Reconstructing Home: Zimbabwean Women in New Zealand.

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Mercy Chipo Tracy Jumo

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Abstract

'Reconstructing home: Zimbabwean women in New Zealand' is a feminist project focusing on the migration experiences of four women aged in their early twenties to late fifties resident in New Zealand over a period of two to five years. Given the expansive nature of women and migration studies, this project presents a partial, situated, reality of the vast migrant experiences of Zimbabwean women in New Zealand.

The project uses the concept of 'home' and its potential for belonging or exclusion to explore the implication of gender in the construction of the women's identities. The findings of the project highlight that the identities of the participants arose from perceived differences resulting from their gender, race, ethnicity, age and social status. As a result, home and identity are inflexed as abode, identity, action, a way of life and behaviour.

The project centres Zimbabwean women in migration by giving voice to women who are a racial and ethnic minority in New Zealand. The project also acknowledges the diversity of Zimbabwean and celebrates the diversity of these women as shown by their subjectively fluid and sometimes simultaneous positioning in place and time as they interact at home, work, amongst themselves, and in society at large.

The project goes beyond identifying the traditional migrant adjustment problems to acknowledging the women's resilience and innovation in seeking a better life for themselves thus transcending the silent sufferer image popularised of women migrants. The resilience and ability to re-strategise in face of shifting multiple and changing oppressions resembles a continuous building process through which the participants continue to construct and remodel places in which they best know themselves and ones they can call 'home'.

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Preface

Researcher self disclosure

Feminist theory advocates that research evolve and develop from the researcher's experience (Reinharz, 1992). The interest, rationale, and impetus for this project are better understood by my location as a researcher. The turn of the 21st century heralded increased emigration of Zimbabweans owing to a combination of factors rooted in political, economic and social circumstances such as family reunion, adventure, porous borders and the lure of global labour circuits. Working in the 'development' sector and involvement in women's rights and the protection of the girl child in Zimbabwe fuelled my interest in the experiences of my compatriots in New Zealand. My experiences as a black girl child born in segregated Rhodesia [1], growing up in independent Zimbabwe and later living in Costa Rica and New Zealand are part of the sensibilities that inform my understanding and interpretation of stories told to me by the four women.

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[1] Rhodesia. The country now known as Zimbabwe was colonised by the British in 1890. Rhodesia made a unilateral declaration of independence from Britain in 1965.The country regained independence in 1980 and was named Zimbabwe.

Chapter One

Introduction

Overview of the Thesis

The thesis explores the gendered experiences of four women migrants who emigrated from Zimbabwe to New Zealand and had been resident in the country for a minimum period of one year and a maximum of five years. The project grew out of unease at the "unacceptable level" (Hama, 2003) of brain drain from Zimbabwe. The impetus for Zimbabwean emigration lies in a number of areas, the most frequently quoted being economic decline and political instability associated with the government's controversial land redistribution policies (Ibid; Crush, 2003, No. 29).

Based on the assumption that women and men experience migration differently (Kelson and DeLaet, 1999; Willis and Yeoh, 2000) I set out to establish how four women migrants from Zimbabwe experienced their migration and resettlement in New Zealand. The main objective was to establish how gender was implicated in their migration and to identify the various roles and identities that came with the process of migration. I therefore paid attention to the women's pre and post immigration status through an assessment of their roles in their families. I found out the extent of family involvement in the women's migration, their reasons for emigration and the receptivity of the host country in the workplace and society. As migration is traditionally associated with opportunity, I was interested to find out to what extent the interviewees were empowered by their migration and how they exercised agency. The project revealed the contested nature of the concepts of 'women', 'experience' and 'home'.

