new settlers were unkind and cruel. Most of them reported that people of their own colour turned out to be crueler than white farmers. They used the term *abiyedu* (meaning 'one of our own') to describe how they felt betrayed and discriminated against by those they considered as their own. At the same time, the newcomers used derogatory terms for them, which configured and maintained social distances between the two groups, particularly during the farm occupations. As Jesphat recounted:

> When they arrived, they shouted "*mabwidi*" [black foreigners], and that all whites should vacate unless they want to work for us [the occupiers]. [They said:] "These *mabwidi* are sell outs. They are lying saying they don't have anywhere to go. Everyone has a home – they should go back to their homes or else they work here [for us]; after all, that's what they came here for." (Interview with Jesphat, 20 September 2019).

Therefore, interviewees reasoned that, instead of showing affection and mutual belonging as black people, the new land occupiers-cum-settlers had proven to be distant and unsympathetic towards their fellow Africans. In their accounts, they described how the fast track occupiers ill-treated and violently chased them away from the farms. Some spoke about how they were beaten at the height of the invasions (occupations), while others reported that they lost friends and family members in death during that dreadful time. One ex-worker stressed the loss of all belongings including clothes, food and shelter when a farm compound was set ablaze in an invasion inferno. In his words:

> There was nothing there. They destroyed everything that I had. I was called by my son at the river, where I was taking a bath. I then heard the singing and chanting. Upon arriving, I found everything on fire. In broad daylight. My hut was burnt and in it was everything I called mine – clothes, food, shoes, even money; virtually everything was gutted down. I was only left with the clothes I was wearing, a piece of soap and a mutton cloth that I used as a towel. That was utter cruelty from our brothers. They were just possessed (Interview with Akim, 19 September 2019).

Thus, cruelty on the part of the autochthones reinforced a social boundary between the former farm workers and the autochthones on the farms. Farm workers of foreign origin continued to occupy the position of the social-cultural 'other', despite existing within the same racial category. National differences, with a pronounced ethnic dimension, consolidated this social divide. A transformation of social boundaries into physical boundaries (and distancing) took place, as the purported foreigners chose to settle in the communal areas away from the hostile environment that prevailed on the farms. The ex-labourers reasoned that accessing communal life might be less troublesome than remaining confined to the overt exclusionary atmosphere at the farms. They no longer retained a sense of identity with the farm, as the village (worker) compound and the white farmer, in together providing at least a conditional belonging, were no longer present. They needed to establish belonging elsewhere and, for some, communal areas represented the best alternative. This was the case even though the occupiers themselves most likely came from nearby communal areas such as Bushu.

7.3.3 Communal Areas as a Temporary Waiting Place

Some ex-workers indicated that initially communal areas were merely their temporary waiting place as they anticipated the return of their former white employers in the near future. These former farm workers reasoned that the government would soon chase away the occupiers (and later, new farmers), and then allow for the return of the white commercial farmers. For instance, white farmers often assured their workers that the early occupations were a temporal political ploy instigated by the ruling party, and the occupations would end after the upcoming parliamentary elections in June 2000 and even be reversed. From this perspective – and thus in the minds of many ex-workers – the ruling ZANU-PF party was simply seeking to solicit support and votes from their traditional support base (communal area villagers and the liberation war veterans) in the face of the rise of the MDC. Even later, with the implementation of fast track, remaining white farmers gave their workers a similar assurance.

As a result, the ex-labourers did not want to seek shelter far away from the farms, fearing loss of their jobs in the event of the anticipated immediate return of their former employers (or their current farmer-employer being allowed to farm productively once again). This explains why some former farm workers decided to settle in communal areas (such as Chakonda and Bushu villages) located near the commercial farms. Thus, at first, such farm workers did not consider themselves as permanent fixtures in communal areas (as potential autochthones in the making) but as mere

sojourners who would return to their place of belonging (the farm). Because of this, when former farm workers like Augusto arrived in Bushu, they did not build permanent houses. Instead, they built plastic and mud thatched temporary huts much like those found in squatter camps.

Only after they came to realise that the FTLRP was not subject to reversal did they decide to settle permanently in the communal areas. Augusto, for instance, reported that he had to convince himself that communal areas were his fate. His employer simply was not coming back anymore and he had to get used to the communal way of life. In his words:

> I ran away from Caledon farm in 2001. It was difficult then. Some of our colleagues were being beaten. We faced all sorts of ill-treatment from our new brothers and sisters [occupiers-cum-farmers]. As this was happening, other people informed us that it was just a phase, that there were things that the government wanted to correct. Painona [the last white commercial farm owner] would come back soon. So, we decided to wait for him in Bushu. But that never happened. And here we are. We had to stay as long as we behave. These people will let us stay and they did. (Interview with Augusto 21 September 2019).

Augusto's account shows that some 'foreigners' migrated into communal areas without any intention of forging a belonging with the land including its inhabitants. Communal areas were sought as a temporary site of refuge (as a place of waiting) but they ended up becoming permanent homes for the former sojourners by force of circumstances. After realising that white commercial farmers might never come back, the former farm workers decided to settle on a permanent basis in Bushu communal areas.

7.3.4 Quest for Autonomy

Most of the ex-workers were quick to point out that they detested the overt control and conditional belonging that came with the new farming settlers after the FTLRP. Of course, conditional belonging whereby farm workers are allowed to stay and work on farms provided they offer labour to the farmer is nothing new for these ex-labourers. As discussed at length earlier, conditional belonging characterised labour relations between farm workers and white farmers since the colonial establishment of settler agriculture. However, the former farm workers reported that the new fast track black farmers were 'too' controlling. They bemoaned how the new farmers would expect them to attend to their fields whenever they wanted.

The constant (on-call) demands by the new farmers for the workers' labour resultantly robbed them of time to engage in off-farm sources of income which they now wanted to venture into following the departure of the white farmers. These activities included buying and selling goods as well as gold panning. However, some former farm workers noted that new farmers (who depended on rain-fed farming) would give them leeway to engage in other income-generating activities during the dry season, since the farmers lacked the capacity to irrigate their agricultural plots. Nonetheless, the ex-labourers indicated that they also wanted to attend to their own plots even during the rainy season. Some simply pointed out that they did not want to work for the new occupiers chiefly because of the majority of new A1 farmers' incapacity to pay them.

The former farm workers reasoned that self-peasantisation in the communal areas would grant them autonomy from the new fast track settlers. Again, this is not an unprecedented move, as discussed earlier. Autochthonous Africans also opted for self-peasantisation, by moving into arid communal areas in protest against white control in European Crown Land during the colonial era in Zimbabwe (Mafukidze 2017). Thus, within this same mindset, former farm workers of foreign origin decided to migrate into communal areas as a quest for autonomy from the over-controlling (and at times abusive) fast track farmers who allegedly wanted to manipulate the presence and working-time of the ex-workers on their farms. Former farm workers who settled in the communal areas after the FTLRP claimed that they now experience freedom to choose what to do with their time and labour without anyone dictating to them. As one former farm worker reported:

> I now wake up whenever I feel like. This is different from the life at the farm, even when white people were still around. Our own brothers with which we share the same skin wanted to continue with this [white farmer] system. They wanted to keep us at the farm provided that we worked in their fields. They were worse because they did not want to pay us. We would get hungry. Whites were better because at least they could feed us. But not with these new ones. All they wanted was to use us for nothing. Threats came every day and night. I had to break free. At least here I wake up at my home when I want to. I am my own boss. Now I can pan for gold, go fishing… I mean anything I want even during the rainy season. This would not have happened at the farm with those people. I would not be this free (Interview with Augusto, 20 September 2019).

Thus, the new form of conditional belonging at the fast track farms was a significant push factor compelling the former farm workers off the farms, in search for freedom in the communal areas. On the farms, the interviewees felt unwanted and excluded, and they developed a view of

themselves as strangers on the fast track farms, despite the fact that some had lived and worked on the same farm for years before the new occupiers came in early 2000. Although residing on the farms for lengthy periods, the new farmers did not accept them as part of those who truly belonged. Admittedly, before the FTLRP, white farmers were 'the self' while the workers were 'the subject other', and hence the latter saw themselves as outsiders on the inside of white farmers' space. Nevertheless, the fast track farm-based arrangements were even more alienating. The new land occupiers quickly asserted themselves as the 'rightful owners' of the farm and, in the process, further estranged farm workers from the only place they knew. They therefore opted for a new land-based social space (i.e. communal areas) with which to forge belonging on a more autonomous basis.

7.3.5 'We had always wanted a Communal Home'

Some former farm workers of foreign origin stressed that acquiring a communal home is something for which they had always aspired. However, accessing a communal residential homestead or *'musha'* was never easy. Rutherford (2001) likewise discussed how farm workers longed to acquire a residential stand in the communal areas with very limited success. Thus, to most farm workers of foreign origin, the FTLRP and subsequent loss of formal employment came as a blessing in disguise, as some of them were given an unprecedented opportunity to settle in Bushu communal areas.

Interviewees reported that a communal stand provided them with an opportunity to have a home of their own and a place for belonging. Though realising this required meeting certain expectations (as discussed later), life was now different from farm life – at which a home was provided only on a conditional basis. As one former farm labourer put it:

> I could not believe that I finally had my home. Mine? A place where I can be a man, a *samusha* [i.e. home owner], where I can grow my own crops and keep animals. This home I can leave for my children and their children's children. It is a legacy that I will leave for my children and our generations to come. Now when I am asked where I come from I can tell them I come from Rena village. Right now, when asked wherever they go, my children also tell people that they come from Rena not Chipori farm. (Interview with Jasphet, 20 September 2019)

Jasphet's words, just like those of other ex-workers, showed that despite the negative effects of displacement, the FTLRP provided many former farm workers with an opportunity to possess a

home. Additionally, this homestead could be transferred to their descendants, as is usually the case with communal land. A communal home potentially fostered belonging between the former foreigners and the land they now called home. They considered themselves as part of the autochthones who have the privilege to call a communal area their home (irrespective of their place of origin). They no longer viewed themselves as temporary sojourners who were in the habit of moving from farm to farm, often with no fixed abode. A communal home gave them a permanent home and a landscape of belonging, in large part erasing their past status as foreigners.

7.4 Navigating Communal Space

This section examines how former farm workers sought to access and secure communal land stands, including in relation to the land possession and livelihood constraints they faced in the communal areas following FTLRP displacements. Accessing communal land, and being accepted hopefully as just another communal area villager, was not a straightforward process, as a range of tactical navigations and practical complexities often arose.

7.4.1 Social Networks

Most ex-labourers managed to secure communal land through their various networks formed with kith and kin who already resided in Bushu. Former farm workers of foreign origin had long established friendships with autochthones and they helped as well in securing communal land. Those who used to work on farms located near the Bushu communal areas had constant interactions with the autochthonous villagers before the occupations. As noted previously, many Bushu communal villagers worked on white-owned Shamva farms particularly in the post-independence era. While some autochthones became permanent employees on the farms, the majority of them remained as seasonal workers. Most farm workers indicated that they had cordial relations with the local villagers with whom they worked. The farm-based interactions resulted over time in the formation of various associations including friendships and intermarriages between the two groups.

Besides villagers working on the farms, the farm workers had other forms of contacts with communal villages and villagers, including off-farm interactions. For instance, farm workers would attend funerals in the villages and the villagers would likewise attend farm funerals. They would drink together in farm and village beerhalls. They attended church together, notably the Salvation Army Church in Kajakata Village which was adjacent to a number of commercial farms.

The exchange of goods and gifts would take place as well at times. Farm workers sometimes gave the villagers groceries (such as salt, sugar, dried kapenta and maize) that they received from the white farmers. In turn, local villagers would give farm workers groundnuts and roundnuts, which Shamva's commercial farms did not grow. Such interactions and exchanges turned into conducive permanent friendships. As a result, farm workers who had such long-established friendships with the autochthones found it easier to settle in communal lands when the fast track displacements occurred. As one interviewee narrated:

> I had always enjoyed good relations with the villagers especially those we worked with. Some of them especially my friends Derek and Gidza had always encouraged me to find a plot in their villages but I kept procrastinating. I guess I was content with the farms. But when *jambanja* [the occupations] came, I realised I had to move. I quickly looked for Derek and Gidza. I told them I was finished [at the farm]. They ran around and Gidza was the first to find something for me [in Bushu]. I wished I had done this earlier. But my friends really assisted. I thank them even up to date. (Interview with Akim, 19 September 2019)

Other interactions developed into intermarriages between workers and villagers. Those female workers who married autochthonous husbands were guaranteed communal homes over an extended period, since sons received communal stands through their fathers. Male workers who married autochthonous wives would also gain access to a homestead in Bushu, though this was more difficult because of the patriarchal nature of Bushu. As discussed earlier, the Shona patriarchal system recognises sons as the inheritors of property particularly land. However, intermarriages established prior to fast track ensured that some former workers of foreign origin had relatives already residing in Bushu. Some of them had sons, daughters, sisters or brothers married to villagers in Bushu and other surrounding communal areas. Typically, these kin liaised with traditional authorities to secure communal land for them.

Ndebvu, for instance, stated that he secured land through his son-in-law. His daughter married a local boy from Bushu and his son-in-law introduced him to a village head, who helped him to secure a communal stand in 2005 when Chipori farm (where he had worked and lived since arriving in from Mozambique in 1942) was taken over by the government. Augusto also got help from his son's in-laws to settle in a Bushu village in 2003, leaving Caledon farm in the process. Caleb, whose father originated from Malawi, secured land in Zhanda village through his wife's uncle. His wife was born of a Mozambican father and a Zimbabwean mother. His wife's uncle

liaised with village head in Zhanda to secure a stand for him. James secured a communal stand in 2003 through his father-in-law. Most cases show that autochthonous relatives, arising through intermarriages with autochthones, were very instrumental for the farm workers of foreign origin in securing communal land.

7.4.2 Vernacular Land Markets

As Chimhowu and Woodhouse (2008) indicate that 'vernacular land markets', which involve illicit and undocumented communal land transfers are thriving in Zimbabwe's communal lands. This research shows that Shamva communal lands are not an exception, as villagers and village heads are actively participating in communal land sales in Bushu. Most former farm workers reported that they 'purchased' communal residential stand for a fee between USD250 and USD300. The money was paid directly to the village head who in some cases shared the proceeds with the autochthonous stand owners. However, in cases of unclaimed land and grazing land, all the proceeds usually went to the village head. This occurred despite the fact that, officially, it is illegal to buy and sell communal land.

The District Development Coordinator's office was aware of the illicit land dealings in Bushu. During an interview, the DDC bemoaned the 'one-man band' communal land sales that were taking place in Shamva communal areas (Interview with the Shamva DDC, 19 September 2019). The 'one man' referred to the village heads, the traditional custodians of communal land who were abusing their power and authority by selling state land and pocketing the proceeds for their own use. Some former farm workers, however, indicated that they did not pay the village heads. Augusto, for instance, said that he left the commercial farm a pauper and it was obvious to the village head that he could not afford the required amount. As a result, the village head did not ask for money from him. As such, he ended up being allocated and settling on a rocky stand, unsuitable for farming. Augusto complained that those who managed to purchase land were given better stands. Nevertheless, Augusto still 'paid' the village head through performing free manual labour for the head. He would plough and weed the village head's fields as a token of appreciation.

The DDC stated that his office had been summoning village heads involved in land dealings. Such cases were typically unearthed when autochthones returned to their communal plots years after leaving for elsewhere, particularly the A1 farms. Upon return, they find out that their plots had been sold and parceled out to landseekers, without their knowledge let alone consent. Contestations

usually through the headmen and the chief's court would then reveal that the landseekers (for instance, an ex-worker) had secured the plot through the vernacular land market. To that effect, some village heads had been warned to discontinue this practice, and others were facing 'disciplinary' action for illicit land sales. Those found guilty lost their headmenship post.

Besides village heads selling land, villagers were also active accomplices. Villagers who had idle 'family' land or those who planned to move elsewhere would avail land to the seekers. Sometimes they would sell the land together with the village head and they would share the proceeds. At other times, villagers would enter into secret deals with the land seekers and they would claim, if questioned by others, that they only got compensation for farm developments, which included houses, cattle pens and fowl runs. In essence, though, the villagers would be selling the land. Upon agreement with the land seekers, the villagers would then handover the 'newcomer' to the village head. Some ex-workers claimed that village heads might expect them to pay a token in the form of a goat. If the village head accepted the goat, it would also symbolise the newcomer's official acceptance into the village. As well, the goat would serve as an approval that the newcomer and his family were free to be buried in Bushu. It would therefore be understood consensually as a symbol of belonging to the land. Some former farm workers thus claimed that failure to offer the goat would result in members of their family not being buried in Bushu. However, during my research, there were no clear incidences of denials of burial for failing to pay the goat. In fact, the village heads confessed ignorance about the goat token, perhaps because of its illegal status.

Autochthonous villager land sales to former farm workers sometimes resulted in future land disputes in Bushu. As indicated, the DDC revealed that his office was handling cases involving villagers who had sold stands to outsiders only to later come back to claim them. The outsiders included Zimbabwean by descent communal land seekers and those of foreign origin including the former farm workers. Apparently, villagers hurriedly sold communal stands in anticipation that they would never return to Bushu. This usually pertained to those who benefitted from the FTLRP and decided, for whatever reason, to leave the farm later. The autochthones would return to the villages (years later), reclaiming their land while confessing complete ignorance of the land sale. Such cases often left the newcomers in a state of destitution, as land authorities (in the form of the DDC's office or traditional leaders) would rule invariably in favour of the autochthones.

As such, autochthones would repossess their land and recommend that the newcomers be settled elsewhere on communal lands. The DDC, however, indicated that this solution might not be sustainable and effective in the long run, considering in particular the increasing communal land demands in Bushu. Because of this, some ex-labourers residing in Bushu felt insecure fearing that autochthones might one-day return to claim their land. Tenure security and belonging therefore remained elusive to some villagers of foreign origin. Though they expressed elation from the idea of finally securing communal land stands, some interviewees noted that their celebrations were clouded with caution and tentativeness. Fear of some autochthone coming back to reclaim their plot was an inconvenient reality. As Caleb noted:

> Yes, sometimes you celebrate. You feel like you have finally arrived where you have always wanted. But when you hear about the sad stories about some of us losing their homes, you can't shrug off the feeling that you might be next. Yes, the cases are few but it's one of those worrying things about being here. Yes, I have been here for a long time now, more than ten years. But you never know. These people [the autochthones] can do what they want with you. We will see. We just pray. (Interview with Caleb, 22 September 2019).

As discussed earlier, most communal residents have both residential and agricultural plots while grazing lands are shared collectively. My study revealed that, in most cases where vernacular markets exist, communal land seekers including the former farm workers were often offered a residential stand only. They did not receive agricultural plots. The DDC highlighted that, if a person is allocated a previously occupied communal residential stand, that person is supposed to get the former occupant's agricultural plot as well. However, both village heads and individual land sellers were not following this practice. Instead, they would indulge in "double allocations" (Interview with the Shamva DDC, 19 September 2019), whereby a residential stand was sold to one person and the agricultural plot to another.

The residential stands were less than one acre. Those land seekers receiving residential stands only were not able to engage in meaningful farming, even if only subsistence levels. Those who purchased cropping land only turned this land into both residential and farming stands. According to the interviewees, these successful land-seekers were easily identifiable by their small agricultural fields, which differentiated them from the long-established autochthones. As Akim explained:

> If you were to move around, you can tell that that [small] homestead belongs to one of us [former farm workers of foreign origin]. Of course, they [land-sellers] might have done it to make money but sometimes I feel they just did it to mock us. It's as if they did not want us here...like they wanted to remind us of something. (Interview with Akim, 19 September 2019).

This separation of residential and agricultural plots resulted in new land use patterns in Bushu, which defied official rural land planning and use. It also altered Bushu's landscape and brought to the fore the challenge of land pressure and scarcity. Land scarcity affects many autochthones, especially young couples who find it difficult to secure agricultural plots. Undoubtedly, however, chances of securing communal plots were higher for autochthones compared to the former farm workers of foreign origin.

7.5 Former Farm Workers and Livelihoods in Communal Areas

The former farm workers living in communal areas expressed mixed feelings about their new forms of livelihoods. While the majority bemoaned the economic hardships that they now faced, some were quick to point out that their lives have improved compared to farm life. Most stated that they now had diversified sources of livelihoods in the communal areas, compared to the monotonous and singular on-farm work to which they were exposed on the commercial farms. Most former farm workers currently earn a living through farming, gold panning, brick laying, petty trading and piece work.

They linked this pursuit of a range of livelihood activities to the newly felt freedom in the communal areas, after leaving behind the domestic government and conditional belonging of the white commercial farm and, in many cases, the fast track farm. Caleb for instance notes that, through his livelihoods, he was free to purchase and own possessions for his homestead without some authoritative figure asking him about the source of his possessions. At the commercial farms, farm labourers were under surveillance, with the farmer constantly checking on his workers' possessions and their sources, fearing the workers were stealing from him. At the same time, the end of white-farm domestic government, particularly in relation to the availability of farm-store credit and food handouts, limited their safety nets in Bushu. Below, I discuss some of the key livelihood strategies that the former farm workers pursue in Bushu, including the challenges and constraints they face.

7.5.1 Farming

Although some former farm workers failed to secure existing agricultural plots, others did so in addition to residential stands. Even those who failed to secure agricultural plots claimed to have now a piece of land on which to practice subsistence farming (in the form of their residential stands). Overall, the land available for crops amongst former labourers remained inferior to those of the autochthones in terms of both size and quality. A visit to the lands of Caleb, Augusto and John for instance revealed that their residential stands together with their farming stands were located in rocky areas. This made it difficult for them to realise sufficient agricultural yields.

Augusto bemoaned the poor-quality land that he owned. He claimed that his former work colleagues remaining at the commercial farm were resettled later in a grazing area on that farm, and they were offered better land than what he got in Bushu. He went on to complain that most Africans of foreign origin were treated as "second class citizens" in Bushu, as they were often fed with left overs and crumbs in the form of land that the indigenes no longer wanted (interview with Augusto, 21 September 2019). The inferior land received signified, for them, a limited belonging in the communal area, one that often reminded them of their foreign origin. This is besides the fact that the inferior land made it difficult for them to realise desired yields and further contributed to their vulnerability. The newcomers' 'otherness' was symbolised by the rocky areas that they farmed and lived on. As Augusto narrated:

> Sometimes you only have to look and you can tell that that place belongs to a former farm person. They [autochthones] don't give their relatives such types of land. It's for us. When we came here in our numbers, they probably said "let's settle them in places where no one else wants". We are given crumbs every time. (Interview with Augusto 21 September 2019.)

Still, the land available for cropping was significant compared to any land which white farmers gave them as workers, which sometimes was no land at all. The former workers also added that they felt more secure and freer to control and use the land compared to their lives as farm labourers. As a result, those who worked hard could realise good yields in Bushu, and they could even sell surplus produce since they now had many years of farming experience. Crops grown included maize, groundnut and vegetables. They used any cash proceeds from crop sales to purchase basic households, goods and to pay for their children's school fees. They yearned for larger and more productive pieces of cropping land, as they could improve their lives on this basis. In this regard, they complained that some autochthones were holding on to large tracts of land that they were not

utilising at all. Some autochthones owning land in Bushu let it lie fallow, opting to farm in the former commercial farm (now fast track) lands, or become employed in urban centres.

Some former farm workers received agricultural plots in grazing lands only in Bushu that, historically, was for collective usage. Typically, these grazing lands required extensive land clearance that was inherently tiresome to the newcomers in the absence of advanced technologies. The new occupiers had to work extremely hard using hand axes and hoes in order to clear the land for cropping purposes. Establishing themselves as farmers in Bushu was a longer and more strenuous process, compared to those receiving well-used agricultural plots.

Villagers in communal areas, on an irregular and uneven basis, receive farming inputs from government and non-governmental organisations. In Bushu, these programmes incorporated former farm workers of foreign origins. During my field trips, I witnessed a number of these workers receiving agricultural inputs (such as seeds and fertilisers) from the Zimbabwean government through the Department of Social Welfare. Non-governmental organisations (notably SOS Children's Villages) were actively assisting farmers with agricultural inputs and expertise. The ex-workers did not experience any exclusion or discrimination in terms of these programmes, and their cropping activities benefited from them.

Besides growing crops, the former farm workers also spoke about the capacity to keep livestock in Bushu, something which white farmers denied them. In communal areas like Bushu, cattle are indispensable for draught power by way of ox-drawn ploughing and weeding (alongside scotch carts for transporting agricultural inputs and produce). Livestock more generally (including goats and sheep) serve as a safety net as they can be sold for school fees and other critical household needs, or in times of emergency (for instance, family funerals and illnesses). Domestic animals are slaughtered as well for family gatherings and celebrations, or during the dry season when gardens cannot produce vegetables as relish. Finally, cattle form a crucial component of bride price (lobola) which is so central to Shona culture in Bushu.

In this context, in our interview (25 October 2020), John highlighted that it used to be difficult for farm workers to marry autochthones, as they did not own cattle. However, they were now able to accumulate livestock (including cattle) and because of this, they felt like "human beings". Bazil for instance expressed his elation about owning a small herd of animals. In his words:

> The only cattle we knew belonged to the white boss. They did not want us to own livestock. I remember Bandack [a former white farmer] used to say "I don't want to see any animal that is not mine in my farm". He would order us to kill communal people's animals that strayed into his farm. So we knew we would never keep our own livestock on the farm. We couldn't even own a mere chicken. But here I now have 2 cattle. I started with two goats which I purchased from my [gratuity] package from my last white boss. They multiplied; then I sold some of my goats and my son gave me more money and I bought a heifer. Now I have two. I am now a man. My sons now have bride-price. I want my cattle to multiply…I now have a place to own and keep cattle without being bothered. So, despite the challenges, life here is promising (Interview with Bazil 15 November 2019).

Thus, livestock ownership could facilitate a sense of personhood (or manhood) as well as belonging in the autochthonous community. Those ex-workers who now owned cattle were able to meet required social obligations (for example, bride price) on an easier basis, and cattle enhanced their overall social status. They were, from their perspective, becoming like the autochthones.

However, not all former farm workers of foreign origin managed to accumulate even small herds of livestock. At a very minimum, they all had chickens. For example, Chipo was rearing boschveld chickens in association with other villagers, and she had 23 chickens at the time of the fieldwork. Some had significant number of goats, which are relatively cheap to buy (compared to cattle) and breed faster. The majority of ex-farm labourers still failed to acquire or purchase cattle, even for those who entered Bushu almost twenty years ago. Those who did own cattle had less than three cattle, except for two who had four cattle. Overall, their livestock holdings fall far short of the status of successful communal area subsistence farmers.

At the same time, there are many poor autochthonous households in Bushu without any cattle ownership at all. This is true (in particular) of younger households, though some of the male heads of these households received cattle from their fathers or deceased parents or relatives. Thus, in a way, former farm workers who failed to acquire livestock were not exactly an exception in Bushu. What was unique in their case was that most of them had reached old age without having accumulated a single cow, a very rare case with autochthonous households.

Interestingly, the livestock-owning ex-labourers purchased most of their livestock in the period between from 2009 to 2016 when the Zimbabwean state adopted the United States dollar as its

major currency. Since 2017, when the country introduced its pseudo-currency, the bond note and subsequently the weak Zimbabwean dollar, purchasing power significantly eroded. Only two interviewees revealed that they bought cattle in 2017, using gold panning proceeds. Gold panning became more lucrative (than farming) since the mineral could be sold in United States dollars, thereby facilitating the purchase of cattle. Except for the few gold panners who were making a fortune in a period of economic crisis in Zimbabwe, the former farm workers (just like the majority of autochthones) were going through difficult and stressful times financially.

7.5.2 Gold Panning

Most male ex-labourers reported that they were now actively involved in gold panning to earn a living. Shamva is a mineral-rich area, being home to one of the country's wealthiest gold deposits. Large-scale mining takes places, but there is also informal gold panning in nearby rivers such as the Mazowe River. Just before the time of my fieldwork, there was the discovery of a gold deposit in Shamva's New Line farm village. Once designated solely as a grazing area for A1 farmers who occupied the farm in 2000, New Line was designated as a former farm workers' area under fast track with most of the workers being of foreign origin. A gold rush emerged around New Line and the ex-labourers living in Bushu communal areas became involved in this. Located near Kajakata and Chakonda villages in Bushu, where many former farm workers migrated, the farm became a haven for the former workers involved in gold panning. Most former farm workers living and plying their trade in New Line happened to be well acquainted with the former farm workers who now lived in Bushu, having worked and lived together on the farms prior to the fast track. Thus, the social networks that existed between the two groups facilitated the entry of the latter into the goldfields.

Gold panning further signaled the former farm workers' freedom from domestic government, as they had the leeway, liberty and freedom to act out their working lives according to their own tempos and rhythms. Certainly, on white farms, gold panning was prohibited, and labourers were expected to devote their working time exclusively to the agricultural demands of the white farmer. Though experiencing loss of full-time agricultural employment because of fast track, they were now at liberty to venture into multiple sources of income (including gold panning). For some ex-labourers (such as Shadreck and James), gold panning was their primary source of livelihood as Bushu villagers, earning more than they did as agricultural labourers.

Because of the vigorous labour involved in gold panning, it was more appealing to the younger and able-bodied men. Others like Augusto preferred on-farm labour (within Bushu) since it was less cumbersome and safer compared to gold panning. Likewise, women indicated that gold panning was a male-dominated activity, and none of the former female farm workers I spoke to indicated that they were actively involved – at least directly – in gold mining. Instead, the women would sell goods and services such as beer, food, clothes and sex to the gold panners. The former farm workers turned gold panners were quick to point out as well that not all was rosy in the world of gold panning. They panned for gold illegally without the proper documentation, and the activity was risky. There were reports that some panners had succumbed to mysterious deaths, and others died or suffered injuries through accidents. Incidences of infighting, deceit and jealousy also characterised the life of the panners.

Despite its challenges, gold panning proceeds facilitated the acquisition of some possessions for the former labourers. One mentioned that he built a five-roomed brick house. Another mentioned that on top of building a four-roomed house in Bushu, he managed to make a deposit on a residential stand in Shamva's Wadzanai Township. He hoped to build a decent house in Wadzanai and possibly diversify his income through collecting rentals from the house. Others indicated that they were able to buy goods including radio, television sets and cell phones, and they were paying their children's school fees through funds accrued from the mining proceeds.

7.5.3 Piece Work

Besides farming their own crops in the communal areas, former farm workers still worked in the former white owned commercial farms, but now as part time employees. The farmers would ferry them from their communal homes in the morning to various nearby farms where they would work during the day. In the evening, they would return to their homes. For former farm workers of foreign origin, working in this way as and when they wanted, signified a break from domestic government – as they could choose when they wanted to work or rest, and gave them time to concentrate on their own communal agricultural plots when necessary. To Augusto, based in the communal area and working as a part timer, was liberating as compared to the old days as a permanent farm employee. Conditional belonging, whereby he traded his labour and loyalty to the white farmer in return for work and shelter, no longer existed.

Former permanent turned part-time farm workers, however, complained that their new farm employers (both A1 and A2 farmers) did not want to pay them to the same wage standard as set by their former white bosses. Ndebvu, for instance had this to say:

> Our very own [black farmers] are just stingy. They want to get rich overnight. White farmers invested patiently, for years, even though what they paid us was low. These people are worse. They see us as donkeys and a cheap gateway to getting rich. They just do not want to pay. (Interview with Ndebvu, 31 October 2018).

Others pointed out that sometimes the new farmers did not pay them at all. The ex-labourers would not demand their payments or seek recourse for fear of victimisation. Caleb for example feared the new fast track farmers would follow him to his communal home and cause a scene. As such, in an endeavour to avoid noise and raising alarm, Caleb would ignore pursuing the new farmers who owed him wages for work done.

Beyond performing part time work on the A1 and some A2 farms, some former farm workers performed piece work on the agricultural plots of certain Bushu villagers. They would weed and harvest crops for Bushu villagers in return for money, clothes or groceries. Communal piece work, though, was hard to come by considering the general poverty that is characteristic of communal areas including Bushu. Due to the subsistence character of Bushu communal agriculture, most homesteads in Bushu in fact depended upon family labour exclusively. They were, however, a few (comparatively) well-off communal villagers who could afford to hire additional labour. They included small business owners, successful full-time communal farmers, salaried communal workers and those who depended on remittances from grown up children or spouses.

Most interviewees indicated that the few villagers who could afford to employ part time labourers preferred former farm workers because they were hardworking. The former farm workers had years of experience on white-owned farms which gave them superior expertise and dexterity in performing agricultural labour. One ex-worker for instance claimed that he was capable of weeding in one day a portion of a plot that an autochthone would take four days to finish. The former labourers also pointed out that, back in the days when they used to work together with communal area autochthones on the former commercial farms, the latter would struggle to complete their tasks. Overall, they claimed that white farmers preferred Africans of foreign origin as farm labourers to even permanent autochthones labouring on the farms. The former farm

workers therefore migrated with their competitive labour advantage over autochthones into the communal areas.

Tensions existed between the former farm labourers and some autochthones over scarce communal piece work in Bushu. The former labourers indicated that some of their autochthonous piece work-labouring counterparts blamed the newcomers for taking away their jobs. The autochthones' ostensible bitterness would manifest itself in different ways that included gossip, name calling and witchcraft accusation. As Caleb narrated the story:

> There are many people (especially these two) who are not happy about me getting more (piece work) jobs. One of them is very young, yet stubborn and lazy. So one day I was offered a weeding job by this teacher. Then he [the young autochthone) saw me going there with my hoe and shouted: "There goes the hungry ones, willing to work the whole day for a pint of Supa [cheap opaque beer]. That's what they came here for. May he never be paid". I kept quiet because I knew where the bitterness was coming from. The other one [young autochthone] has been spreading all sorts of lies about me. He tells people I will be sleeping in the fields while my gobblins will be doing the work. Look at my hands, how rough they are. Do you think they belong to someone who spends the day sleeping? (Interview with Caleb, 16 November 2019).

Thus, in some cases in their endeavour to earn a living, the former farm workers would unintentionally spark tensions with the autochthones. Realising their vulnerability, most former workers as newcomers would try to avoid confrontations as the case of Caleb shows.

7.5.4 Petty Trading

Most female interviewees were trying to make a living through buying and selling commodities that included groceries, footwear and clothing. A handful of men were also engaged in this trade. Generally, petty trading was highly gendered (and feminised) and it involved low risks compared to masculinised trades such as mining. The women would buy commodities in the nearby Wadzanai township (in Shamva town) or as far as South Africa. These would be sold in the communal areas, former white owned commercial farms or in nearby mines.

Social networks established during years of farm life enabled the petty traders to sell their merchandise in the former white owned farms. Most of their customers were people who once lived or still lived on the farms, the majority of them being those of foreign origin. Their shared foreign origins, alongside their common experiences as allochthones, facilitated this. As 'the

other', both buyer and seller thought it fit to support each other on a mutual basis. Mary for instance noted that most of her customers preferred to buy from her than buying from 'strangers' who in this case were autochthones. Hence, Mary had a guaranteed pool of reliable customers in the form of Africans of foreign origin. Petty trading business trips to the former white owned farms usually entailed social journeys as well, as the traders would converse with their friends and relatives who still lived and worked on the now fast track farms. There would be an exchange of ideas during those trips, including discussions around the feasibility of facilitating access to communal land for the purchasers of their commodities. At the same time, these farm-based customers were facing economic hardships thereby threatening the viability of the petty traders.

When it came to petty trading amongst the gold panners, women sold commodities to both autochthones and those of foreign origins. However, like amongst the farmers on fast track farms, petty traders indicated that most of their gold panning customers were of foreign origin. Though gold panners are feared because of their tendency for violence, the female petty traders were comforted by the fact that they knew some of the panners, as they were living in Bushu. As well, Shamva Gold Mine closed in 2018, resulting in former mine workers using their mining expertise to seek personal fortunes by gold panning in the district. Just like former commercial farm workers, most of the former mine workers were of foreign origin. Their shared 'foreign' language, culture and origin significantly facilitated business fortunes for the former farm workers turned traders. Most panners were also reliable customers since they were accumulating a reasonable amount of wealth. Commodities in demand from the panners included alcohol, cigarettes, clothes and food.

Apart from selling to the farm and mining communities, the petty traders had a customer base in the form of the autochthones in the communal areas. Business transactions enabled the establishment of new social networks amongst their new autochthonous neighbours. As they were selling, the petty traders would sit down with their customers, ask for drinking water and such interfaces usually opened opportunities for conversations, leading at times to the formation of friendships. Some commodities were sold on credit to certain neighbours, and trust based on anticipated payments could be formed between the traders and their autochthonous customers. Social relationships were therefore established and these helped to bridge the social distance between the autochthones and allochthones.

However, in some instances, relationships were not always consequentially cordial. Nyasha for instance complained that some autochthones thought that former farm workers in general and former farm workers of foreign origin in particular were dull, uneducated and possibly lacking business skills. Hence, in their exchanges, autochthones would attempt to cheat the traders. Intended non-payment and negotiating for ridiculously low prices were some of the dishonest ploys that the buyers would use in an attempt to manipulate the traders. Failure to pay debts often resulted in threats engraved in claims of witchcraft and sorcery, used by the traders in attempts to coerce autochthones to honour their debts. As people who were thought to possess supernatural powers by the autochthones (discussed later), the traders of foreign origin would use that social label to recover their money. Thus, in a way, the social construct of traders of foreign origin served as a form of social capital used to sustain their livelihoods. However, such strategies often resulted in strained autochthone-allochthone relationships in Bushu.

7.5.5 Mukando

Communal people particularly women are actively involved in small savings and lending groups known as *mukando* in the vernacular. Former farm workers in Bushu joined these small savings groups and participated in them together with autochthones. Villagers paid monthly contributions into a common pool (i.e. fund), between USD1 and USD2 each. Withdrawal from the fund involved repayment of the debt at a 10% rate of interest. The funds served a panoply of purposes. For instance, at times, a member could withdraw a lump sum from the accumulated funds to start or boost her income-generating projects. Those who needed emergency funds such as school fees or money for funeral or health expenses would also borrow from the fund.

Generally, *mukando* provided a readily available albeit small loan for the former farm workers, whose lack of collateral security rendered them ineligible to lend from banks and other micro-finance institutions. Due to the meagre amount accumulated in the fund, and the constant demands for various expenses, the fund was often depleted (notably towards school opening days), leaving potential borrowers in a precarious state. Nonetheless, *mukando* became a key source of credit for the former farm workers in Bushu.

To the former farm workers, *mukando* was reminiscent of how the white farmer would always lend them money, only to deduct it from their wages in accordance with the dictates of domestic government. Nevertheless, the amount of credit made available to labourers by white farmers far

exceeded the amounts drawn through *mukando*. The former farm workers spoke about the *mukando* funds as very meagre and insufficient to meet their most basic needs, thus reflecting favourably on their former lives with reference to this particular issue.

Females represented the vast majority of *mukando* members in Bushu. Besides serving as a social safety net for women specifically, *mukando* also served as an important form of social capital for women in the villages. *Mukando* meetings gave the female villagers (including ex-labourers) a chance to meet and interact at least once a month, and to exchange thoughts about income-generating activities. Sometimes government employees (notably the Ward Coordinator from the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development) would visit villagers during their *mukando* gathering. The Ward Coordinator would speak to the female *mukando* members about income-generating skills, as well as about domestic and gender-based violence. During the *mukando* gatherings, the former farm worker would interacte and interface with the female autochthones, entailing the developing and nurturing of friendships. Becoming and staying a member of the lending schemes facilitated cross cutting ties between allochthones and autochthones, and this enhanced a sense of belonging for the allochthones, thereby undercutting their strangeness in Bushu.

However, again, the economic crisis in the country (post the Mugabe era) threatened constantly the viability of most *mukando* groups in Bushu. By February 2020, female interviewees indicated that the vibrancy of the *mukando* groups had deteriorated significantly because of challenges around currency. After the Government of National Unity in 2013, the United States (US) dollar currency reserve dwindled, and the Zimbabwean government introduced the bond note as a surrogate currency ostensibly to curb externalisation of the US dollar. The bond note was pegged at 1:1 on its introduction in 2017, but then was rapidly devalued by the central bank. In 2019, the government de-dollarised (and reintroduced the Zimbabwean dollar), making local transactions in US dollars and any other form of foreign currency illegal. The chaotic and inconsistent monetary policies contributed to a hyper-inflationary environment such that by June 2020 the parallel market exchange rate stood at 1USD:100 Zimbabwean dollars.

Female members of the *mukando* highlighted that the hyper-inflationary environment coupled with a perpetually weak Zimbabwean dollar was threatening the sustainability of *mukando*. They were therefore insisting on forex-based *mukando* contributions. However, forex (foreign exchange) in

the form of the US dollar was difficult for members to access since other sources of income were in local currency. As a result, there were signs of the Bushu *mukando* groups in decline, including through the loss of members.