The use of a feminist poststructuralist framework highlighted the use and effect of discourses of gender, racism, ethnicity, social status and age in constructing shifting identities of migrant women and in structuring the women's relationships in the private and public spheres. Because migration fosters change it was important to analyse the women's changing roles and identities in place and time. I anticipated that the findings would affirm the gendered nature of migration, but I did not anticipate the extent to which racism and ethnicity and not gender considerations emerged as primary organisers for the four women. I began the project with some awareness that racism could be a consideration for the black women, Sarah, Carol and Judith, having moved to New Zealand, a majority white country. However, it was remarkable to hear the opposite perspective from Anne's experience of racism as a white minority in a black majority setting of Zimbabwe. I was unprepared for the silence on black ethnic differences chronicled in historical accounts and the media, and the encounter with ethnicity experienced by Anne who is white. The identification of racism and ethnicity as central organisers in the women's lives temporarily brings two cultural and sometimes opposing groups together as a group of Zimbabwean immigrants.

However, while the advantages of national sentiment expressed in the face of racism and ethnicity present scope for alliances for example, on political and immigration matters, they potentially veil the heterogeneity of Zimbabwean women, their subjectivity, and difference amongst themselves and with other women. Uncritical acceptance of national identity creates fixed characters foreclosing the identification of other sites of struggle noted by the women such as age, social status, religion and social interests as well as the complexities of their shifting and intersecting positioning. Addressing racism and ethnicity as binary

opposites is restrictive and resulted in silences on the women's interaction with non-Maori or non-whites in New Zealand.

The individual circumstances of the women in this study were far from linear. They were fluid as was their ability to 'reconstruct home' and the extent to which they felt 'at home' in New Zealand. Migration opened up new horizons for personal, formal and informal learning, extended the women's world outlook and improved their standard of living. At the same time the women were faced with additional dimensions of self-identification and struggle for example, loss of employment, under employment, lowering of job status, long hours and wage work that potentially curtails the gains made for the girl child because of incorporation into the domestic sweatshop. While the women made independent decisions the findings in their migration these have to be considered in the context of their positionality not only in structured and expectant families and societies, but also within an international environment driven by global market capitalist and consumerist values and needs.

The sample of four was practical enough to satisfy the one academic year limit of this study and is not intended to generalise the totality of Zimbabwean women and men's experiences in New Zealand. Using feminist in-depth interview methods, I tape recorded the narrative accounts of the migration experiences of the four women. Drawing on feminist poststructuralist theories this research explored how discourses construct subjectivities in migrant identities and how these are shaped by specific social and historical contexts in the migration process. Feminist poststructuralist analysis facilitated the exposure of the manipulation of language in hierarchical structuring of subjectivities in migration. The interviewees' experiences were framed in 'difference' or 'otherness'.

Power is central to the construction of difference mediated through gender, race, ethnicity, age and social status in both sending and receiving countries. Although the women talked more of their experiences as Zimbabweans rather than as women, textual analysis indicated that gender was in fact, a crosscutting theme. One could speculatively attribute the refusal to confront gender to personal, cultural and national loyalties or fears or assume that the conspiratorial *'you know'* often made by participants implied that because I am a woman and one from their country, I should essentially and culturally know that our lives are gendered.

The migration choices of these women, why they chose to emigrate, how they selected the country of destination, their relationship with the country of origin and personal views on their current life were an important reflexive exercise for both the informants and myself. The exercise enabled me to make some policy recommendations in the concluding chapter, the most significant being a call for disaggregated data pertaining to immigrants and truly gender sensitive immigration policies. Current policies employ seemingly gender-neutral language that veils traditional prejudices that continue to disadvantage women.

The thesis is structured into seven chapters as follows:
Chapter one provides an introduction to the thesis by providing a background to Zimbabwean emigration and highlighting women's active role in migration.

In Chapter Two, I set the context for the current study by linking it to the major concerns in the literature on women and migration that revolve around centring gender in migration. Some of the current topical areas concerning women and migration are the feminisation of migration, export of female labour, transnationalism, integration and gendered

households. I also review the New Zealand government's immigration policies noting bias towards men's immigration and retention of employment status.

Chapter three frames the project within feminist qualitative research methods and methodology. I make use of feminist in-depth interviewing and follow feminist research ethics of mutual respect and participant consent and protection. This project is informed by feminist poststructuralist theories that privilege subjectivity and pay attention to migrant women's roles and identities historically and culturally placed and articulated in language.

Chapter four presents a summary of the interview findings highlighting the major themes that revolved around constructions of difference, otherness, belonging and exclusion.