7.5.6 Food Handouts

The elderly and orphans received food handouts availed by the government and non-governmental organisations in Bushu communal areas. In times of drought (notably the years 2007, 2008, 2018, 2019 and 2020), food handouts (mainly maize, Zimbabwe's staple food) were also availed to vulnerable households. The elderly received 50 kilogrammes of maize on a monthly basis through the Department of Social Welfare. Former farm workers of foreign origin residing in Bushu, who met the overall requirements of the programmes, received maize. The ward councillor highlighted that there was no exclusion whatsoever in terms of beneficiaries of the maize packages and, on two visits, I witnessed maize being distributed among former farm workers. The interviewees stated that, in most cases, a 50-kilogramme bag of maize was sufficient for the whole month and they might share their maize with neighbours with maize shortfalls. At times, they also sold part of the maize package in order to have money to grind the rest of the maize into mealie meal (for cooking *sadza*).

The former farm workers benefiting from the maize expressed their gratitude highlighting that, when they were on the commercial farms, no maize support was forthcoming from central government. Instead, the farms' domestic government implied that the farmer was solely responsible for his employees' welfare, as farm spaces were privatised spaces under the sole control of the white farmer. At the same time, they highlighted that what they now received in the communal areas (in terms of maize donations) was less – comparatively speaking – to what the farmers used to give them. Martha and Mary for instance both stated that the farmer used to give them "enough" food handouts – not just maize, but also kapenta, beans, cooking oil, sugar and salt (which they deemed indispensable for their diet). Now it was only maize. As a result, the former farm workers spoke about currently suffering from hunger and malnutrition in the Bushu communal areas.

In this regard, it is important to note that not every former farm worker of foreign origin was eligible to receive maize handouts in Bushu. The able-bodied and those of working age were not eligible, even for those autochthonous households. This was a serious problem, again compared to

working and living on white farms – where permanent employment guaranteed a monthly wage along with any available handouts. As Shadreck indicated, in the communal areas, there was simply no steady income stream, with crop production being seasonal.

Despite the inclusiveness of governmental food handouts, the former labourers did speak about certain hidden conditions that bordered on the politicisation of food. As Augusto stressed:

> You have to be obedient for you to have peace and get something [maize]. You saw what was happening there. You heard the slogans. (Interview with Augusto, 19 September 2019).

Augusto was referring to a government maize programme witnessed by me. By slogans, Augusto was speaking about the ZANU-PF slogans chanted at the Department of Social Welfare food-handout distribution point at Kajakata Business Centre. Ward party leaders took the opportunity to campaign for their party, despite the fact that food handouts are not supposed to be 'politicised'. Augusto, like other food beneficiaries, reasoned that he had to chant political slogans so that he would continue to benefit from the handout programme on an ongoing basis. More broadly, from the perspective of Augusto and other ex-labourers, the showing of allegiance to the ruling party was a necessary condition for belonging fully to the Bushu community. Belonging would in turn bring with it food benefits, the type of benefit enjoyed by the former farm workers during their time when they conditionally belonged to the farm.

7.5.7 Family Members Support

Elderly former farm workers relied quite significantly on family members' financial support, with remittances from children providing a reliable social safety net for most parents. Admittedly, most of the children were merely working on farms as general labourers (fast track farms), while others were involved in mining or working in towns such as Shamva and Bindura. The majority of these children, who were born and raised on farms, were not professionals and they had only minimal education (attending farm schools, which usually ended at primary school level and involved basic reading and writing skills). Despite their own low standard of living and precarious existence, children remitted money that helped parents to purchase some basic food and groceries. Similarly, husbands working elsewhere would send money to their wives and children.

Generally, young widows amongst the ex-labour population in Bushu experienced especially harsh economic conditions, since their dependent children were too young to look after them. With children to care for, they often found it difficult to work their lands on a sustainable basis or to

find local casual work. Some young widows though relied on piece work, particularly weeding fields and harvesting crops in both communal areas and nearby farms. Young children would assist their parents in accomplishing the agricultural work. Young boys would complement the meagre family income through herding neighbours' cattle, specifically during school holidays (with the earnings put towards paying school fees for the children). Therefore, child labour acted as a safety net for these de jure female-headed households in Bushu. These strategies were, however, not unique to the 'newcomers' (ex-farm labourers) but were practiced by female-headed households amongst the autochthones. Simultaneously, the former farm workers had weaker and less extensive social networks compared to the longer-established communal area villagers, and the latter could draw more readily on networks (including kinship relations) for support.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter considered the motives that led the former farm workers to move to Bushu, including based on their experiences of land occupations and fast track. The former farm workers of foreign origin considered a panoply of issues and alternatives before finally opting for communal areas following the fast track occupations. Various social networks established with the autochthones prior to fast track proved pivotal for securing communal land in Bushu. It was also noted that the ex-farm workers have since embarked on diversified livelihood strategies after moving to Bushu. However, most of the farm workers have led precarious lives in Bushu, except for a few who have made fortunes out of gold panning. As is the case with most communal areas in Zimbabwe, a vernacular land market involving village heads and ordinary autochthones thrives in Bushu. Despite government's rhetoric to avail communal land for the former farm workers free of charge, actual access involved illicit deals. Certainly, the ability to access a homestead and land was not an arena short of inconsistencies, particularly in relation to rural land use and planning as well as communal land tenure security.

CHAPTER EIGHT: EX-FARM LABOURERS' CLAIMS AND STRATEGIES OF BELONGING IN BUSHU

8.1 Introduction

Following from the previous chapter, this chapter now focuses on the former farm workers' perceptions and narratives, as well as practices of interaction and possible co-existence, vis-à-vis the autochthones in Bushu communal areas, with a particular focus on how these relate to questions of belonging in Bushu. This involves a deep consideration of the multiple ways in which ex-farm labourers of foreign origin seek to transition from their previous lifeworld (or form of existence) as 'farm people' to a lifeworld made up of communal area residents. Whether this transition, and the strategies deployed during this uncertain and troubled transitional period, leads to the ex-farm labourers becoming 'communal people' and fostering an authentic belonging in Bushu, is central to the chapter. Simultaneously, and of great significance, the chapter brings forth the strategies used by these former farm workers to somehow preserve their foreign identity, thereby possibly developing their own unique version of communal area belonging.

8.2 We Belong to this Soil Too

Despite the many obstacles faced after moving into Bushu, all former farm workers of foreign origin indicated that they considered themselves as 'sons and daughters of the soil' or '*vana vevhu'* in the vernacular Shona language, and for various reasons. They disagreed with the 'othering' perspectives of the autochthonous farm occupiers (who chased them from the farms on the pretext that they were foreigners), as well as those of some Bush villagers. They bemoaned the fact that a number of self-acclaimed autochthones called them derogatory names as a way of challenging and undercutting their claim to a localised sense of belonging. In doing so, they adopted at times an inclusive (transnational) sense of humanity, simply noting that they deserved to be seen and treated as 'sons and daughters of the soil' because they are 'humans'. Biblically, all humans were created equally (irrespective of their prevailing social identities), and all belong to the land. More importantly, black people were not supposed to discriminate against each other based on ethnicity or nationality. Quoting a song from Nicholas Zacharia, a Zimbabwean musician of Malawian origin, one interviewee (Augusto) had this to say.

> I just don't understand why these people are hard. [Nicholas] Zacharia told us in his song, "Everyone is your relative, there is nothing called ethnicity". But the way these people chased us from the farms [during fast track occupations], you would think they did not come from this earth. You look at them and there's nothing different between us, unless maybe one starts to talk [a different language]. You would expect that behavior from a white man. But whites were better. Even the way they chased white people from the farms … We were all created by God. The land belongs to God, not some people. We all came from the soil and likewise we will all go back there. (Interview with Augusto, 20 September 2019).

Akim, whose sentiments were shared by second and third generations of migrant farm workers, reasoned that he deserved to be treated as a son of the soil since he was born and bred in Zimbabwe. As such, the fact that he was born on a farm to Mozambican parents did not make him an outsider. Instead, he deserved a respectable and dignified place in the communal areas because he was an authentic son of the soil. During the interview, Akim articulated the following thoughts:

> I am a son of the soil because I was born here [Zimbabwe]. My umbilical cord is in Zimbabwe. You won't find it Mozambique. It's not there, it's here. I grew up in Zimbabwe and so did my children. So, me and my children are sons of this soil. Just like them [so-called autochthones]. My children are here; they attend school together with their children. In fact, all that they do I also do so, there is no difference. We attend [political] rallies together and vote together. I live here in Bushu and I will be buried here. So, I am from and of here. (Interview with Akim, 19 September 2019).

Another ex-labourer, John, was born of a Malawian migrant farm worker and an autochthonous Korekore mother in Mt Darwin District near Shamva. John fought alongside the autochthones in the liberation struggle of the 1970s, defying the nationalist narrative that constructed Africans of foreign origin as sell outs and enemies of the struggle. He opined that he was a Zimbabwean first and foremost, considering his birth in Zimbabwe to a mother who was an autochthone (and the many autochthonous maternal relatives which came with this) and because of his alignment with the liberation struggle. It was the feeling of belonging to the oppressed nation-in-struggle that compelled John to participate in the liberation struggle alongside the liberation fighters who eventually defeated Rhodesian colonial forces. Aligning with the nationalists was thus a key factor that augmented his qualification as a son of the soil since the liberation struggle signifies a crucial foundation in the birth of the post-colonial Zimbabwean nation and national belonging.

As discussed earlier, the liberation fighters (as sons and daughters of the soil) were led by the land spirits (the *mhondoros*) in the fight against the white minority and in their endeavour to reclaim land from the white minority settlers. Being part of the cause of the *mhondoros* became central to John's sense of belonging in Bushu through attachment to land. John argued that he belonged to the nation and Bushu more specifically, more so than self-acclaimed autochthones whose contribution to the liberation struggle may be open to dispute. As he narrated his story, he said:

> Yes, I went back to the farms to work for the whites after the [liberation] war. But the war was hard. We struggled during the war. I was still young though but I fought for this country. This soil that these people [fast track occupiers] came to claim, claiming that it's theirs only. I could see them. They never went to war just like most of them here in Bushu, who think they can lecture us about [what it means to be] sons and daughters of Zimbabwean soil. They were in the comfort of their homes while we were in the bush to take back the land [from white settlers], our soil. They must keep quiet. It's not over I will get my [fast track] portion. (Interview with John, 20 September 2019).

Other interviewees also spoke forcefully about their children and their generations to come as all true sons and daughters of the soil. Caleb for instance stated that his children are already sons and daughters of the soil in Bushu by virtue of them being his children. He indicated that, though his three married sons were still working and living in surrounding farms, they will eventually join him in the communal land and had every right to do so. He was therefore paving a way for his sons in Bushu so that they could assert and strengthen their belonging in the village. They would come and permanently live at their "father's stand" in the future.

The former farm workers claimed that the autochthones intentionally abused the term 'sons and daughters of the soil' in order to exclude those of foreign origin. In the first instance, the term was used to justify the chasing away of white farmers whose skin colour marked a visible difference with that of the autochthones. In Bushu, amongst blacks, the term openly emerged whenever land and other resources were scarce or disputed. In relation to the distribution of food handouts and agricultural inputs, Africans of foreign origin were called names when it appeared clear that there were input and handout shortages. Overall, then, derogatory slurs denoting alien origin such as *mabwidi, manyasarandi* and *vabvakure* began resurfacing and circulating in the context of shortages and contestations. In terms of land and belonging, name calling (based on 'othering') was a discursive act of exclusion which inhibited the closing down of social distance between foreign ex-labourers and autochthones in Bushu communal areas.

8.3 Asserting Belonging in Bushu

In this section, I discuss the different tactics and strategies that the former farm workers, through their agency, devised and pursued in order to actively assert and maintain belonging in Bushu as they attempted to (re)invent their life in Bushu. The thrust is to show the former farm workers concerted efforts at forging belonging to the community of fellow villagers, to different associations and to the Bushu landscape itself.

8.3.1 Political Affiliation

Akim, together with many other ex-labourers, argued that their purported political affiliation made them 'sons and daughters of the soil'. Akim and Shadreck, for instance, reiterated that they were active members and supporters of the ruling ZANU-PF party and this, on its own, made them authentic sons of the soil. Shadreck indicated that he aligned himself with the land occupiers during the FTLRP, but was bitter that his fellow comrades did not allocate him land thereafter. He felt deeply betrayed and turned the table on them by labelling them as 'sellouts'.

In populist Zimbabwean discourses, supporting ZANU-PF equates to patriotism and loyalty to the nation. Supporting the opposition party (MDC) entails the exact opposite, with opposition supporters interpreted as unpatriotic and often referred to as sellouts and western saboteurs in dominant state discourses. By being a self-acclaimed ZANU-PF supporter, Shadreck considered himself patriotic and thus a true son of the soil. In this regard, those autochthones who supported the MDC fell outside the nation and were not true sons of the soil. In this way, being a ZANU-PF supporter was an important – and indeed necessary and sufficient – basis for self-identification as an autochthone. Therefore, belonging is a state of being, which is achievable through party politics regardless of ancestral origin. Shadreck thus argued:

> How can you say you are Zimbabwean if you don't support ZANU PF? Some of these people [autochthones] who claim to be sons of the soil here in Bushu can't even chant a ZANU-PF slogan. So where do they belong? I know of everything ZANU-PF. They don't. So, they can't tell me cheap politics about me being a *mubwidi* [alien]. Those who don't appreciate ZANU-PF history and ideology are the real *mabwidi* [aliens]. (Interview with Shadreck, 20 September 2019)

From this perspective, belonging to the nation and Bushu specifically required a nationalist and ZANU-PF loyalty. Some former farm workers strategically aligned themselves with the ruling ZANU-PF in order to assert belonging and thereby gain access to state resources such as food handouts and land. This maneouvring by ex-labourers arose in the context of the highly polarised

political tension and outright conflict existing in contemporary Zimbabwe, with the ruling party having a significant organisational presence in communal areas, including through the chiefs. ZANU PF continues to dominate the electoral landscape in rural Zimbabwe (in both communal and resettlement areas), with pronounced support in particular in the three Mashonaland provinces

Located in Mashonaland Central Province, Shamva is a ZANU-PF stronghold, with all local and national elections won consistently by the ruling party since 1980. The war of liberation in Shamva during the 1970s was very intense, with significant guerrilla activity and mobilisation in the (then) Tribal Trust Lands in the area. Memories of the war run deep in Shamva, and vivid recollections of the brutality of the colonial regime (including by white farmers) continue to circulate amongst the older generation in rural Shamva (Bhatasara and Helliker 2018). For Bushu communal area villagers, there is a pronounced continuity between the ZANU-linked guerrilla units operative in the 1970s and the ruling party in post-colonial Zimbabwe. The rise of the MDC and white farmer mobilisation in support of the MDC from late 1999 and into the period of the land occupations, as noted earlier, served to bring about a close association between former farm workers and the opposition party in the eyes of Bushu villagers. In this context, in moving into Bushu, these former workers have had to navigate a complex and troubled political atmosphere. Their presence as belonging to Bushu became questionable because of the MDC-white farmer-farm labourer nexus, and their apparent foreign status only complicated matters further.

Cognisant of their sell out label, former farm workers of foreign origin were determined, in strategic fashion, to prove their critics wrong in Bushu. As a result, to assert and consolidate their inclusion in Bushu, the newcomers participated in ruling party activities and they were not willing to openly support any political party other than ZANU PF. Interviewees pointed out that they owned ruling party regalia, which they wore from time to time in an effort to make themselves indistinguishable from autochthones. All former farm workers in fact declared that they were active ZANU-PF party members and some were part of village and ward party structures. They made sure that they attended all ruling party meetings and rallies without fail. All those who possessed pertinent Identity Cards also reported that they had voted for the ruling party in all national and local elections since coming to Bushu. Augusto, who chanted ZANU-PF slogans whenever necessary in order to ‘fit in’, highlighted:

> You have to observe the rules. You have to be obedient. Sometimes it's better to play dump and have peace. Attend meetings, take [party] positions if necessary and stay out of trouble. That way no one will come after you. (Interview with Augusto 11 November 2019).

Augusto's words imply that the former farm workers seriously considered the ruling party as their gateway to ticket to belonging. They reasoned that if they showed party allegiance in a visible manner, there was a guarantee that they would stay in Bushu unmolested. This was a tactical move in which they performed ZANU-PF membership. This political navigation was not lost on local ZANU-PF leaders, who spoke about the loyalty of former farm workers to the ruling party. One party leader claimed that the party steadfastness of the ex-labourers was more recognisable in comparison to some of the "lost" autochthonous opposition supporters in Bushu (Interview with Comrade Dee, 28 February 2020). From this viewpoint, autochthonous lost souls were political strangers in Bushu. Thus, the former farm workers arguably defied their strangerhood and otherness by supporting the 'right' political party, one that ostensibly defined autochthony.

8.3.2 Cultural Strategies

Forging belonging in Bushu entailed acculturation on the part of the newcomers as well. Culture and all its symbols and materials proved pivotal in defining personhood and group affiliation. Resultantly, ex-labourers stated that they felt compelled to adopt local cultural practices and symbols in order to be acceptable as part of the Bushu community.

Though the former workers were fond of farming and wanted to maximise their agricultural productivity, they pointed out that they had to observe '*chisi*'. *Chisi* is a traditional day of rest from agricultural work that, in Bushu, is observed every Thursday. On this day, no one is supposed to work in the fields, as the land spirits will be visiting the fields. Traditional authorities, notably village heads and chiefs, guard this day jealously. Not observing *chisi* is a serious offence. If any villager is caught attending to their fields on a *chisi* day, he or she will need to pay a fine in the form of a goat and finger millet. Attending fields on a *chisi* is an insult to territorial spirits and it attracts bad omens onto the land. Serious misfortunes (notably drought) come about from the consequences of not observing *chisi*. For the former farm workers, this practice was new to them, since white farmers did not observe *chisi* in commercial farms.

Most interviewees indicated that, given a choice, they would rather rest on their church days and not Thursday. For those who attended church on Fridays, Saturdays or Sundays, observing *chisi*

on a Thursday implied two days per week of non-productivity. Autochthones faced the same challenge, but they were used to this practice (unlike the former farm workers). For the newcomers, observing *chisi* was not easy. Though they were gradually coping with it, some reported that their first days in Bushu were characterised by defiance and consequent fines from the traditional authorities. For Martha, it took her village head's stern reprimands against her *'bwidi'* (alien) tendencies for her to stop attending to her fields on a Thursday. In her words:

> I used to think that it was not a serious offence until I was caught one day. I was tried before the whole village and I was ordered to pay a goat, which I did not have at the time. I had to do piecework to raise the money. It was a heavy loss. The village head called me '*mubwidi*' and he said that it was us newcomers who were causing trouble. Other villagers also shouted that us *mabwidi* were profaning the land. That is when I realised that I had to stop. (Interview with Martha, 7 November 2019).

Martha's sentiments show that the process of belonging for the former workers was at times a project of the communal villagers themselves. In this case, disobedience on the part of newcomers would bring the wrath of the land spirits onto the entire village. On behalf of Bushu villages, the chief and local village heads took stringent measures against the strangers in order for them to adapt to (and adopt) the cultural standards and practices of their hosts. The need to avoid punitive cultural measures, and in a further attempt to avoid name calling, was broadly effective in enforcing cultural uniformity in Bushu.

Additionally, former farm workers attended autochthonous cultural rites (such as rain making ceremonies and *jiti*) existing in Bushu. Most interviewees stated that they had no issues with attending these arrangements, since they used to be involved in such ceremonies when they were still working for the white farmers. As discussed earlier, Shamva white farmers and their workers used to participate in rain making ceremonies in Bushu. Thus, unlike *chisi*, rain making ceremonies were not new to former farm workers, such that becoming and belonging to Bushu is a process that began prior to fast track.

The majority of the former farm workers were of the matrilineal Chewa of Malawian and Zambian origin who trace their descent from their maternal line. They are therefore different from the patrilineal Shona who trace their descent through their paternal relatives. As well, unlike the autochthonous Shona, the Chewa do not practice lobola (i.e. bride price). These practices were

therefore likely to cause contestations, especially in the event of intermarriages between the former labourers and the long-established Bushu villagers. In this regard, the interviewees reasoned that they had to change their practices in order to belong to, and in, Bushu. Martha and Chipo thus indicated that they expected their son-in-laws to pay bride price. As Martha argued:

> I can't say no to my cow[7] when I know that my son paid a lot of money and cows for his wife to his [autochthonous] in-laws. We also want those cattle and money. After all, those are the expectations here. I can't be an exception. (Interview with Martha 20 September 2019).

8.3.3 Religious Affiliations

Religion and spirituality more broadly helps to foster a sense of belonging, just as it can be a source of division. Former farm workers in Bushu were keen to assert belonging in Bushu through joining different religious circles in their villages. A majority of former farm workers particularly those of Malawian origin were born to Muslim parents. They had also adopted the Islamic faith on the commercial farms, with some of them having been leaders in their respective congregations. A handful of former farm workers belonged as well to various Christian denominations notably Salvation Army and Roman Catholic (prior to fast track).

However, since moving into Bushu communal areas, most former farm workers (particularly those of Islamic faith) changed their religion. They joined churches prevailing in Bushu, including 'modern' churches (especially Pentecostal churches) and white garment indigenous Apostolic sects. The modern Pentecostal churches and white garment churches have dominated religious circles in rural Zimbabwe over a number of years now, predominating over 'traditional' churches such as the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Methodist church. For Mary and her family, together with some of her friends, leaving Islam for a 'modern' Pentecostal church was a worthy move since they could attend church together with her "new neighbours and friends*"* (Interview with Mary, 25 November 2019). She was an active member of her new church and three of her children were part of the Praise and Worship team, as well as actively participating in the Youth segment of the church. One of Mary's grownup sons married a fellow congregant from the same church and the two became Youth Advisors. The young couple were role models for the church youths,

[7] Though much of the lobola payment among the Shona goes to the father of the bride, the mother is also entitled a single cow.

including the autochthonous youths who looked up to them for advice and guidance pertaining to youth issues.

Other former foreign labourers noted that they were non-church goers on the farms, but they had since converted to various churches since coming to Bushu after realising that almost all the villagers belonged to at least one church. Nicholas for instance stated that neither he nor his wife attended church during their days at the farms. However, he joined the Salvation Army when he came to Bushu because in his words:

> It is one of the dominant churches in Bushu. Most elders in Bushu attend Salvation Army. Therefore, as an elderly person, I saw it fit to join other elders on Sundays. We can proceed to the beerhalls after church service together. (Interview with Nicholas, 7 November 2019).

Nicholas and Mary's thoughts show that they decided to join churches they found in Bushu in order to become like the autochthones. Mary wanted to 'be' like her friends and neighbours while Nicholas joined the Salvation Army so that he could fit into the 'village elders' circle. Choosing a church and actively participating in its activities was therefore a gateway to belonging in Bushu. The newcomers were keen for acceptance within the autochthonous community and they used religion as a moral grounding for belonging. However, not all former farm workers abandoned their religion after arriving in Bushu, as I discuss later.

8.3.4 Material Landscape

Ex-workers sought to construct material landscapes that would forever serve as a reminder of their presence in Bushu and in the process stamp their belonging. For example, some allocated residential stands with existing homesteads left by the previous residents highlighted that they refused to occupy those homesteads, opting to build their own. They decided to construct their own houses as a way of asserting their autonomous belonging to the land untamed by the previous occupiers. As one interviewee noted:

> I refused to occupy that house left by the family that used to live here. I know it might not make sense to you because it is obviously nicer than what I built. You can see it was built using bricks and it is plastered by cement and it has three rooms, an asbestos roof and it has a cement floor. But I said no. Because it's not mine. That's not me. So when I bought this stand I decided to build something that was mine. Yes, its humble – you can see both of my huts are built of anthill soil, grass thatched and the floor made of cow dung. But you know what? Its mine. These are my houses and I sleep

> peacefully. My ghost will forever stay in these houses. Their ghost [of the previous occupiers] will always have peace there [in their house] rather than having our ghosts fighting in that house (Interview with Jasphet, 20 September 2019)

In addition to building their own houses, many former labourers constructed other buildings including fowl runs, cattle pens and maize dryers as a way of stamping their independent belonging in Bushu. Others planted trees (including fruit trees and bamboos) in an effort to alter their residential stand in a manner that would identify them with their stands. However, some felt no need to build new houses. Instead, they occupied houses left by previous occupiers but they stated that they performed rituals meant to cleanse the space of the previous occupiers.

Some women were particular about their cooking huts or kitchens, choosing to build their own while turning the previous owners' kitchens into fowl runs or store rooms. In Zimbabwe's rural areas, the kitchen is built separately from the bedroom or main house. In the kitchen, women cook and keep their cooking utensils including pots, plates, spoons and waterbuckets; and households usually eat their meals in these kitchens. The kitchen is therefore a deeply feminised place. According to Bushu custom, when a married woman dies, she is supposed to lie in state in her kitchen at least for one night before burial. In an effort to align themselves with the local custom, female newcomers demanded that their husbands build them their own new kitchens so that they could be mourned in their kitchens. Hence, though they may have agreed to occupy the main house or huts used as bedrooms (even those of the previous occupant), the women would always make kitchens an exception.

Graves also became crucial material symbols through which the former farm workers claimed and asserted their belonging in Bushu. In the past, prior to fast track, non-autochthonous Bushu residents were buried in wetlands, and only after consultation with the spirit mediums. Autochthones were, however, at liberty to choose where to bury their departed as long as it was within land designated for their household. Thus, autochthonous families have interred their departed within specific nearby anthills for generations. At the same time, a focus group discussion with Bushu village heads revealed that burial conditions for allochthones including the former farm workers of foreign origin have since been relaxed. These former workers thus indicated that they were at liberty to bury their household members near their houses.

In this context, graves situated within land designated for the former farm workers served as symbols of belonging to Bushu. The former labourers conducted their cultural and family rituals and practices at these gravesites, including appeasing their ancestors. Some like James wished they could exhume their parents from the farms where they were buried, and rebury them in Bushu where he (and they) now belonged. This way, their ancestors' spirits could join them and their generations to come in Bushu. Some ex-migrant workers, whose relatives were buried in the farms, reported that they sometimes visited their relatives' graves, or they had dreams about their dead relatives buried there. James for instance claimed that his father periodically visited him in his dream asking him to clean his resting place. In his words:

> If I stay for a long time without visiting the [farm] cemetary, he [his father] comes to me in my dreams. He usually says, "come and see, my house [grave] is now in a mess". When that happens, I will know that his grave needs sweeping. I wish I could bury him here; otherwise, a part of me will always be at that farm. (Interview with James, 12 October 2019).

James however found consolation in the fact that his own spirit would be free to roam around and over Bushu since he was going to be buried there. The ex-labourers' narratives showed that though they now belonged to Bushu, the graves they left behind on the farms will always remind them of their attachment to the farms. This does not entail a dual belonging (to both the farm and the village), but perhaps represents a nagging incompleteness when it comes to belonging unreservedly to Bushu.

8.3.5 Intermarriages

As previously discussed, autochthones including chiefly families have used intermarriages as a way of cementing kinship ties and belonging in Bushu. The former farm workers also made use of this strategy to assert their own belonging in Bushu. In this sense, intermarriages with autochthones did not simply entail a relationship between two consenting adults. Rather, they were a way of constructing social networks and social bonds within Bushu for purposes of accessing land, thereby solidifying claims of belonging. Thus, besides those former farm workers who married autochthones while they still resided on the farms, some children of the former labourers were entering into marital arrangements with autochthones in Bushu, resulting in longer-term kinship relations between autochthones and allochthones.

However, the ex-labourers indicated that romantic affairs let alone marriages with autochthones were quite difficult to establish and, in some cases, to maintain. In a sense, the odds were against long-term marriages. Caleb whose son married a young autochthonous woman narrated the challenges they met in establishing and sustaining the marriage. His son experienced humiliation in its various forms from his wife's relatives while he was courting her and even subsequent to the marriage. He told the story as follows:

> At one time when, they were dating, he [his son] had to be admitted at the local clinic to nurse wounds he sustained after he was beaten by her brothers. I initially thought of opening an asasult police case but my son pleaded with me not to. I also pleaded with him to leave her. I did not want to lose my son but he would have none of it. He talked about love. He said he loved and wanted to marry her. The girl was equally adamant. She was also constantly beaten by her parents and the brothers. They said she could not marry *mubwidi* from Malawi. They told her we were totemless. But she refused to jilt my son. They probably knew each other better. They went to secondary school together. Before we knew it, she was pregnant and she eloped and we took her in. I had no issues with her because she was a good girl and she respected us. In the first days, her parents wanted to take her away but she refused. But thankfully things have changed over the years. We are now relatives. Real ones. We are in very good books with our in-laws. We share and do a lot of things together. They love their grandson much as we do. (Interview with Caleb, 19 November 2019).

Caleb's account shows the way in which intermarriages assisted in fostering relations between autochthonous and non-autochthnous families. Though autochthonous parents initially strongly disapproved of intermarriages with farm workers of foreign origin, these unions are being gradually normalised. The eventual acceptance arises from the fact that the former labourers are in Bushu to stay. As such, intermarriages between the autochthones and the ex-workers may continue to strengthen relations and cement belonging in the same manner that autochthonous families strengthen relations through intermarriages in Bushu.

The children of former farm workers also engaged in similar and shared activities with the autochthones' children. These activities included going to school and learning together, fetching firewood and water, herding cattle and attending church, all of which brought these children together. Such interactions and interfaces facilitated the undercutting of the strangehood of allochthones. For this reason, interviewees like Martha opined that – over time – it was going to become easier for their children and all later generations to come to co-exist with Bushu

autochthones. Martha pointed out that she constantly encouraged her children to play with the autochthones and possibly marry them in the future.

8.4 Staying Authentic

While the former workers were determined to assert belonging through engaging in common activities with the autochthones, many were likewise determined to maintain their unique identity, and thus not belong in and through complete assimilation. Interviews reveal that they had certain cultural traits and practices that they wanted at all costs to preserve and possibly pass on to their children, even if they were now residing in Bushu on a permanent basis. Additionally, they wanted to share some of their cultural practices with the autochthones, a process that was contested by the elderly and traditional leadership in Bushu (as discussed in detail later). To some extent, certain autochthones especially the younger generation willingly adopted the former farm workers' 'foreign' culture. This section discusses cultural practices imported by the former farm workers into Bushu and their practice of them.

8.4.1 Zvigure

Most male interviewees of Malawian origin and a few of Mozambican origin indicated that they had preserved the Chewa traditional dances known as *'gule wamkulu'* in Chewa or *'zvigure'* in vernacular Shona. *Gule wamkulu* literally means 'great or big dances', and these dances have their roots among the Chewa of Malawian origin. Legend has it that the dances originated as a way of entertaining people in return for food. Later, the Chewa aristocracy adopted these dances and used them for purposes of political legitimacy. However, since the aristocracy did not want to be recognised as partaking in these dances of the commoners, they put on paraphernalia in the form of masks and rags in order to conceal their identity. In Zimbabwe, the dances came with the Chewa labour-seeking migrants, which explains why *gule wamkulu* is popular in mines, farms and low-income urban areas and not in communal areas. The dances used to and still serve as a form of entertainment.

This study reveals though, that far from only serving as a source of entertainment, the dances have great significance in terms of identity-formation and social belonging. As a general tendency, the *gule wamkulu* dances are a significant identity marker among the Chewa in Zimbabwe (Daimon 2007). The dances relate to major identity markers such as gender, class and ethnicity. Because of this, "the Chewa identity in Zimbabwe has principally been re-constructed, not much from their

ethnic or linguistic characteristics, but from their *gule wamkulu* traditions" (Daimon 2007:2). My research confirmed Daimon's claims. *Gule wamkulu* is indeed a major identity marker that separates Africans of foreign origin from the autochthones in Bushu. Most of the interviewees of Chewa origin claimed that the *gule wamkulu* dances were an indispensable part of them. As one of the Chewa ex-labourers clearly highlighted:

> We will never leave that dance. It has to go on, for our generations to come. *Gule wamkulu* is us. It's what defines us. We cannot be separated from it no matter what. (Interview with Ndebvu, 12 December 2019).

These Chewa ex-workers also brought to the fore that the dances held meanings that went beyond what people could see with a naked eye. The dances were deeply sacred among the Chewa and all those who practiced them, as they represented a form of traditional religion that united the Chewa people and their ancestors. Just like the traditional African religions in Zimbabwe, Chewa traditional spirituality revolves around the belief that dead ancestors hold power and protection over the living, who act as an intermediator between the living and God. Thus, in the dances, ancestors are symbolised by the masks that the dancers put on during their performances (Daimon 2007).

Gule wamkulu was important to the Chewa migrants since the dances invoked and enabled the migrants to communicate with their God in a foreign land. Chewa interviewees believed strongly that local leadership in Bushu should respect their religion, and give them an opportunity to practice freely their religion. This would facilitate their ancestors' presence in Bushu, despite the existence of many graves of the dead in the former commercial farmlands. In this context, they bemoaned the contempt that some local leaders and local autochthones alike showed towards their dance. In some villages, reportedly, the dances were subject to bannings on the pretext that they profaned the land because they amounted to a foreign pagan act disrupting the spiritual landscape in Bushu.

The dances ignited significant levels of politics of belonging and 'othering' between the former farm workers and the autochthones in Bushu. As will be discussed more fully later, the elderly and traditional leadership in Bushu were against the performing of *gule wamkulu* dances in Bushu. The Chewa in Bushu vowed to continue with the dances despite the hostile ethnic context. In fact, they undertook secret initiation ceremonies just outside Bushu in an effort to preserve the tradition of

the dances. Owing to the hostile environment coupled with the secrecy that characterises membership and their activities, Chewa ex-labourers were unwilling to reveal the actual initiation sites used by Chewa residents in Bushu. They simply indicated that one of the sites was "just nearby". Under these troublesome circumstances, initiation ceremonies ensured that the tradition lived and survived beyond the farms and mines and across generations.

Despite the contestations from elderly and Bushu traditional leadership, it appeared that some younger autochthones not only liked but actually joined *zvigure* in Bushu unbeknown to their parents. At the same time, there were rumours that some youngsters known to have participated in these 'foreign' activities had been cautioned by their parents and family members for doing so. The former farm workers reasoned that the young autochthonous initiates together with the Chewa descendants were the future of *gule wamkulu* in Bushu.

As noted, not all former farm workers engaging in the practices of *gule wamkulu* were Chewa by origin. Augusto for instance pointed out that he joined *zvigure* while working at a nearby farm despite the fact that he was of Mozambican origin. Such cases challenge the authenticity of *gule wamkulu* as a purely Chewa tradition in Bushu. Likewise, not all members of the young generation of Chewa newcomers in Bushu subscribed to *gule wamkulu*. Some instead chose Pentecostal and Apostolic religions and lifestyles in Bushu. As well, some older Chewa residents were leaving *zvigure* for Christianity. Sixty-five-year-old Martin for example reported that he left *zvigure* when working at a certain farm in Shamva, long before coming to Bushu after realising that the dances were a form of pagan worship. He then chose to convert to one of the local Apostolic sects. Martin like other like-minded Chewa interviewees reasoned that it was not proper to join the dances and thereby the religious doctrine which they stood for. They now worshipped the Christian God and not the *gulu wamkulu* deity (*Mulungu*) alongside many autochthones in Bushu.

By forsaking *zvigure* for a local religion, Martin and other Chewas had become part of the religious 'us' in Bushu leaving behind the 'other' *gule wamkulu* dancers, who still needed spiritual salvation necessary to become a fully-fledged Bushu villager. These complex developments challenge the idea that *gule wamkulu* will remain indefinitely an identity marker among the Chewa in Zimbabwe, as purported by Daimon (2007). Instead, I argue that the initiation of non-Chewa into *zvigure* and the forsaking of *zvigure* by some of Chewa origin signify a quest for un-belonging and a subverted form of othering and strangerhood. Through voluntarily joining the *gule wamkulu* practices, the

young (particularly male) autochthones were subverting the prevailing hegemonic discourses about foreigners and challenging othering of the foreigners by the dominant autochthones. They were in a way sending a message that *gule wamkulu* dancers were not strangers in Bushu anymore. Even if *gule wamkulu* dancers were strangers in Bushu, the young autochthones were proudly part of the strangers in their own land. However, despite these complexities, most former farm workers of Chewa origin across all ages vowed to continue with their *gule wamkulu* tradition in Bushu communal lands.

8.4.2 Chinamwali

Though male Chewa interviewees identified *gule wamkulu* as their identity marker, the female version was *chinamwali*. *Chinamwali* is a female initiation rite practiced by ethnic groups mainly from Malawi and Zambia. It is a rite of passage to complete womanhood for the Chewa originally from Malawi, Lozi from Zambia, and Chikunda from Mozambique and Zambia. During this rite, young girls of puberty stage whisked away to secret places where they receive lessons and training about life as a woman. While girls are normally initiated as soon as they experience their first menstrual cycle, the rite can also be performed when a woman is about to get married. Young women undertake different lessons about sexual reproduction and practices as well as womanhood. These include labia minora elongation, sex styles education, respect for husbands, and how to be a virtuous heterosexual wife in general. Similar to *gule wamkulu*, *chinamwali* initiations are shrouded in secrecy. As one of the trainers Anna explained, *chinamwali* literally means "the hidden" (Interview with Anna, 19 September 2019). Hence, the initiation is all about revealing to young and troubled women the secrets of being a successful wife.

The *chinamwali* initiation involves the giving to initiates of specific beads that enhance sexual intercourse, which the woman wears around the belly to bring about sexual magic and power. As Anna explains, men are hypnotised by the beads, leading to an insatiable sexual eroticism, desire and pleasure in men. To those who hold them to be effective, the beads are an exceptional aphrodisiac. *Chinamwali* initiates elongate their labia ostensibly to make sex more enjoyable for men, with the labia acting as fingers that grip the penis during sexual intercourse. A man can also caress both the labia and the beads before and during sex and this amplifies sexual satisfaction. The young women also learn how to arouse a man using their different body parts including hands, breasts and lips.

My research revealed that, similar to the dynamics within the *gule wamkulu* tradition, autochthonous women were joining the newcomers in practicing *chinamwali* training and initiation rites in Bushu despite the labelling of *chinamwali* as a 'foreign' practice. Thus, young autochthonous women of puberty age as well as those who were about to be married were, in unison, joining the former farm workers' daughters as *chinamwali* initiates. Autochthonous women facing marital problems especially those related to sexual issues also sought the services of Anna in a bid to save their troubled marriages. Anna boasted of her ability to save such marriages. She blamed autochthonous women for lacking sexual abilities and dexterity:

> To be honest with you, Shona women do not know how to please their men in bed and even in matters that have nothing to do with the bed. They just don't know how to make a man satisfied. When they come here [to see me], you realise that they have been playing as logs in bed. They just lie down and expect a man to do everything. That's not how sex is done. When they come to us, we teach them how to dance in bed. They always come back to thank us, saying that fire has been reignited in their bedrooms. That's why we are here. (Interview with Anna, 19 September 2019)

This teaching and training of the autochthones by the former foreigners on sexual issues (a subject about intimacy) is a demonstration of the newcomers' ability to subvert hegemonies that look down upon Africans of foreign origin. Realising the power that they now wielded as evidenced by the growing number of autochthonous women who frequented their houses for sexual training, the women of foreign origin were able to construct autochthonous women as a sexual and cultural other, those who lacked knowledge on how to please a man. In this particular case, autochthones become the cultural other in their own land (Bushu). Being a *chinamwali* graduate therefore became a new form of social differentiation and status in Bushu as introduced by women of foreign origin. The migrant women possessed seemingly indispensable cultural-social capital that was lacking among the autochthones. It was not the purpose of my research to ascertain whether this lack was real or imagined, but the female interviewees stated that the lack was obvious.

Sexual fetishism is often rife among otherised populations including migrants (Jensen 2011). However, whether or not this was a case of fetishism is not the crucial issue here. Rather, the fact that locals sought the expertise of the newcomers is a manifestation of autochthones' acceptance of the newcomers and their culture in Bushu. Perceived sexual and marital knowledge equipped the newcomers with a repository of cultural-social capital to justify their belonging in Bushu. If

chinamwali was a critical local need, then the newcomers arguably had to stay and help troubled women in order to bring and maintain sanity in the autochthones marriages in the heterosexual and patriarchal Bushu.

Social capital in the form of chinamwali effectively presented the ex-labourers with power and prestige over uninitiated autochthonous women. It became their gateway to belonging in Bushu while subverting local ethnic and cultural hegemonies in the highly ethnicised Bushu communal areas. However, some of the sexual practices taught were not unique to the newcomers, and neither were all locals willing to consume the newcomers' sexual practices. Labia minora elongation, for instance, existed among the ancestors of the autochthones in Bushu long before colonisation. Nonetheless, it remains that the finer details of *chinamwali* were unique to the newcomers and some autochthones were willing to learn about them.