In Chapter five I draw on poststructuralist theories to deconstruct difference and analyse racism, ethnicity, age, gender and social status. I also show how biological characteristics such as skin colour and age are appropriated into relations of ruling to distinguish not only difference but to denote negative difference or inferiority.

Chapter six focuses on unpacking the meaning of home in the four migrants' experiences. The theme of home is central to this thesis touching on migrant women's identity and belonging in different spaces, private and public. It illustrates the political nature of the concept of home and endeavours to show home as more than an abode. It evolved as a way of life and as spatial areas of resistance continually reconstituted in relation to individual experiences.

The final conclusions are made in Chapter Seven in which I draw together the dominant themes of difference and show how they as discourses mediate power, structure societies and replicate. I argue for the centring of women in migration processes and contend that the effects and impact of migration on the four women are subjective and relative to space and time. The migratory process is complex and in turn generates complex feelings and fluid identities that continually demand new analytical approaches to engender social change.

Streaming out of Zimbabwe

In attempting to identify who emigrated from Zimbabwe, Buckle (2002) alludes to the sense of loss of home, a recurring theme to be addressed in this project. She says:

> what had begun in February 2000 as a land question affecting only a tiny white minority, had blazed across the entire country, spreading across the entire country, spreading like an uncontrollable bushfire to every facet of Zimbabwean life (Buckle, 2002:235).
>
> Both black and white, started packing their belongings to leave the country of their birth (Buckle, 2002:204).

Porous borders and the lure of global labour circuits and family reunions have also influenced Zimbabwean emigration.

Zimbabwe has a total of 12.8 million people of whom 3.5 million live outside the country (Zimbabwe Central Statistics Office, 2002). An estimated 1.1 million live in the United Kingdom, 1.2 million in South Africa, 100 000 in Australia and 100 000 in Canada (Chidavaenzi, 2004). At the end of 2002, the United Kingdom, a popular destination with Zimbabweans recorded 10,000 asylum requests from Zimbabweans and granted 2,900 asylum. These numbers were considered very high with the requests ranking second to Iraq and the asylum offers second to Somalia (U.S. Committee for Refugees, 2003). However, these aggregated figures tell us nothing of the gender constitution of the emigrants.

A comparative study of Zimbabwe and South Africa conducted in 2001 revealed that Zimbabwean women showed higher tendencies toward migration, recording a high of 62% to the 54% Zimbabwean men (Crush, 2003, No. 29). The 2001 New Zealand Census also recorded a higher presence of Zimbabwean women 1,521 to 1,368 men (Statistics New Zealand, 2001). These numbers show the magnitude of current

Zimbabwean emigration as well as its gender constitution. It is important that future research give consideration to the significance of these high figures of Zimbabwean women migrating.

The international attention that current Zimbabwean migration has attracted has contributed to the construction of new Zimbabwean migrant identities and some fixed perceptions that need to be dislodged. For example, where many had previously been known to leave the country to pursue further studies, today refugee, overstayer, economic refugee, shift worker and prostitute identities apply sometimes regardless of previous social standing. The pity with which participants in this project were viewed was derived from the colonial history, the legacy of Third World poverty and media reports on economic and political backwardness of their country. The negative background associated with Zimbabwe influenced the way participants viewed themselves and their life experiences in relation to members of their own migrant community and their host country.

The precise figures, extent and impact of the Zimbabwean exodus are yet to be evaluated (Crush, 2003, No. 29). The loss of human capital, particularly that of professionals and skilled persons, is important in view of Zimbabwe's status as one of the least developed countries further challenged by a life expectancy of 37.7 years due to the effects of HIV/AIDS (World Health Organisation, 2002). However, future research needs to disaggregate migration information so that whatever policies Zimbabwe and New Zealand implement are gender explicit and appropriately address the gendered constitution of migration. Zimbabwe should seek to ease the brain drain and/or incorporate migrant participation and investment in that country. The policy implications for New Zealand, the receiving country include the

provision of settlement, employment, education, health and recreational services in an environment conducive to multiculturalism.