8.4.3 Sadaka

A majority of former farm workers of Mozambican origin indicated that they celebrated their departed ancestors through a ritual called *sadaka*. *Sadaka* involved family members brewing beer and slaughtering animals amid songs and dances. The dusk to dawn feasts also involved the living asking for their ancestors' protection. Everyone including the autochthones was free to join *sadaka* celebrations, albeit only family members (of the Mozambicans) were supposed to lead the ceremony. Older participants like Augusto (from Mozambique) wished for their children and generations to come to preserve the tradition of *sadaka* in Bushu.

Augusto however pointed out that, though he would invite his autochthonous neighbours to attend *sadaka*, only a few would turn up. Those who attended usually refused to drink the beer or eat the food. To him, it appeared the autochthones just watched and were there not necessarily to participate. Instead, some of the former farm workers, including those of Malawian and Zambian origin, would attend and participate in the proceedings. As was the case with *gule wamkulu*, most traditional leaders were against the idea of holding *sadaka* in Bushu.

8.4.4 'Foreign' Music, Movies and Language

My field visits to some former farm workers' homes would coincide with foreign music being played or danced to. Most owned radio sets and a few owned solar powered television sets. Music played would range from Zimbabwean based musicians to those based in their countries of origin. This does not imply that Zimbabweans including autochthones do not listen to foreign music. What

was striking in the homes of ex-farm workers though was the continuous and consistent playing of Chewa and Zambian music.

Music from Zimbabwean born musicians of Malawian origin such as Alick Macheso and Nicholas Zacharia proved very popular with the interviewees. They highlighted that, even though they enjoyed all of the songs played, they loved Chewa songs more than Shona ones. Caleb indicated that he wished Macheso would compose more Chewa songs so that his children would learn 'their' language more fully. By referring to Chewa as 'their' language, Caleb was probably implying that Chewa and not Shona was his children's true language and authentic identity. Despite the fact that his children were born in Zimbabwe, Caleb wanted them to embrace the Malawian language.

The ex-labourers also owned a collection of old school and contemporary Malawian, Mozambican and Zambian music. They reported that they follow the latest offerings from their favourite artists based in their countries of origin. Sometimes, they would listen to this music with friends of foreign origin when they paid visits. In a way, this helped to foster a sense of belonging and solidarity among Africans of foreign origin in a diaspora.

Interestingly, they also expressed displeasure in the manner that Zimbabwean-by-descent artists, particularly those in mainstream music industry, show cased Africans of foreign origin. According to them, most television dramas appearing on the national broadcaster – Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) – presented Africans of foreign origin as either mystical or dull. Martha gave an example of *Maoko Matema*, a drama on ZBC, which casted a character of foreign origin (Arineshto) as a traditional leader. Some complained that Zimbabwean-by-descent musicians who sing in Chewa (such as Zex Manatsa) did so with the intent of parody. As such, they did not appreciate his music. However, others highlighted that they did enjoy the parody that comes along with such music.

On two occasions, I found Martha watching Chewa movies at Chipo's house. Both Martha and Chipo once worked and lived at a nearby farm and, even though they were both born in Zimbabwe, they were born of Malawian parents. They had both managed to secure communal stands in one of the villages in Bushu. The two women would sit comfortably in Martha's small sitting room watching an old model 14-inch colour TV. Their children would also join them. They would play pirated Chewa movie DVDs during their spare time. Since my initial visits took place during the dry season, they had more time to rest as they were not busy in the fields, unlike the case during

the rainy season. They therefore had enough time to watch their favourite Chewa movies and soapies during my September and October 2019 visits.

The two women pointed out that the Chewa movies were very instrumental since they taught them significant details about 'their' culture and origins. They pointed out that the movies were important to them since the filming of the movies took place in their countries of origin. Besides being born to Malawian parents, the two were born and bred in Zimbabwe and had never visited Malawi. Hence, they reasoned that watching Malawian movies shot on Malawian soil helped them to translate what had become their imagined origins into reality. Chipo mentioned that the movies helped her visualise present day Malawi. To Martha, just seeing Malawi on the screen assisted her in connecting to her place of origin and even the people living in present day Malawi. As she pointed out:

> Sometimes we laugh at ourselves. When we watch actors on TV,… we always joke and say "look at that one, doesn't she sound or look like you? That must be our father's sister's daughter that he left in Malawi. We should visit them some day". Then we continue laughing. (Interview with Martha, 17 October 2019).

Movies and music were an important medium for passing on the intricacies of the Chewa language to the Malawians in Zimbabwe. Martha for instance indicated that most of the movies she watched contained rich Chewa idioms and cultural practices. Her wish was for her children to learn Chewa culture and language from the movies, such that Chewa movies and music became very important to the life of her households. Chipo and Martha complained that even though their autochthonous friends would listen to Chewa music, the latter had little interest in watching Chewa movies and dramas. They were also very willing to translate Chewa language for their Shona neighbours and friends in Bushu, but these neighbours were not very keen to learn the Chewa language. Shona neighbours would only watch Shona or English movies. Because of this, the two women expressed deep displeasure at the belittlement of their language by the autochthones.

The former farm workers spoke Chewa and other languages spoken in their countries of origin especially when conversing amongst themselves. This was particularly noticeable among the older former farm workers notably the first- and second-generation migrants. Their foreign accent was also prevalent when they spoke the local Zezuru dialect of Shona. The former workers noted that

their ethnic languages were an important part of their identity, despite being subject to ridicule by the locals who laugh at their 'foreign' accents. As one interviewee narrated:

> Chewa is my language; it's a part of me. It's who I am. In the farms, we could speak it in the compounds though its different now. Most of our new neighbours cannot speak it. Yes, I can speak Shona but you can hear its different from yours. Some of the people here [in Bushu] think that the way I speak is funny especially the young ones... I remember when we first came here, they would come to greet us. When we greeted back they would just laugh and run away. We later realised that they were fascinated by our accent. Even some of their parents do that. But I can't be ashamed of my language. So, I will continue speaking like this. I would want my grandchildren to speak the way I do, but you can see they [younger Chewa] speak differently. It could have been different had we still been on the farms. But here they [their accent] are definitely going to change. (Interview with Caleb 20 November 2019).

The younger generations particularly the millennials spoke with a deep local Zezuru accent unlike their parents and grandparents. Though they could understand their parents' ethnic languages, they reported that their appreciation of those languages was limited. There was therefore a shift towards the local language for the younger generation of the former farm workers of foreign origin.

In summation, though they longed to belong to Bushu landscape and all its collectivities, the former farm workers of foreign origin also felt the compulsion to preserve their unique cultural practices which they felt were definitive of their being and identity. Despite facing resistance from some powerful autochthones, the ex-farm labourers found ways (including secretive ones) of preserving and practicing cultural practices that continued to shape their lifeworlds in Bushu. This may imply present and future multi-ethnic practices becoming the norm in Bushu, especially considering that some autochthones find the cultural practices worth joining and following.

8.5 Former Farm Workers' Perception of the Bushu Autochthones

In this section, I discuss some of the former farm workers' perceptions on the autochthones in light of belonging and the politics of belonging in Bushu. I start by discussing the seemingly correlative relationship between the total number of years spent in Bushu and the former farm workers' perceptions of the autochthones. What follows thereafter are some of the specific perceptions of the former farm workers about the autochthones in Bushu, and how these arise from the everyday interfaces between the former farm workers and the autochthones.

8.5.1 A Question of Time and Belonging?

Former farm workers of foreign origin who migrated into Bushu post fast track expressed mostly negative perceptions of their new neighbours. Their negative perceptions however seemed different to those expressed by former farm workers of foreign origin who migrated into Bushu prior to fast track, particularly those that migrated into Bushu in the 1970s during the liberation war. Though the immigrants from the 1970s were not of particular interest to my study, interviews conducted with both older and newer (post-2000) immigrants seem to suggest correlative tendencies. Overall, even amongst the newer immigrants, perceptions of autochthones to some extent correlated with the number of years lived in Bushu communal areas.

Hence, former farm workers who had lived longer in the communal areas, particularly those who migrated into Bushu soon after the onset of the FTLRP in the early 2000s, seemed to have started developing positive perceptions of the locals compared to those who migrated later. Quite likely, the longer the former farm workers interfaced with the autochthones, the more they learned about each other and the more they cemented their relation and acceptance of each other. Additionally, it appeared that the former labourers who once worked on farms bordering or near Bushu communal areas had a more positive perception of the autochthones. This was due to the at least intermittent contact they had with the autochthones while working and living on the farms. However, these were simply general tendencies. For example, some former farm workers who had spent more years than others in the communal areas had continued to express a negative perception of the autochthones. The ongoing negative perception of the autochthones demonstrates, in many instances, a perpetual social boundary between autochthones and allochthones. This maintenance of social boundaries implies that othering persists between the two groupings.

The general tendency, though, is as follows. Former workers who had spent more years in Bushu opined that the autochthones treated them with dignity and in the same manner that they treated fellow autochthones. They claimed they did not experience ethnic discrimination by their neighbours and local traditional leadership. At the same time, those who moved into the communal areas later (from the 2010s onwards) had a negative conception, namely, that autochthones were jealous and discriminatory towards them.

8.5.2 Lack of Farming Prowess

Those former farm labourers who had spent most of their lives on the farms claimed to possess better farming skills than the autochthones. Once settled in the communal areas, they also claimed

that they were realising superior agricultural yields than the autochthones despite the fact that they possessed inferior farming land in terms of both size and quality. They blamed the autochthones for being ignorant when it came to farming excellence. Augusto for instance was irked by the way in which autochthones practiced their agriculture. In his words:

> These people do not know what farming is. They think that owning a big size of land and draught power is sufficient for one to be a good farmer. But alas. Farming is not easy. You need to have knowledge, hard work and experience. White farmers taught us those skills. Now people here in Bushu think we use *juju* [magical powers] but that is not true. Our farming prowess is a result of years spend with white commercial farmers, learning and mastering farming. (Interview with Augusto, 10 December 2019).

Some former farm workers argued that autochthonous communal farmers were no different from most new black A1 and A2 fast track farmers when it came to a lack of farming skills. Even if the autochthones in Bushu were given more fertile and arable commercial farm land (like the fast track farmers), they would never equate themselves to former white farmers in terms of levels of agricultural productivity. Poor yields and low productivity were likely to be the outcomes as long as the autochthones were the majority of the commercial farmers in the country. For that reason, some interviewees such as Ndebvu and Caleb even asserted that it was better for former farm workers to receive priority as land redistribution beneficiaries, since they had more farming expertise compared to the autochthones. Giving commercial farm land to the locals was bound to curtail the country's once thriving agricultural sector, as in fact it had since the year 2000. In the end, the former farm workers attributed the autochthones' failure to perform agriculturally to lack of modern farming techniques coupled with sheer laziness.

Former farm workers stated that most of the Bushu autochthones were jealous of their farming abilities and this was another source of tension between the two groups. Martha and Augusto for example pointed out that autochthones justified their farming inferiority by blaming the former farm workers for using *juju*. 'Lazy' autochthones would point fingers at them and even other successful autochthonous communal farmers for using goblins and other supernatural means to steal yields from their fields. To the former farm workers, autochthones used sorcery and witchcraft claims as a scapegoat to justify their farming incompetence.

Chipo also gave an account of how, on one occasion, one rival autochthone discouraged other villagers from buying vegetables from her garden on the pretext that she used water used to bathe dead human bodies to water her vegetables. Chipo claimed that the rival's lies were meant to sabotage her thriving market gardening. Augusto argued as well that some villagers were skeptical about buying grains from his field, fearing he used supernatural powers. He narrated how some villagers unwarrantedly claimed that those who bought his grains were 'theft and witchcraft' accomplices of Augusto, since he used his goblins to steal yields from fellow villagers to boost his own yields. The othering and labelling of former farm workers and their yields signified an economic rivalry between the allochthones and autochthones. Thus, for some newcomers, autochthones were jealous and lazy farmers, incapable of producing high yields from their comparatively larger and more fertile communal fields.

The verification of witchcraft claims was not pertinent to this study. The key point entails considering the meaning of such witchcraft accusations and the social contestations in which these claims exist. In this respect, it seems clear that these were socially constructed accusations on a specifically ethnic basis, ostensibly arising in an attempt to 'otherise' former farm workers. Even though witchcraft is real to those who believe in it, the prevailing social context and interfaces between allochthones and autochthones conditioned who was the witch and the bewitched. Apparently, those with power to define, who in this case were autochthones, were in a stronger position to call the seemingly powerless newcomers witches.

The witchcraft accusations involved painting the former farm workers as a people oblivious to modernity. Effectively, a witch in this case represents a social misfit, a person who (or a category of people which) has come to cause a disturbance in a once orderly community, the kind of social disturbance that allochthones presumably always cause whenever they settle in an autochthone's territory. Former farm workers of foreign origin would come across as a people who failed to practice modern agriculture using scientific ways by having to turn to magic and sorcery. As a form of othering, the allochthone witch becomes an evil person tantamount to an unwanted villain, one who does not and cannot belong amongst the unadulterated autochthones. Witches of foreign origin therefore represent unwanted and dirty elements in Bushu that pollute the territorial space of Bushu. They remain intruders and strangers who at some time in the future will have to leave Bushu as they are causing moral disturbances. Accusing someone of witchcraft therefore becomes

a justification for potentially expelling the accused from the village. In short, in the eyes of the autochthones, by practicing witchcraft, the newcomers made it impossible for them to fit into the Bushu community. They just cannot not belong. They are in the territorial space, but not of the space.

However, witchcraft accusations are also pervasive within the category of autochthonous farmers in Zimbabwe including in Shamva. Mudege (2007) notes for example that successful farmers in Shamva's Mupfurudzi Resettlement Scheme are usually blamed for using witchcraft and magic to boost their yields. Because of this, witchcraft accusations targeting specific community members with particular attributes (in my study, people of foreign origin) can be understood as being rooted in a broader and lengthier history of A politics of belonging in the communal areas of Zimbabwe.

8.5.3 They Are Too Controlling

Though former labourers reasoned that the communal areas came with considerable autonomy compared to the farm-based domestic government, they also pointed out that certain elements within Bushu sought to control them. Those who engaged in practices of control included ordinary autochthones as well as traditional and political leadership in Bushu.

As discussed already, the former farm workers posited that one way of asserting belonging in Bushu, and to some extent to gain access to certain resources (including food handouts) was through showing loyalty to the ruling ZANU-PF party. However, I noticed that some former labourers attempted to avoid any discussion of political issues, particularly during our first interviews. Further, they indicated that at times supporting ZANU-PF, including participating in the party's activities such as rallies was not so much a choice as a directive from the party's youths. Some compared the subtle coercion to join and participate in the ruling party's activities (including voting for ZANU-PF) to the way in which their former white farmers at one time attempted to coerce them to support the opposition MDC (from late 1999). Thus, to avoid confrontations with political leadership in Bushu, all interviewees stated that they possessed ruling-party membership cards, with none of them reporting being an opposition member or supporter. As Augusto explained:

> Every place you go has its owners and rulers. You have to do what they want whether you like it or not. So here you have to support your leaders and do what they want including voting. What you want to do doesn't matter. (Interview with Augusto, 22 November 2019).

Some former workers including Augusto feared that failure to adhere to the directives and dictates of the ruling party might come with undesirable consequences including harassment and intimidation, particularly towards election times. They also thought that non-compliance would result in failure to access government handouts in the form of agricultural inputs and food relief.

Others complained that traditional leadership wanted to control their cultural practices. As already discussed, traditional leaders disapproved of *gule wamkhulu* dances in Bushu. Instead, the former farm workers were ordered to follow Bushu's cultural practices. This explains why *gule wamkulu* practices occurred clandestinely in Bushu.

8.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I focused on the former farm workers' perceptions and narratives of possible co-existence with the former farm workers. Despite the persistent name calling and exclusionary tactics that they faced, the former farm workers considered themselves first and foremost Zimbabweans and authentic sons and daughters of the soil. Strategies employed to forge belonging in the communal areas were encapsulated in economic, political, religious and cultural spectrums. Though there was a marked imperative amongst the ex-farm workers of foreign origin to foster belonging in Bushu, they also felt the need to preserve some of their cultural traditions. As well, some autochthones became 'consumers' of the former migrants' culture. Interfaces with the autochthones cultivated mixed feelings among the former farm workers, with findings suggesting a correlative relationship between number of years spent in Bushu and perceptions of the autochthones. Though some positive perceptions seemingly developing over time, the ex-labourers maintained that autochthones including the leadership were too controlling, and this was perhaps reminiscent of the experiences of control under domestic government on the white farms.

CHAPTER NINE: AUTOCHTHONES AND EX-FARM LABOURERS OF FOREIGN ORIGIN IN BUSHU – THE POLITICS OF BELONGING

9.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses autochthones' perceptions and practices in relation to the former farm workers of foreign origin, including ethnicised forms of exclusion in Bushu. I first focus on the perceptions of ordinary autochthones as informed by their everyday interfaces with the former farm labourers. In capturing the narratives of these autochthones, the chapter seeks to unearth the sources of micro politics of belonging between the two groups but, this time, from the autochthones' perceptions. A later section considers autochthonous political, administration and traditional leaders' perceptions and practices in relation to the former farm workers in Bushu, in order to unearth the macro politics of belonging and how this may impinge upon the former farm workers' modes of belonging in Bushu. Focus is also given to if and how the macro politics of belonging might have replaced the farm based domestic government and farm-based conditional belonging.

9.2 Autochthones and the Ex-Farm Labourer Newcomers in Bushu

This section captures ordinary Bushu autochthones's narratives of co-existence and perceptions of the ex-farm labourers of foreign origin in Bushu, in an attempt to understand micro politics of belonging, strangerhood and othering between the autochthones and the former farm workers. I therefore look at the autochthones' sources of tensions and contestations with the ex-farm workers and how these shape interfaces and co-existence between the two groups.

9.2.1 They are Taking our Children's Land

Most autochthones in Bushu expressed panic over the sudden in-migration of foreign farm workers into the communal villages. They were concerned about communal land scarcity in Bushu and they blamed the newcomers for exerting increasing pressure over land. Land scarcity was a reality especially in villages located nearer to Shamva town, with land seekers constantly approaching authorities in those villages for plots of land. In this context, a number of land seekers were being settled on land designated for animal grazing. This caused contestations between the autochthones

and the newcomers as well as between the autochthones and their village leaders who were supposedly selling grazing land on an illegal basis.

Though some autochthonous villagers indicated that they had 'enough' land for agriculture and grazing, they claimed that the newcomers were robbing their children and future generations of autochthones of the much needed yet finite communal land. Additionally, they pointed out that, owing to land pressure, communal area cropping plots were becoming smaller, compared to what their fathers accessed in the past. This implied that the autochthones would have inadequate land to pass on to their sons. As one autochthone pointed out:

> Look, this land is not going to stretch. Zimbabwe is not going to Johannesburg. It will remain Zimbabwe, from Zambezi to Limpopo [rivers], it won't go beyond that. And so is Bushu [fixed in size]. Right now, I have four sons and I have to give each of them a stand. That means I have to divide my field among them. I inherited two acres from my father. He owned 6 acres and divided them among the three of us. So, you can see. Ask yourself, how many acres am I going to give to each of my sons? And what are their sons going to give their sons. We are failing them by donating their land to these [foreign] people. It's clear our village heads need to stop selling land. (Interview with Mhungu, 18 December 2019).

However, the patrilineal access to land implied that the autochthones were not worried about their own daughters. The assumption is that the daughters would access land through their husbands. Not every daughter necessarily married and, even in cases where daughters married, some daughters of the autochthones would marry Africans of foreign origin including the former farm workers and their descendants, who typically lacked access to ancestral lands. Even intermarriages amongst autochthonous households meant that daughters were accessing land via husbands whose plots would likely be small. Overall, women's access to land continues to be precarious in Bushu communal areas. At the same time, as pointed out earlier, some former farm workers of foreign origin accessed land through their autochthonous wives. Thus, in these instances, women facilitated men's access to land. The women would have to plead for land from their fathers or brothers on behalf of their husbands. This dynamic shows that the gendered character of land access sometimes entails men accessing land via women, thereby going contrary to the overall patrilineal arrangement.