Having sketched the background to Zimbabwean emigration I now turn to the definition of the key concepts used in the current study and the following section addresses this.

Key theories and concepts

The concepts central to this project are those relating to women, difference and experience.

Zimbabwean women

The term Zimbabwean women can be misleading to suggest a concrete identity and non-existent homogeneity. It must be read to identify the country of origin or birthplace of the four interviewees.

The four interviewees were female by sex and gender, three black, one white. The project politicises the colour black and white to represent the use of the terms in denoting differences institutionalised in racism. In spite of sharing the same nationality and some basic cultural traits the Zimbabwean women were not homogenous and while sharing the same national identification the women experienced racial, ethnic, social status, age and other differences.

Experience

Experience is central to feminism as a way of knowing, being and learning. Feminist projects such as this one enable women to express their perspectives on life and aspirations absent in male centred philosophy. People who experience all sorts of discrimination are able to present a wider worldview because they have come to understand

their own oppression as well as the way in which their oppressors think (Kirby and McKenna, 1989; Rowbotham, 1992).

Gender

Gender refers to the social constructions of the biological difference between men and women that are indicative of the attitudes inherent in a particular culture and society. It explains the behaviours and identities and power relationships of people. Gender tells us what it means to be male or female.

Difference

Theories of difference have largely revolved around dual oppositions centred on Western male hegemonic norms. Taken from this perspective difference represents deliberate crafted lacking and inferiority. Difference always exists in contrast to something. Findings of this project highlighted exclusion on the basis of biological or physical differences, race and ethnicity, experienced in the confluence of black and white Zimbabweans with multicultural New Zealand dominated by Pakeha and Maori worldviews. Difference also emerged amongst and within the four informants, problematising the notion of a unitary Zimbabwean woman or unified Zimbabwean women. Dual opposites are reductionist and fall short in addressing the complexities and interrelationships embedded in gender, race, ethnicity, age and social status that need wider, more encompassing meanings of difference (Weedon, 1999; Scott, 2003).

Racism

Racial difference is signified by physical characteristics and skin colour. Racism evolved in theories rooted in European expansionism and colonial acquisition that privileged the white racial group over black or non-white persons. Racist ideas have been absorbed as tradition and

cultural mores and institutionally inscribed as barometers of normalcy, modernity or civilisation.

Ethnicity

The difference between ethnicity and racism is slim and elusive. In the current study ethnicity manifested itself in the privileging of common cultural traits and consciousness. Ethnicity can rally kinship based on shared race, history and cultural heritage and sometimes skin colour (Weedon, 1999; Mohanty, 2003). Reference to ethnicity in Africa has been institutionalised to refer to the indigenous peoples' tribal affiliations for example, the Shona and the Ndebele in Zimbabwe and is seldom applied to white people. The Shona are the largest indigenous linguistic group in Zimbabwe followed by the Ndebele.

In other words racism dominates the characterisation of relationships between white and black people in Africa thus muting ethnic differences for example, between whites of British descent and those of Afrikaans origin. The Zimbabwean national registration details that request for tribal affiliation, chieftainship and village details accentuate ethnic identity for black Zimbabweans. Where their white counterparts simply acknowledge their race, indigenous Zimbabweans note their race, tribe and kinship.

However, international migration presents challenges to these internal 'national' identities mainly because international travel uses a different way of identifying travellers. Therefore, whereas race is a significant organiser in international migration, African ethnicities are less pronounced. Where migration is taking place to a country that is predominantly Caucasian like New Zealand, white ethnicities become more evident. As in the case with the different African ethnic groups, shared Caucasian heritage does not override ethnic distinctions based

on intonation and other constructed differences within the white racial group.

Age

The manipulation of age as a signifier of difference marks bodies as old and young and has the potential to objectify their physical attributes within categories of beauty and (physical) ability. Within migration, age is used as a measure of life experience. In these circumstances, young, unattached women are deemed vulnerable to lone migration because of their youthfulness and gender. As a yardstick for experience, age is celebrated as the memory, history, pillar and identity of the migrant family. Age has discriminatory qualities informed by the social location of the onlooker.