Some autochthones were quick to point that land parceling to outsiders (including ex-labourers) was supposed to stop, considering the failure on the part of many Bushu villagers to benefit from the fast track land process. Those ordinary communal villagers receiving fast track land did so under the A1 small-scale model, with possessing A2 commercial farm plots confined to the 'politically connected'. The A2 beneficiaries consisted of war veterans, ZANU-PF leaders and government workers, with the majority of them comprising top government officials originating from districts outside of Shamva. Additionally, A1 plot holders from Bushu held on to their limited family plots in Bushu, serving to exacerbate land shortages. As Mhungu further explained:

> We hear our fathers long back used to conquer to get land. But now it's illegal. *Jambanja* came and its now history; those who benefitted won. The majority of us lost. These few [white] farmers we remain with have to stay. For example, Magobo [one of the few white farmers remaining in Shamva} has to stay, and people love him [because] he helps everyone including the government. Even if we chase him away, we all know that the farm will be taken by one big man. So, like I said, land is not going to expand. Those people [former farm workers of foreign origin] who are coming here, they need to stay on those [former white] farms or go somewhere else. Not here. (Interview with Mhungu, 19 December 2019).

Autochthonous peasants in Bushu recognised, though, that it was almost impossible for former farm workers to attain land on fast track farms, given the considerable challenges they faced as autochthones. Nevertheless, they tended to reason that the ex-farm workers should vacate Bushu communal areas in the same manner that they had vacated the farms. This of course was tantamount to disputing the in-migrants' belonging, or denying their communal belonging altogether. Such, almost xenophobic, remarks were reiterated by most autochthones who felt that land was simply becoming increasingly scarce in Bushu, including for autochthones. As one of the local autochthones argued:

> So, these people cannot continue coming here. But, here we can deal with the matter. These people need to go back. We all know they came from somewhere. They have to go back there. They know where they came from. They ty to be clever, pretending like they don't know where they came from. Their countries [of origin] are not growing [in size] and neither is ours. (Interview with Noah, 20 November 2019).

Although xenophobic-like tendencies existed amongst communal villagers in Bushu, and vague threats issued against the ex-workers, there are no cases of xenophobic attacks in Bushu.

What was also striking about Noah is the fact that his family is originally from Centenary District and not Shamva District, though the two districts are both located in the same province. His grandfather had migrated to Shamva, after running away from witchcraft accusations. However, he insisted that any Zimbabwean was free to settle anywhere in Zimbabwe. Hence, autochthones were free to migrate anywhere else in Zimbabwe, but not Africans of foreign origin. He claimed:

> My sister [addressing the researcher], my surname is Zimbabwean. Go wherever you want in Zimbabwe. They know us. We are the owners of Zimbabwe. Not them. Even if they look like us, their surnames will always betray them. One of them came to my house looking for piece work. I asked him what's your surname, he said Phiri. Now tell me, what sort of a surname is that? Obviously not Zimbabwean. So, when he wants to appease his ancestors he will speak to the Phiris, who are where? Not me, it's clear I will speak to my great grandfathers who are [buried] in Hoya, Muzarabani[8] (Interview with Noah, 20 November 2020).

To Noah, being autochthonous fell within the geographical boundaries of Zimbabwe, so that it was not localised or confined to Bushu. This nationalisation of autochthonous claims was widely held by other autochthones who claimed origin from Zimbabwean districts other than Bushu. However, most of those who claimed origin from other Zimbabwean districts were not as anti-foreigner, at least stridently, as was the case with Noah.

Autochthonous villagers, as indicated, spoke negatively about their traditional and political leaders for selling communal land at the expense of the autochthones and their generations to come. They were also concerned that, if strangers continued to access and possess land in Bush, then this would compromise the ethnic complexion of Bushu. As one autochthone brought to the fore:

> These leaders of ours are serious kleptomaniacs. Money is too important to them, more than ethics and morals. They know that this land is ours and our children's heritage. Why allow strangers? You see, they [foreigners] are here behaving freely like the owners of this land. Those houses they are building will soon be ruins and they now have their graves here. That means a lot. I don't know whether our leaders really know what they are doing. (Interview with Mhungu, 19 December 2019).

Villagers like Mhungu were not comfortable with the material presence of the former farm workers of foreign origin, in the form of houses and graves in Bushu's landscape. This material presence

[8] Hoya is a place in Centenary District. Muzarabani is another name for Centenary from where Noah purports his ancestors originate.

tended to stamp their belonging on a permanent basis in the communal area. In particular, there was significant concern about the ex-labourers burying their dead in Bushu. In this regard, it was more proper for the former farm workers to continue burying their departed in the former commercial farms. Furthermore, Mhungu argued that instead of allowing the former farm workers to build their own houses, they should only live in houses specifically built (and once lived in) by autochthones. "That way", Mhungu claimed, "they will not leave their *matongo* [ruins] in Bushu" (Interview with Mhungu, 19 December 2019). Mhungu's tone seemed to imply that the former farm workers were only temporary sojourners and that would eventually leave Bushu sometime in the future. He would not accept the idea that the former farm workers were in Bushu to stay, possibly for many generations to come.

9.2.2 They do not Deserve to Belong Here

Even though Noah and like-minded self-acclaimed autochthones reasoned that those considered as non-Zimbabweans should vacate Bushu, some other autochthones thought otherwise. These autochthones believed that the former farm workers of foreign origin deserved to settle in Bushu on a permanent basis, like everyone else. They included a few of those who claimed Bushu as their place of origin, as well as most of those who traced their origins from other parts of Zimbabwe (i.e. outside Shamva District). They reasoned that everyone had a chance and right to belong anywhere as long as they observed and respected the cultural traditions of the place.

Some autochthones pointed out their ancestors came originally from elsewhere (outside Shamva) and, in itself, this was a legitimate reason for not excluding other people who sought land in Bushu. Vhirimi, a retired government worker in his 70s, pointed out that all people living in southern African shared the same origins. He narrated that his great grandfather came from present day Mozambique and migrated into (what is now) Zimbabwe during the pre-colonial era. He noted that his surname now sounded like a Shona name, but it was actually a Mozambican surname by origin. As he indicated:

> The problem is that most of these people who call others foreigners are not aware of their history. Yes, my ancestors are believed to be one of the original occupants of this area. But you see, my grandfather used to tell us that we came from Manica [a Mozambican province]. Our ancestors then settled in what is now Mutare [an eastern Zimbabwean town located near the Mozambican border]. Some of our relatives are still in Manica and some are in Mutare. My great grandfather and some of

> our friends and relatives then moved here a long time ago. Now people today think of us as originating from here. (Interview with Vhirimu, 20 February 2020).

Vhirimu's story, like most of the Bushu villagers who consider themselves as autochthones, reveals the historical migratory trends that are characteristic of most southern African ethnic groups (Mlambo 2016). He opined that, because of the complex migration patterns that took place over an extended period, it is now difficult to tell who is an autochthone or a stranger in the southern African region broadly, and even in Zimbabwe and Shamva more specifically. He also narrated how his grandfather once found 'unknown' graves near their house in Bushu while digging in his yard:

> My grandfather used to tell us how he accidentally exhumed a human skeleton while digging an anthill in his yard. All along, he was not aware that there were graves in that anthill. When he reported the matter to the traditional leadership, everyone was shocked to learn about the graves. So what this means is that some people who we know nothing about once lived here a long time ago. So let the living share the land; it doesn't belong to specific people no matter who we think we are. (Interview with Vhirimu, 20 February 2020).

Vhirimu therefore argued that anyone and everyone had a right to belong to the communal areas of Zimbabwe, as long as they are black. For him, the whole of southern Africa was home to any ethnic group from the region, an issue that white settlers had disrupted and distorted through their compartmentalisation of the region into national territories and their reconfiguration and reconstruction of ethnic groups and identities. For this reason, former farm workers of foreign origin were no different to him in terms of land access and ethnic belonging in Bushu. The only difference is that the former workers (or their ancestors) migrated into the territory of Zimbabwe during a later time-period than his ancestors did.

Vhirimu's own narrative of southern African migration land and ethnicity led him to have a positive perception of the ex-farm workers. The fact that others in Bushu viewed him as one of the autochthones, yet he claimed foreign origin, shows the elastic and fluid character of the status of being an autochthone. His identification as an autochthone in Bushu probably stems from the idea that his family had lived in Bushu for generations. In this regard, length of time spent in a certain territory contributes to the way in which (and the extent to which) specific families are labelled and treated locally as either autochthones or strangers. To that effect, over the long term, former

farm workers of foreign origin might become slowly integrated into the category of autochthone, with this process of belonging also mediated by whether they have Shona-sounding (or perhaps Ndebele-sounding) surnames, as well as by their respect for what is considered as the traditional practices of Bushu culture.

9.2.3 They are Mystical

Most autochthones alleged that the Africans of foreign origin were notorious when it comes to witchcraft, sorcery and magic. They claimed that much of what the newcomers did was unexplainable in any ordinary or common-sense way, as their actions were intertwined deeply with the spiritual realm. As already discussed, the former farm labourers complained that the autochthones wrongfully accused them of using *juju* to realise high yields from their fields. The autochthones were convinced that these yields were not commensurate with the poor soils on which their crops were grown. They alleged that the new migrants inherited *juju* from their foreign ancestors, which they used for transferring crops mysteriously from the autochthones' fields

Besides using *juju* in their fields, the autochthones blamed the new migrants for using witchcraft to silence critics in Bushu. They reported that they feared the witchcraft and magic of the former farm workers to such an extent that they always avoided confrontations with them. One autochthone (Miriam) gave an account of how a certain woman of Malawian descent bewitched her son, as a punishment for resisting that woman's membership in a *mukando* group (Interview with Miriam, 27 October 2019). The migrant woman was supposedly notorious for non-payment of debts in the village. In an attempt to minimise defaulters, Miriam disapproved of the woman joining the group and this did not go down very well with the migrant woman.

In retaliation, the woman apparently caused a mysterious illness in Miriam's six-year-old son. It was when Miriam consulted a local prophet that there was a revelation about both the witch and the reason for bewitching the boy. One recurring allegation was that, during the night, the former farm workers visited their villages in their countries of origin riding on a winnowing basket. However, none of the autochthones confirmed having seen the witches riding on a winnowing basket. They claimed that one required 'spiritual eyes' for them to be able to see the witches.

The mystification of the migrants occurred as well in the way that the autochthones interpreted the newcomers' cultural beliefs and practices. From their perspective, all the traditional rites of foreign origin (such as *gule wamkulu*, *sadaka* and *chinamwali*) were embedded in magic, sorcery and

witchcraft. Locals alleged that the migrants' rites were shrouded in secrecy in an attempt to conceal their supernatural quality from the autochthones. They questioned why for instance *gule wamkulu* and *chinamwali* initiations took place in secret places and, as well, they thought that the paraphernalia that the *gule wamkulu* dancers wore was hiding the magic that comes with the dances. This was despite the migrants' explanation that ritual secrecy is deliberate in order to bring about and enforce group cohesion among the dancers, and was not for casting spells on autochthones.

It is also important to note that the autochthones practiced their own traditional rites, which were not entirely different from those of the former migrant workers. Rain making ceremonies, which involve appeasement of ancestral spirits, are an annual event in Bushu and indeed most parts of rural Zimbabwe. In Bushu, autochthones conduct these ceremonies in secluded and sacred places, albeit all elders are welcome to participate. Old women who have reached menopause are responsible for beer brewing. In some cases, after the slaughter of animals, a feast accompanies the rain making ceremonies. Through spirit mediums, there is the invoking of territorial spirits and sometimes they manifest themselves.

The autochthones also practiced their traditional dances in the same manner that the migrant Africans did. They continue to engage in traditional dances such as *mbakumba* and *jerusarema*, as they did in the past. Rituals and ceremonies such as *jiti* (whereby dusk to dawn dances are conducted in memory of departed family patriarchs) are practiced as well among the Shona in Bushu. *Jiti* commemorations can take place for a week and, in most cases, there occurs the slaughtering of animals and the brewing of traditional beer. Therefore, *jiti* celebrations involve feasts and traditional dances almost in the same manner as *sadaka*, as practiced by former farm workers of Mozambican origin. Additionally, the ceremonies involve invoking the ancestral spirits in the same way as *sadaka* and *gule wamkulu*.

Autochthonous dances and cultural practices clearly resonate with the 'foreign' culture. However, autochthones still maintained that their dances and rituals were 'normal', 'harmless', 'acceptable' and 'supposed to be done'. They were to be done *in* Bushu by the people *of* Bushu. The migrants were welcome to participate in the autochthones' rituals; however, there were certain rituals and places of which the African migrants were not supposed to be part. For instance, they could not lead rain making ceremonies or appeasement of the territorial water and land spirits. They were

not allowed to enter into sacred caves where burials of traditional leaders took place. It was the autochthones' place to lead in rituals, and the place of migrants only to follow proceedings. At the same time, (ordinary) autochthones who did not belong to the Bushu royal family were also excluded from leading the rituals and ceremonies. However, the presence of ordinary autochthones in these rituals and ceremonies was more acceptable than in the case of allochthones.

Further, a version of *chinamwali* exists among the Shona of Bushu, which involves teaching young women how to become virtuous wives. Nevertheless, the autochthons claimed that theirs was 'acceptable' and there was no use of magic or tarty intentions as was the case with *chinamwali*. Autochthonous women also stressed that Shona girls were taught by people 'they know', usually their father's sisters and in some cases grandmothers. With the advent of Christianity, women are taught as well in their women's guild church gatherings and kitchen parties. Local Shona-speakers did not conduct initiation ceremonies, as was the case with *chinamwali*. They also claimed that they did not use supernatural powers and love portions, which they argued was a norm among the Chewa migrants. As Kupa explained:

> We don't do what they do. We don't use love portions and all the voodoo medicines that they use. Ours is just plain word of mouth, where we explain things verbally and clearly to our girls and even older married women. We do it in clear daylight where we normally teach our nieces when they are about to get married. We do not do it at graveyards like what these [Chewa] people do. These days, people also conduct these teachings within church settings especially during Thursday afternoon women's meetings or sometimes in a few cases during kitchen parties. We also do it with intentions to safeguard our marriages and not to steal people's husbands like they [the Chewa] do. (Interview with Kupa, 17 December 2019).

9.2.4 Husbands and Wives Snatchers

Due to their fetishised sexual prowess supposedly gained through the *chinamwali* rite, autochthones thought of migrant women as husband snatchers. Autochthonous women reported that women of foreign origin were causing problems in the marriages of autochthones. From their viewpoint, allochthonous women were using sexual magic gained through *chinamwali* to lure autochthonous husbands. This again became a source of tension between autochthonous women and the former female farm workers of foreign origin. As one local woman complained:

> We haven't had peace since these people came in their numbers. Yes, we used to have some of them and yes they caused problems here and there. But since they came in these big numbers. the problems

> have worsened. We hear they have beads around their bellies which hypnotise our men. Most of our friends have since lost their husbands to these women who use *muti* hidden in those beads. Once your husband tastes these women, my daughter [addressing the researcher], he is gone. (Interview with Kupa, 17 December 2019).

Kupa was deeply uncomfortable with the idea of women of foreign origin coming into Bushu in their numbers. To her, an *en masse* migration of women into Bushu was comparable to an alien or stranger invasion. By coming in their numbers, foreign African women were invading not only physical spaces, but social and intimate places as well.

In recognising the 'snatching' capacities of foreign women, some autochthonous women reasoned that they had to counter the fear of losing their husbands to the newcomers through acquiring their own sexual skills. One of the interviewees (Nora) thus indicated that she became a *chinamwali* initiate in order to deter her husband from soliciting for sex from the newcomers. In her words:

> If you can't beat them, then join them. I now have those beads, and I now know all their sexual styles. So, my husband does not have any reason to go to those women. I am more powerful because I have the best of both worlds. I know everything about *chinamwali* and also about my culture. Those [foreign] women say Shona women do not know how to please their husbands, because they did not go through *chinamwali*. Now that I went through *chinamwali*, what are they going to say? So, my husband needs nothing from them (Interview with Nora, 9 October 2019).

Even though she could not hide her dislike of the foreign women, Nora was quick to admit that *chinamwali* did help her. She indicated that the intimacy skills she learnt as an initiate improved her intimate relationship with her husband. Further, she had no issues with her children becoming *chinamwali* initiates as that could help them maintain their own marriages. Nora also revealed that most autochthonous women secretly sought for intimacy skills from certain women of foreign origin in Bushu. However, because of pride and fear of ridicule, the autochthonous women would not openly talk about it.

Some autochthonous men also expressed reservations over foreign African men's alleged fetishised sexual prowess. They resented the idea that most autochthonous women believed Chewa men were more loving and sexually powerful than autochthonous men. These beliefs supposedly gave men of foreign origin a competitive advantage over Bushu men. Autochthonous men were therefore not pleased with the thought of Bushu girls choosing the (former) farm workers over

them. In fact, they claimed that Bushu women had a history of eloping with farm workers of foreign origin, even before fast track. This included communal women from Bushu employed as temporary farm workers on white farms prior to fast track, who at times married foreign farm workers living on the farms. In certain instances, these women were already married to men in Bushu, but they would eventually leave their husbands in Bushu to settle permanently with their lovers of foreign origin in the farms. Because of this, local men forbade their wives from working on the farms, thus keeping them away from the clutches of the foreign men. As one Bushu man (Zorodzai) noted:

> Our women are easily swayed. We know of some who left their homes and marriages for those Chewa men. They were lied to. They were made to believe that those men know how to treat women. I realised that a long time ago. So, when I realised that my wife had developed this interest of working in the farms I said 'no more nonsense'. A wife can be taken away. I had to protect my marriage. (Interview with Zorodzai, 10 March 2020)

Thus, autochthonous men expressed fear that the former farm labourers who settled in Bushu post fast track might take autochthonous women, particularly their own wives. Just like the local women who were unsettled about Chewa women migrating into Bushu, the men also spoke of significant discomfort over men of Chewa origin moving into Bushu and settling there. It was particularly difficult for men like Zorodzai who had concerns about former farm-based migrants, given their experiences of the past. In this way, the post fast track in-migration of the former male workers into Bushu deepened and exacerbated a longstanding rivalry over communal women. The contender, in the form of African men of foreign origin, now lived amongst the autochthonous Bushu men.

Several interviewees, in addition, referred to a case whereby one of the former farm workers supposedly used *juju* to break up a marriage between an autochthonous couple with the intention of taking the wife as his own. Though he only married the woman after she separated from her husband, accusations were levelled against him for causing the events that led to the divorce. Zorodzai pointed out that the accused man had always secretly loved the woman, but he could not have her since she was married. He therefore, as the story goes, caused the husband to have erectile dysfunctions, which made the wife leave her husband. She later married the former farm worker whose parents came from Malawi, though he was born in Zimbabwe. He inherited his charming

and alluring character, it is said, from his father. Thus, autochthonous men such as Zorodzai argued that the local chiefly authorities must be vigilant and remain cognisant of the magical powers of Africans of foreign origin before accepting them into Bushu communal areas.

Blaming of African men of foreign origin existed as well amongst autochthonous males about their lack of appreciation for the importance of fidelity and conjugal rights. They argued that the Chewas' matrilineal background robbed Chewa men of a recognition of the significance in the role of lobola in sanctifying fidelity within a marriage. On one hand, as a matrilineal group, the Chewa trace their lineage through their maternal descent. They also inherit from their maternal kin, usually from a mother's brother. Most importantly, they do not pay bride price (lobola). On the other hand, the Shona are patrilineal and, as such, they trace their descent via their fathers. Further, they inherit from their paternal relatives albeit modern laws are making it possible for children including daughters to inherit from their mothers. Again, unlike the Chewa, the Shona consider bride price as crucial in the recognition of a marriage. As discussed earlier, the Shona bride price is quite expensive and, in most cases, it takes a lifetime of periodic payments to finish the full bride price payment. The male autochthones therefore reasoned that, if the migrants appreciated the costs associated with bride price payment, they would not go after their autochthonous wives.

However, most of the men of Chewa origin who married Shona wives indicated that they paid bride price. As well, some said that they required their sons-in-law likewise to pay bride price for their daughters. Supposedly unaware of these complex dynamics, autochthonous men continue to argue that former farm workers of Chewa origin are not privy to the central idea that lobola payment gave a husband exclusive conjugal rights over his wife. As they saw it, this lack of understanding gave some Chewa men the audacity to approach married autochthonous women. At the same time, though, they interpreted Chewa matrilineal inclination as granting a Chewa wife the leeway to practice infidelity within a marriage.

Even though they openly contested some of the sexual practices of former foreign workers, there was a tendency amongst autochthonous men to admire women who had gone through *chinamwali*. One local polygamous man who married a second wife of Chewa origin pointed out that he was pleased by the sexual practices of his second wife. In his words:

> I won't lie to you; the difference is there. They know what they do. It's different from our Shona women. Those *chinamwali* women will make you go back to them. That's why I had to marry her

> [his second wife]. I just did not want to share her anymore. I had to make her mine. They do not use *juju*. No. They are just well trained. They are masters of intimacy. I told my first wife to go for *chinamwali* but she refused thinking I was mocking her. But I meant it. That's why I ended up marring my Chewa woman. (Interview with Goddy, 18 March 2020).

Hence, some autochthonous men like Goddy did not contest the idea of their wives becoming *chinamwali* initiates as this helped boost the intimacy of their relationships.

In summary, autochthones' contestations and politics of belonging, with reference to the ex-farm labourers, hinges upon competition over land within the context of current land shortages. Macro politics of belonging that have been historically employed to exclude Africans of foreign origin have since been translated into a micro politics of belonging in Bushu whereby local autochthones have used the ex-labourers' foreign origins as a source of otherness and, at times, to justify social boundaries and conflicts with the ex-farm labourers. As such, the ex-farm labourers have been blamed among other things for being mystical, spouse snatchers, land grabbers and thus unbefitting of belonging to Bushu. However, despite the negative perceptions, some autochthones feel the ex-farm labourers of foreign deserve to belong to Bushu like any other autochthone, chiefly because Southern Africans share a common ancestral origin. Though they were at pains to admit it, other autochthones noted that, despite the social othering that they experienced in Bushu, the ex-farm labourers wielded powerful social capital which proved useful for maintaining marriages in Bushu.

9.3 Authorities and Former Farm Workers in Bushu

This section discusses the role of authorities including state administrators, elected politicians and chiefly authorities in the inclusion and/or exclusion of former farm workers of foreign origin in Bushu. It includes a consideration of the perceptions and expectations of these authorities in relation to the former workers, and of the interfaces between them, in order to understand the extent to which they support the belonging of these foreigners in Bushu. This might simply entail the existence of a new mode of conditional belonging for the former farm workers, now in the communal areas of Bushu.

9.3.1 Support the 'Right' Party and all Shall be Well in Bushu

One ZANU-PF party leader argued that everyone who was a "human being" was welcome and had every right to settle in Bushu, provided that the person was black and, importantly, "loyal" to the party leadership (Interview with Comrade Dee, 28 February 2020). He also reminded me that

the heir to the Bushu Chieftaincy throne, Bramwell Bushu, was also a sitting ZANU-PF Member of Parliament for Shamva South. ZANU-PF was therefore inseparable from Bushu royalty and the land itself including its villagers.

Revealing that his parents originated from another (nearby) district, Comrade Dee claimed that, if the traditional chiefly authorities in Bushu had been xenophobic, he would not have managed to settle in Bushu, and be elected subsequently into public office. He opined that his "patriotic" character had earned him respect and support from the local electorate, despite his origins from outside Shamva. He viewed himself as a firm ruling ZANU-PF member who had rose through the ranks in Bushu to become a powerful autochthone. To him, supporting the "right" party (i.e. ZANU-PF) was the most critical attribute when it came to belonging in Bushu. As discussed earlier, some former farm workers like Shadreck and Augusto soon realised the importance of partisan politics in Bushu and they performed their ruling party affiliation to gain acceptance in the area.

This local politician recognised that some former foreign farm workers were active ruling party members, and that former workers actually held leadership positions within the party's different structures at village and district level. In his words:

> They are actually more reliable than some of these people we call relatives. Actually, we have unruly elements within our own [autochthonous] group who have been importing opposition politics into the district. However, not the former farm workers. They are loyal; they know their place. I am sure they are aware of how they came here. They wouldn't want to go through those memories again. (Interview with Comrade Dee, 28 February 2020).

Comrade Dee's remarks highlight that, to some extent, the former farm workers' choice of political parties was motivated by their need for security to land access. Cognisant of the history of the liberation struggle, and the fact that it only came possible to move into Bushu because of the ZANU-PF-inspired occupations and fast track programme, the former farm workers sought it fit – as a tactical measure – to align themselves with the ruling party. When asked to elaborate upon what would happen to the former farm workers if they supported the opposition MDC party, he pointed out:

> We might consider sending them back. We did not help people so that they give us a headache. Like I said, they need to know their place, that way they will not have problems. They have been doing

> very well; as a result, they have had peace of mind. They think. They are clever. They know the right party to support and all is well for them here. Except for one Dhunda. That is why he did not stay (Interview with Comrade Dee, 28 February 2020).

Comrade Dee told me the details about Dhunda. Dhunda secured a communal stand in Bushu in 2001 after his eviction from a certain Shamva farm in April 2000, one of the first farms occupied in the district. The village leadership in Bushu allowed him access to communal land. However, Dhunda had a record of being an active MDC party member while he was still working on the farm. Though he did not openly pursue opposition politics in Bushu, Dhunda would equally show apathy to ZANU-PF politics, including during critical election times. As Comrade Dee narrated the story:

> He would not attend [ruling party] meetings. He only bought a [ZANU-PF] membership card for his wife but would not buy his... He was not with us. He was a total sell out. We peacefully confronted him towards the 2002 elections. Five days later, he left for good together with his family. We hear he went to Harare. You see, no one chased him away. He went on his own, because of his sins. We so much wanted to give him a chance. But, alas, he wouldn't repent. He was bewitched by those whites. So. he did himself a favour. Let him leave Bushu. (Interview with Comrade Dee, 28 February 2020).

Dhunda's story was not an exceptional one. There was evidence of other former farm workers who initially secured communal stands in Bushu but later on decided to move elsewhere. To Comrade Dee, this took place within a context of the former farm workers' reluctance to "repent" from what he termed the 'toxic" opposition party politics of white farms. He posited that those who did repent settled quite comfortably in Bushu. Thus, Dhunda's story shows the importance of partisan politics in Zimbabwe's rural areas. More specifically, failure to adhere to the dictates of the "right" party continues to impinge upon villagers' belonging within the rural polity of Bushu, with local ZANU-PF politicians such as Comrade Dee overseeing the transition of former labourers from MDC to ZANU-PF, or possibly ensuring their removal if the transition is not forthcoming.

9.3.2 Newcomers and the Profane: They have to Observe our Tradition and Culture

One recurrent theme that emanated from this study was the autochthones' claim that former farm labourers were disrespecting cultural symbols and practices in Bushu and thus profaning the land. A focus group discussion held with village headmen in Bushu revealed that they were concerned especially about cultural dimensions of belonging. According to the heads, those foreigners who

had already secured communal stands in Bushu were supposed to observe the culture of the land in order for them to co-exist with the autochthones. They were not supposed to practice their ethnic traditions in Bushu.

One of the village heads complained that the newcomers were in the habit of working in their fields during the traditional day of resting (or *chisi*). He emphasised that disrespecting *chisi* came with heavy penalties from the land spirits. Indeed, because of the failure on the part of foreigners to follow this practice, the angered land spirits were withholding rainfall and soil fertility as a punishment. Therefore, Bushu was facing successive years of drought owing to the newcomers' failure to observe the traditions of the land.

Another village head also pointed out that the former farm labourers were illegally panning gold in sacred places, namely, the wetlands near Kapadza River. The wetlands were a sacred landscape reserved for the burial of infants. As such, no one was supposed to disturb the resting place for the young departed souls. The former farm workers seemed unmoved by this tradition and the sacredness embedded in that particular landscape. During my research, it became clear that most autochthones expressed their shock and outrage about the audacity and nerve of "the foreigners" to defy a long-held tradition by their casual approach to these sacred sites. This led to a significant level of fear amongst the autochthones about the gold panners of foreign origin. They reasoned that if these gold panners could exhume young bodies for pieces of gold, then nothing could stop them from undertaking other atrocities, including murder. In fact, while I was in the field, some of the village leaders warned me to be cautious and wary when it came to the former farm workers turned gold panners, as they were "dangerous people".

Additionally, village heads blamed former farm workers for trespassing in other sacred places, such as burial hills for traditional leaders. In some cases, foreigners would cut trees, hunt and even defecate in these sacred places, thus further insulting and profaning the resting places of the owners and custodians of the land. Like other autochthones, the heads blamed the newcomers for additional social ills, including deforestation, soil erosion and siltation. These acts not only altered Bushu's landscape but also defiled it. They also singled out theft, witchcraft and sorcery as some of the socially undesirable practices frequently committed by the former farm workers in Bushu. The village heads argued that it was more frequent for them to receive complaints of the commitment of these acts by the allochthones, compared to the autochthones.

Besides their failure to observe the cultural traditions of the land, the village heads blamed the newcomers for importing their "heathen" cultural beliefs and practices. Village heads (and some autochthones, as indicated) strongly disapproved of the open practice of cultural rituals by in-migrants, who had no primordial history in Bushu. Therefore, foreign rituals and cult-like practices such as *sadaka*, *chinamwali* and *gule wamkulu* were widely condemned by the village heads. For instance, an interview with one village head showed an intense disapproval of *zvigure* in Bushu communal area. In his words:

> They should go back to the farms if they want to practice those 'things'. We will never allow them to practice those dances here. They are free to leave for a while [when they dance]. [They can] [s]kip into farms, mines or in Wadzanai Township or any other urban area, dance for all they want, and then come back when they are sober and done. Just not here. We have our own [rituals] that we need to do and we can't mix. (Interview with one village head, 18 December 2019).

Thus, dancing *zvigure* was tantamount to profaning the autochthonous land in Bushu. Allowing the newcomers to freely and openly practice their 'foreign' tradition and religion ostensibly symbolised religious mixture of a polluting kind, which would disturb (and was disturbing) the spirits of the land.

Interestingly, the village heads (as protectors of tradition) were comfortable with the presence Christian traditions in Bushu. They considered Christianity as culturally and morally harmless, and indeed all the traditional leaders (to whom I spoke) were members of at least one Christian denomination. In this light, then, their only concern was with other 'African' gods like *Mulungu* (praised for example by the *gule wamukhulu* dancers). One traditional leader pointed out emphatically that Bushu already had its 'traditional' deity, known as *Mwari* or *Musikavanhu* in the vernacular Shona language. For this reason, as strangers from afar, there should be no room for former farm labourers to import their alien deities, spirits and ancestors into Bushu. Foreign ancestors were simply not welcome in Bushu, a land that had its own territorial spirits and autochthonous ancestors. Chewa ancestors did not belong to Bushu – they belonged elsewhere. Thus, if the former farm workers were to reside and belong in Bushu, they had to come under the guidance of the autochthonous Bushu spirits only. African foreign gods would profane the land and consequently bring misfortunes. Infertility, droughts and mysterious diseases would continue to plague Bushu if alien spirits and gods visited or stayed in the land.

Hence, as with the local political leadership in Bushu, cultural leaders also sought to mediate the access of foreign former workers to Bushu, and thereby ensure that their belonging to Bushu entailed a conditional belonging.

9.3.3 Traditional Leadership is no Place for Foreigners

As discussed earlier, Shona families originating from chieftaincies other than Bushu established kinship ties and belonging through intermarriages in Bushu, and some of these families had members who became village heads under Chief Bushu. However, interviews with Chief Bushu and Bushu village heads indicated that, unlike the Shona broadly, the former workers of foreign origin were not eligible as village heads even if they were to marry into chiefly households. Though he could see a possibility of intermarriages between his grandchildren and the former farm workers, Chief Bushu indicated that appointing anyone of foreign origin as a village head was an unacceptable idea. As he narrated:

> They don't have a chance to become village heads. It's just not possible. Yes, they can marry our children. Our children are marrying anyone they like these days, but we can't go to extremes of giving them such powers. They will be a problem to us in the future. (Interview with Chief Bushu, 13 February 2020).

Local traditional leadership argued that former farm workers could seek elective political office but not any office within traditional leadership. Traditional leadership was ascribed by birth and thus only autochthonous Zimbabweans with kinship relations to chiefly families could be appointed as traditional leaders.

9.3.4 Everyone is Welcome but we just don't have Enough Space for them Anymore

Despite blaming the newcomers for profaning their land, some village leaders stated, nevertheless, that everyone deserved to belong in Bushu regardless of their ethnic origin. In this respect, even strangers are an important part of any local territory provided they respect and observe the cultural traditions of the land. Being accommodative to strangers would translate into fortunes for the land, conditional on the upholding of cultural arrangements pertaining to land. Shona ancestors would ensure adequate rains, land fertility, good yields and general prosperity to Bushu if the cultural authorities received and treated strangers well. The shortage of land tended, however, to be an inhibiting factor to the presence of more strangers moving into Bushu, as noted earlier. Nevertheless, as one village head pointed out:

> There is no land anywhere without *vatorwa* [strangers]. Some of us also came from other areas even though it is within Zimbabwe. Strangers have been historically important to our land. Some of our spirit mediums in Bushu were actually strangers. They would act as our intermediaries with our land and water spirits. But, like I said, they have to behave. (Interview with village head Ex, 28 February 2020).

The village heads, like the political leaders, stressed the importance of loyalty if the newcomers wanted to develop an authentic and full belonging in Bushu. In particular, they expressed concerns about abiding to cultural traditions and not partisan politics, as was the case with political leaders.

Most administrative authorities, including the District Development Coordinator and District Council representatives, stressed that everyone was welcome to settle in Bushu regardless of their ethnic background. The DDC highlighted that the government does not have any segregation policy towards former farm workers of foreign origin. As such, his office has a responsibility to ensure that former farm workers settle somewhere in the district. Like others, he admitted that land scarcity was a serious cause for concern in the Shamva district, both in former commercial farms and communal areas. However, this would not deter his and the chief's office from resettling land seekers in Shamva's communal areas, including the former farm workers.

9.4 Conclusion

This chapter concluded the thesis' empirical chapters by focusing on the autochthones' and Bushu leaderships' perception and narratives of negotiated co-existence with the allochthones in the form of former farm workers of foreign origin. My research revealed that, just like the former farm workers, the autochthones also had mixed feelings towards the newcomers with negative perceptions outweighing the positive ones. A closer analysis of the main source of contestation, however, pointed to subtle wars over the finite resource, that is, land. Though some autochthones were prepared to let go of their land for a few hundred dollars, most autochthones were not comfortable with the idea of newcomers of foreign origin settling in their ancestral lands forever. Most tensions and contestations thus mainly stemmed from the autochthones' fear that the newcomers will rob them and their generations to come of their ancestral lands in Bushu.

Tensions were also sparked by the fear of the allochthones' perceived mystic powers that manifested themselves in their sexuality including fetishised sexual powers and magic. The

allochthones were accused of using magic to lure autochthonous women and men and, in some cases, taking the autochthones' spouses and wrecking autochthones' marriages in the process. However, despite these tensions, some autochthones voluntarily joined the allochthones' cults including their rituals and initiations, with some claiming that the foreign cultural practices were crucial particularly with regards to their sexual life thereby safeguarding their marriages.

Local leaders emerged as the new patrons dictating forms of belonging for the newcomers in Bushu, overseeing the control of the ex-farm labourers and, in turn, replacing the farm based domestic government with local social control mechanisms. Politics of belonging were encapsulated in the manner in which exclusionary claims and practices were defined for the ex-farm labourers by various authorities in Bushu. Village heads dictated profoundly, among other things, cultural practices which the ex-farm labourers were (dis)allowed to practice in Bushu, though insisting that strangers bring fortunes to the land. Thus, the allochthones could partially become part of Bushu provided they abandon their cultural practices and ethnic religions for Bushu territorial spirits and practices. Political leaders expected the allochthones to follow the dictates of the ruling ZANU-PF party as well, in order to guarantee their stay and possible belonging in Bushu. Government administrative leaders notably the District Development Coordinator, however, pointed out that everyone had the right to unconditionally access communal plots though such claims often diverged from what actually transpired in Bushu. Though they continued to parcel out land to seekers at times illegally, village heads insisted that they were now short of adequate land to give to new land seekers.

CHAPTER TEN: CONCLUSION

10.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the thesis by way of revisiting the main arguments of the thesis and demonstrating how the empirical study was able to address the thesis objectives. In doing so, I start by discussing the subsidiary objectives and highlight how I pursued these objectives in the actual study. I then attend to the main objective of the thesis while emphasising how the theoretical framework guided the pursuit of this objective. Finally, I indicate the contribution of the thesis to the existing scholarly literature and recommend possible further studies pertinent to the focus of the thesis.

10.2 Addressing the Subsidiary Objectives

The five subsidiary goals combined, as set out below, contribute to addressing the main objective of the thesis:

- To identify factors determining the former migrant farm workers' decision to (voluntarily or involuntarily) settle in the communal areas.
- To examine the ways in which these former farm workers have negotiated their way through the communal area space, including in relation to land possession and livelihood sources.
- To analyse farm workers' perceptions and narratives of possible co-existence as well as their lived experiences and interaction with the autochthones in the communal areas.
- To analyse autochthones' perceptions and practices in relation to the former farm labourers, including forms of exclusion.
- To consider the role of the state, including chiefly authorities, in the inclusion and/or exclusion of the former farm workers in the communal areas.

Following on from chapters one to five, which contextualised the empirical study in a variety of ways (including theoretically, historically and thematically), chapters six to nine focused on the empirical case study of former farm labourers of foreign origin in Bushu communal areas in

Shamva. Hence, these empirical chapters formed the basis for addressing the subsidiary objectives, particularly chapters seven to nine (as chapter six provided an overview of the case study sites).

The first three subsidiary objectives were tackled in chapters seven and eight, including the reasoning of the former labourers in deciding and seeking to move into Bushu communal area (chapter seven) as well as – once in Bushu – their perceptions, narratives and practices when it came to interfacing with the autochthones in Bushu communal areas as integral to their project of belonging (chapter eight).

In terms of moving (voluntarily or involuntarily) into the Bushu communal areas (*objective one*), there are a number of identifiable reasons. These include a longstanding desire to acquire communal stands, or the simple fact that – in the face of fast track land reform and ill-treament by the new farmers – farm labourers were desperate to move to an alternative place to avoid absolute destitution. As well, some of the reasons for moving suggest that tensions between autochthones and allochthones existed prior to the fast track occupations, as these became embodied in the troubling experiences of farm labourers of foreign origin during the land occupation process.

In relation to the ways in which these former farm workers negotiated their way in and through the communal area space (including in relation to land possession and livelihood sources) (*objective two*), a series of points came to the fore in chapter eight. There was a focus on how the former farm workers accessed plots in Bushu communal areas using various social networks and strategies. Those former farm workers who interfaced and established relations with the autochthones prior to fast track found it easier to access communal land plots. However, the insecure character of communal land tenure amongst the farm worker migrants was captured in the manner in which they might lose supposed rights to 'ownership' and possession in the event of the autochthones reclaiming their land for various reasons. As set out, different livelihood strategies or activities are embarked upon by the former farm workers since coming to Bushu. While these strategies at times facilitated belonging, they also at times created tensions between the migrants and the autochthones.

Chapter eight also addressed the *third objective*, which analysed the former farm workers' perceptions and narratives of potential co-existence as well as their interaction with the 'autochthones' in Bushu communal areas. In addressing this objective, I began by looking at the former farm workers' own perceptions of themselves in relation to land and belonging in

Zimbabwe. They detailed who they perceive as the sons and daughters of the Zimbabwean soil, highlighting how they interpreted themselves as forming part of this 'autochthone' category. These former farm labourers deploy various political, religious, cultural and political strategies in forging their project of belonging in Bushu. In attempting to determine whether the former farm workers felt the need to differentiate their identity from the autochthones, it became clear that certain 'foreign' ethnic cultural practices continue to be observed and practiced by the farm worker migrants in Bushu. Holding onto these practices, and thus not assimilating themselves as such, sparked tensions between them and autochthones in relation to the politics of belonging. Despite the contestations, some autochthones clandestinely participated in the newcomers' cultural practices thereby bridging social distances between the two.

The last two subsidiary objectives transferred the focus from the allochthones to the autochthones. In chapter nine, the fourth objective sought to analyse autocthones' perceptions and practices in relation to the former farm labourers, including forms of exclusion. With a particular focus on families considered authentically autochthonous to Bushu in an effort, it is evident that there are mixed feelings towards the former farm workers of foreign origin, albeit negative perceptions outweigh positive ones. Sources of tensions with the former labourers from the autochthones' perspectives were visible. Land shortages in Bushu meant that autochthones focused on the unprecedented influx of former farm workers, which left the former with insufficient land to leave for their descendants. At the same time, there are some autochthones who claimed ethnic origins outside Bushu and Shamva district more broadly. These autochthones were more receptive to the former farm workers of foreign origins, but not across the board.

The *fifth objective* sought to consider the role of the state, including chiefly authorities, in the inclusion and/or exclusion of the former farm workers in the communal areas, as discussed in chapter nine. The perceptions and roles of local political, traditional and administrative leadership are of some importance in enhancing or constraining belonging of the former farm workers of foreign origin in Bushu. From the perspective of local leaders, there are certain conditions that the former farm workers are expected to fulfill for them to stay in Bushu. Political leaders expected the former farm workers to be loyal to the ruling party, and traditional leaders expected the former migrants and their families to show allegiance to Bushu land spirits and cultural practices. Despite

these exclusionary tendencies, the state (through the DDC's office) made strides to ensure that the former farm workers and any other land seekers could access land in Bushu.

10.3 Addressing the Main Objective

As stated in chapter one, the overall objective of the thesis is *to offer a sociological analysis of belonging amongst former farm workers of foreign origins in communal areas after fast track in Zimbabwe, with a specific focus on Shamva District*. In section 10.2, I demonstrated the complex and convoluted character of the project of belonging on the part of the former farm workers of foreign origin, as they strategically and tactically seek to negotiate their entrance and stay in Bushu communal areas. In this section, I try to show the relevance of the thesis' theoretical framing for understanding this non-linear, open-ended and difficult process of belonging.

The thesis drew upon the notions of lifeworlds and interfaces and, more specifically, the concepts of belonging, othering and the strangerhood in seeking to understand the negotiated relationships between the former farm labourers and autochthones in Bushu. Given the differentiated history of white farms and communal areas in Zimbabwe, as distinct rural spaces, not only physical but also considerable socio-cultural distance characterised the relationship between farm labourers on white farms and communal area villagers over an extended time period. For this reason, I discussed about the emergence and development of two separate lifeworlds, without denying though a degree of internal differentiation and variation within these two lifeworlds. Thus, within the category of the farm worker lifeworld, there is a specific sub-category of foreign farm labourers. In moving to communal areas, and seeking to forge belonging in Bushu, former farm labourers of foreign origin began to interact along a series of interfaces with the general lifeworld of Bushu autochthones. In doing so, because of the socio-cultural distance prevailing, they were conceptualised by Bushu autochthones in an 'othering' manner, as strangers who did not belong.

However, before discussing issues of belonging, othering and strangerhood in Bushu more fully, it is important to note that the exclusion of the former farm workers began before they settled in Bushu. Here, I do not intend to revisit forms of exclusion on white farms prior to fast track, because this has been discussed elsewhere (Rutherford 2001, 2008). Rather, I refer to the experiences of the former farm workers during the land occupations and subsequent departure from the commercial farms. The anti-farm labour sentiment prevailing amongst the autochthonous

occupiers presents a case of othering and strangerhood on the part of the latter, reflecting the historically generated distancing of socio-cultural lifeworlds. The former farm workers' disappointment and feeling of betrayal about the manner in which the autochthonous occupiers in effect chased them away from the farms points to a denial of belonging even to a rural space (the white farm) in which they lived and worked for decades.

The Zimbabwean state seemingly allowed this victimisation of farm workers to take place during the occupations, when it was in a position – at least potentially – to protect them through the deployment of state security. However, because of official claims that farm labourers belonged elsewhere (outside of the nation and beyond Zimbabwe's territorial borders), the state labelled them with a foreign tag, as outsiders. This 'othering' became even clearer under the fast track programme, as farm workers were in large part excluded from the land redistribution process. Although fast track was meant to decongest the communal areas, many former farm workers had no choice but to seek a future in the communal areas on their own initiative. In being now 'othered' on white farms, they choose an option which would likely entail 'othering' as well.

Thus, the state-sanctioned (macro-) exclusion of farm workers tallied with the micro-politics of (un)belonging in Bushu communal areas, as the stranger tag existed in Bushu, as these former labourers were aware of from the very beginning. As a category of people considered as 'foreign', the former farm workers found themselves depicted as strangers, as people who could not claim primordial relations to Bushu and thus who simply did not belong. This is evident by the small and inferior plots on which the former farm workers were often settled. In most cases, the former farm workers lacked access to agricultural plots unlike the typical autochthone. They were at times settled in grazing lands, demonstrating othering at worst and simply tenure insecurity at best, as they faced possible eviction at any time. In cases of land disputes, particularly when autochthones reclaimed their land, the allochthones would suffer loss of land, showing that it was the autochthones who claimed ultimate and unconditional belonging to Bushu. The former farm workers could only access land on condition that the 'owners' (in the form of autochthonous families) did not want it back. Overall, communal area lands remain a birth right and a place of unquestionable belonging for the autochthones only.

Despite the tremendous adversities faced, belonging in Bushu for the former farm workers of foreign origin could however be forged over time. Thus, former farm workers who had stayed in

Bushu for a longer time had a more positive perception of autochthones and of their communal area security than those who came later, particularly those who arrived after 2010. This enhanced embeddedness within Bushu, and the heightened sense of belonging, only arose through a multi-faceted and difficult project of belonging along a series of interfaces, revolving around land, livelihoods, culture, spirituality, marriage and so forth. However, to reiterate, this is not a linear process and it may be subject to reversal.

This is because the project of belonging, as a process, entailed a conditional belonging, or belonging to which are attached a number of conditions. Therefore, just like the white farm at which there was a form of conditional belonging under domestic government (derived from supplying labour to the farmer), conditional belonging also existed in Bushu for these former farm labourers. Politically, the former farm workers had to show loyalty to the ruling party. Indeed, it was indicated that the former farm workers who failed to submit to the dictates of the ruling party ended up leaving Bushu for good. Traditional leaders were more concerned with cultural issues of belonging as far as the former farm workers of foreign origin were concerned. As strangers, the former farm workers' cultural traditions were not supposed to be practiced in Bushu. Instead, they were supposed to abandon their cultural traditions (and deities) and replace them with Bushu territorial spirits and cultural practices as a condition for belonging in Bushu. In this context, the former workers often carried out political and cultural performances publicly to satisfy these dictates (to perform belonging), while going contrary to them privately. In this sense, they maintained key elements of their lifeworld which set them apart from the autochthones, thereby setting their own terms for belonging.

Ultimately, belonging as a process, for the former labourers in Bushu, is an everyday series of negotiations with ordinary villagers. Beyond what local cultural and political leaders might demand of these strangers, belonging only has the potential of being realised through day-to-day interfaces with neighbours and other nearby villagers. These everyday interfaces may solidify or undercut complex processes of belonging. For instance, in order to assert belonging, at times the former farm worker newcomers would avoid conflicts with local autochthones, even in cases where they felt maltreated. Even possible police cases would go unreported in an effort to maintain peace and harmony. Overall, failure to satisfy neighbours' expectations and to ensure daily cordial

relations could easily invoke autochthonous claims about non-belonging amongst the newcomers, thereby demonstrating the precariousness of the ex-labourers' project of belonging.

Despite the tactical forms of exclusion employed by the autochthones and leaders in Bushu, the former farm workers clearly were not helpless victims. In seeking belonging, they were active agents determined to preserve their dignity and identity. As noted, in the midst of possible cultural annihilation or assimilation, the allochthones strove to preserve their own cultural identity. In addition, they and at times converted this into useful social capital. Cultural practices were sometimes effectively harnessed to subvert local hegemonies in Bushu. Autochthones especially women and the youth became consumers of the former farm workers' culture in the form of *chinamwali* and *gule wamkulu*. Far from becoming the 'other', the allochthones became perceived authors and determiners of the autochthones' marriages and sexuality. In this way, the lifeworld of the autochthones was also reconfigured in the project of belonging of the allochthones.

Though displaced through fast track, and ultimately victims of the fast track process, former farm workers of foreign origin were not mere objects of others. Though victims, they do not live within the realm of victimhood, at least in the case of those who migrated to Bushu. For them, a long road along belonging in ethnicised communal areas might have already started. The fact that the government did not seek to prevent these ex-labourers from moving into communal areas, despite their placement in a controversial and politicised history of unbelonging to the nation, might contribute to the slow but possible process of becoming Zimbabwean. But, as brought to the fore, their project of belonging (like any project of belonging) does not travel along a linear path. It is open-ended, differentiated and uneven with no pre-determined or possibly even complete end. The path it is taking in Bushu, and the extent to which this entails a coming together (or even synthesis) of different lifeworlds, depends significantly on the everyday agency and practices of both the allochthonous ex-labourers and the autochthonous communal area villagers, and their negotiated interactions.

10.4 Thesis Contributions and Further Studies

This thesis has sought to contribute to scholarly literature on land studies in Zimbabwe. Land issues remain pertinent in rural Zimbabwe as they continue to invoke emotions, tensions and conflict, including pitting those who are considered autochthonous 'sons of the soil' and the

purported allochthones, including whites but also Africans of foreign origin (Cheater 1990, Muzondidya 2007, Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009). Much of this literature, including on fast track, has focused on racialised land politics without considering seriously the ethnicised forms of exclusion, including in relation to communal areas. I have therefore, firstly, added to this literature by highlighting the ethnicised forms of belonging in communal areas focusing on Bushu. Secondly, existing Zimbabwean literature on farm workers post fast track has also fell short in documenting the diverse experiences of farm workers, with only minimal research undertaken about former farm workers of foreign origin in the communal areas.

In offering this analysis, I focused specifically on the question of land and belonging. Though questions about land and belonging are increasingly appearing in the Zimbabwean (and broader African) literature, I sought (thirdly) to offer a unique understanding of the quest for belonging by way of the notions of lifeworlds and interfaces.

Despite the contributions of the thesis, significant research still needs to be done in relation to the lives of former farm workers of foreign origin in the communal areas of Zimbabwe, post fast track.

As a first issue, more research is required about the former farm workers' livelihood strategies. In the case of Bushu, I noted that except for a few cases involving successful former farm workers turned gold miners, most of the former farm workers now lead precarious and fragile lives. More strikingly, the precarity relates mainly to women, particularly the widowed who find it difficult if not impossible to pursue sex-typed livelihood strategies such as mining. Most of these women reported that their lives deteriorated after coming to Bushu as they found it difficult to identify sustainable livelihood activities. Hence, it is important for future research to focus on the gendered experiences and challenges facing former female farm workers in the communal areas.

A second issue involves the observation that communal tenure security remains elusive for most former farm workers of foreign origin, at least in Bushu. The scholarly literature tends to argue that communal land tenure is a secure form of tenure, though devoid of ownership rights (Matondi and Decker 2011). Such sweeping statements need to be qualified, as allochthones are subject to dispossession in cases of land disputes involving autochthones, leading to conditional belonging. As well, though my main focus was on former farm workers of foreign origin who migrated into communal areas, I also noticed a persistent conditional form of belonging for former farm workers still residing on A1 farms. In this context, it becomes important to undertake further research

around the conditions which facilitate and undermine security of tenure, including in communal area spaces.

Hopefully, this thesis will motivate other scholars to pursue these and other critical issues with reference to land and belonging in Zimbabwe.

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Appendix 1: Interview Guide for Former Farm Workers of Foreign Origin

Name Age Sex

Place of Birth Educational Qualification

Profession Years spend on farms/communal areas

What are the factors determining the former migrant farm workers' decision to (voluntarily or involuntarily) settle in the communal areas?

- Some people were born on the farms whilst others came to the farms as adults. Tell me about your early memories at the farm. Where you born there? If not where were you born?
- Kindly provide a detailed account of your life on the farms?
- As you worked at the farm, how was your relationship with the farmer? What do you miss about the farm? Do you regret leaving the farmer? Why do you say so?
- After the 2000 Fast Track Land Reform Programme some former workers of foreign origin migrated to towns, others remained in the farms. What were your reasons for settling in the communal areas?
- Do you think that life could be different elsewhere? What are your reasons? Given an option, would you choose to go back to the farms? What is the reason for your answer?

How have former migrant farm workers negotiated their way through the communal space, including in relation to land possession and livelihood constraints?

- As you worked in the farms did you ever get into contact with the indigenes? Tell me about your interactions

- Did your interaction with the indigenes facilitate your access to communal land? Can you explain how? If not who would you say helped you to get your stand? Explain further.
- I understand that you used to earn a living as a farm worker, how are you earning a living now that you are in the communal areas? How would you compare your economic life now and that you used to have in the farms? What would you want to see changing?
- Some scholars have indicated that white farmers used to provide education, health and food for their workers. Who provides for that in the village? How would you compare that with what you used to receive on the farms?
- I also understand that permanent farm workers used to get a piece of land from the farm? How would you compare that land you used on the farm with what you have now? Which one is more secure, productive? What are your reasons?
- Do you see your children and their descendants occupying this land for generations to come? Why do you say so? What would you wish to see changing/ unchanging?

What are former migrant farm workers' perceptions and narratives of co-existence as well as their lived experiences and interaction with the indigenes in the communal areas?

- Some writers have indicated that there are people called "sons and daughters of the soil". Who would you think are such people in this village? Why do you say so? Do you see yourself as one or at least becoming one day? What did/will it take?
- Do you think that your children, or their descendants will become or are already such? What did it or will it take?
- Tell me about your interaction with the people you found already here. Are you aware of their family origins? Do you think that they are the 'owners' of this land? What are your reasons? What have they done to welcome you in the village?
- Tell me about your day to day interaction with the indigenes. What activities do you engage in together as a collective? What have you learned from them? What have you taught them? Are there other activities that you would rather do without them? Tell me about them.

- Do you think that your relationship with the villagers you found here is better or worse with the one you had with fellow workers at the farm?
- Do you sometimes come into contact with the village leaders including political, government and traditional leaders? Tell me about your interactions. Do you think that they treat villagers differently? If so how? What would you like to see change?
- It has been noted farm workers find it difficult to acquire citizenship. Has this changed? Do people have access to these now? What would you wish to change?
- Do you think that there are opportunities and services that the indigenes enjoy that are unavailable to you? What do you propose should be done?

Appendix 2: Interview Guide for Autochthones

- **What are indigenes' perceptions and practices in relation to the former farm labourers, including forms of exclusion?**

- I hear there are former migrant farm workers living in the village. How have they settled in the village? Did you know about them before they came into the village? Kindly explain further.
- Tell me about your interaction with them in the village.
- What has been done to welcome them?
- What have been your best/worst moments with them?
- What have you learnt from them? What have you taught them?
- Do you think that there are barriers between you? How have these been contained? What needs to be improved?
- Some people talk about 'sons and daughters of the soil'- Who in your opinion are these people? Do you think that former migrants also fall into this category? What are your reasons?
- In your opinion what has been done or what needs to be done for migrants to become 'sons and daughters of the soil''?
- What has changed in the village since the newcomers came? What needs to be done to change/maintain the situation?
- Do you think that there are places, rituals or contexts where the newcomers do not fit in? May you explain further. Have the newcomers been already there? May you provide detail?
- Do you also feel that there are certain programmes, places, rituals or migrant lifestyles that the 'sons and daughters of soil should not participate in? Kindly explain.
- What is it about this village that allowed the villagers to access land? Who do you think helped the newcomers access land? What are your thoughts on this?
- What do you think the indigenes will benefit from giving the newcomers a place to live?

- What does this village mean to you? What is your opinion about having people from other villages or countries in this village? What would the ancestors say?

Appendix 3: Interview Guide for Local Leadership

- Kindly you take me through the process of acquiring of securing communal land? What sort of people are entitled to settle in communal land? Are there any people that are not entitled to communal land? Can you explain further?
- What are the statutory provisions that govern communal land tenure?
- How secure is communal land compared to private property?
- How often do outsiders and insiders seek communal land in this village?
- Do land seekers always secure land? What is the minimum/ maximum acreage land seekers receiving?
- What does it take for an individual to acquire communal land? Do they pay something in cash or kind? If so how much? Where do the proceeds go?
- Some writers and leaders have been quoted saying that communal land is not for sale, what are your views? Have you ever heard of cases of land purchase in other communal areas? What about in Bushu? If yes, what action was taken to rectify the matter?
- In your opinion, who is the 'real' owner of communal land? Do you think that there are certain individuals that the 'owner' would want to give or withhold land from? If you were the 'owner' who would you give or not give land to? What are your reasons?
- There have been reports of communal land based conflicts in many areas in Zimbabwe. Have you ever heard similar reports in Shamva? If yes, what was the cause and how were these handled? Do you think that the conflict solving strategies were effective? If not then what do you think was supposed to be done, by whom?
- I understand that most communal areas in Shamva are surrounded by commercial farms. Did the local people benefit from the 2000 Fast Track Land Reform Programme? How did this affect population pressure in communal areas?

- I also understand that some former farm workers migrated into Shamva communal areas after the 2000 Fast Track Land Reform Programme. Can you tell me about them? How have they settled in their new homes? What has your office done to receive them? Do you think that they feel welcome? Explain?
- In your opinion, should the government avail more communal land to former farm workers including those of foreign origin in the communal areas? What are your reasons
- What other services should be availed to these newcomers in your area? Are they already receiving these? Are there specific conditions to be met before they receive such services? Kindly explain more.
- Do you feel that there are certain programmes, rituals, ceremonies or activities that migrants in the communal areas should or should not be a part of? Kindly explain.
- Alternatively, do you feel that there are programmes, rituals, ceremonies or activities that migrants in the communal areas should or should not practice in isolation? Kindly explain.
- Do you feel that there are certain places where migrants should not go in the villages? Kindly explain.

Appendix 4: Life Histories

- Can you tell me about yourself and your childhood years (General life story) including where you were born, your parents/ guardians?
- What is that you remember the most about growing up particularly the place you grew up at as well as your teen years.
- What are some of the cultural and religious practices that you remember observing as you grew up?
- Can you tell me more about your adulthood besides work life including marriage and family life.
- How did you end up as a farm worker?
- Kindly take me through your life as a farm worker and a farm worker of foreign origin
- How was farm life before the fast track?
- Can you tell me about your fast track experience and how you ended up in Bushu?
- Can you tell me about your current life here in Bushu? How is it different from life at the farm socially, economically, culturally and politically?

Appendix 5: Focus Group Discussion Guide

The following is the list of questions that guided Focus Group Discussion held with village heads.

- Kindly you take me through the process of acquiring of securing communal land stands in your villages? Who is the owner of communal land? What sort of people are entitled to settle in communal land? Can you explain further?
- What are the cultural rituals that a newcomer is expected to observe in your villages in relation to land and belonging?
- How often do outsiders and insiders seek communal land in this village?
- Do land seekers always secure land? What is the minimum/ maximum acreage land seekers receiving?
- What does it take for an individual to acquire land in your villages? Do they pay something in cash or kind? If so, how much? Where do the proceeds go?
- Some writers and leaders have been quoted saying that communal land is not for sale, what are your views? There are reports that some village heads are selling land? What would the ancestors say and do? Has this happened to your village? How often have you been approached by potential land buyers? How did you react and why?
- There have been reports of communal land based conflicts in many villages in Zimbabwe. Have you ever heard similar reports in your villages? If yes, what was the cause and how were these handled? Do you think that the conflict solving strategies were effective? If not then what do you think was supposed to be done, by whom?
- I understand that some former farm workers migrated into Shamva communal villages after the 2000 Fast Track Land Reform Programme. Can you tell me about them? How have they settled in their new homes? What role did you as village heads play to receive them? Do you think that they feel welcome? Explain?

- In your opinion, should the government avail more communal land to former farm workers including those of foreign origin in the communal areas? What are your reasons?
- Do you feel that there are certain programmes, rituals, ceremonies or activities that migrants in the communal areas should or should not be a part of? Kindly explain.
- Alternatively, do you feel that there are programmes, rituals, ceremonies or activities that migrants in the communal areas should or should not practice in isolation? Kindly explain.
- Do you feel that there are certain places where migrants should not go in the villages? Kindly explain.
- Are there instances you feel the former farm workers straddled over cultural places and rites? What actions did you take?

Appendix 6: Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Patience Chadambuka at the Rhodes University. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, to receive satisfactory answers to my questions, and any additional details I wanted.

I am aware that excerpts from the interview may be included in the thesis and/or publications to come from this research, with the understanding that the quotations will be anonymous.

I was informed that I may withdraw my consent at any time without penalty by advising the researcher.

I understand that every precaution will be taken by the interviewer to retain and store data as securely as possible.

I was informed that if I have any comments or concerns resulting from my participation in this study, I may contact Professor Helliker at Rhodes University on **0027793532819** email k.helliker@ru.ac.za and/or the Rhodes University Ethics Coordinator s.manqele@ru.ac.za. I can also contact Patience Chadambuka on cellphone number 0715643250 or write her on pchadambuka@gmail.com.

With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

I agree to the use of anonymous quotations in any thesis or publication that comes of this research.

Name of Participant: _____

Date of birth: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

I, Patience Chadambuka, hereby confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature and conduct of the study.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

If verbal consent is given, the interviewer must sign below in the presence of the participant.

_____ _____

(Signature of interviewer certifying that informed Consent has been given verbally by respondent)

Date