Social Status

Social status is a fluid category in which one's position is valued in terms of financial and material acquisition associated with job position, house and model of car, social interests and private or public schooling for the children. Social status is a manner of behaviour for the interviewees as much as it is an identity (Weedon, 1999). However, the power derived from social status can exist and exert influence with or without material privilege.

Home

Home is treated as multi dimensional, fluid and evolving. It is a place of shelter, repose, security, consistence and memory (McDowell, 2003:14). Home is contradictorily a seat of women' oppression and self worth. It is a structure on whose adornment society generates identities of its occupants. Home is also the work place and a site of societal gatherings, nation and the Diaspora.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Women and Migration: The Literature

This chapter presents literature that highlights some of the topical issues in women and migration and underscores the importance of gender and migration studies. The final section of this chapter reviews New Zealand's immigration policies, particularly those enacted to deal with the 'Zimbabwean situation' [2].

Women and migration scholarship is a relatively new area of inquiry that grew out of the late 1970s and early 1980s feminist criticism of the marginalisation of women in migration (Willis and Yeoh, 2000:xii). Within a diverse body of literature some of the areas of concern are women and work, the construction of migrant identities, women and men's changing roles in the household, transnationalism, trafficking, and Internet brides (Ibid; Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002). The subject of gendered migrant identities and the notion of migrant belonging continue to gain currency as international migration gains momentum (International Office for Migration, 2003). Current trends in feminist scholarship have shifted from a "pathologising lens" that focuses on negative aspects of integration such as cultural shock to "looking at resiliency, strengths, and positive outcomes" (Berger, 2004:28) of migration.

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[2] 'Zimbabwean Situation'. The term has been popularised internationally to address the current socio-political and economic conditions in Zimbabwe including emigration. A Google search of the Zimbabwean or Zimbabwe situation will yield a multitude of websites such as,

USAID report, http://www.zimbabwedemocracytrust.org/outcomes/details?contentId=1883; UNICEF report, http://216.239.57.104/search?q=cache:gqfJmwX95wcJ:www.unicef.org/emerg/files/Emergencies_Zimbabwe _Situation_Report_030403.PDF+the+zimbabwe+situation&hl=en&client=REAL-tb; Zimbabwe news site, http://www.zimbabwesituation.com.

In the following section I draw on migration theories to make a case for a gender analytical framework in migration based on the fact that women have always been part of the migration story obscured by male centred universalism that continues to dominate migration theory (Morokvasic-Müller, et. al., 2003:9; Truong, 2000:31).

Towards a gender based approach

Human migration characterises the global phenomenon of the movement of people internally or across regional and international boundaries. In 1994 the International Organisation for Migration estimated that 120 million people moved from one country to another legally or illegally. Of these, 15 to 23 million were refugees and asylum seekers (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002:18-9) with the rest comprised largely of people in search of work and some who migrate for family unity. Migration theorists have attributed the phenomenon to a variety of causes, the most dominant being economically grounded push/pull factors. The pull factors characterise the search for better livelihood, more resources, and opportunities while the push factors typify the flight from civil and political strife and natural disasters (Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Arthur, 2000; Morokvasic-Müller et. al, 2003:9-10).

A variety of migration theories have been propounded. Neo-classical scholars argue that people in poor paying regions or countries move to areas where they can earn a higher income to sustain a better life style as well as lessen the expense of the move (Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Wright, 2000). Marxist scholars emphasise the capitalist exploitation of labour while Third World scholars draw on the core-periphery concept of capitalist exploitation of labour to explain migration (Wright, 2000). However, feminists maintain that while each theory contributes some knowledge about migration, modernist theories not only discriminate against women but also against countries that are described as

underdeveloped (Dodson, 1998, No.9:13). Gender considerations expand our understanding of women and men as actors with different roles and experiences, behaviours and expectations in migration.

The contested nature of migration indicates contradictions and intersections between theory and practice. For example, Wright (2000) traces the shifting perspectives in migration theory in Southern Africa (including Zimbabwe) and identifies two theoretical problems. First, she notes that the commonly used neo-classical and structuralise models of migration are gender blind and therefore, limited. Second, Wright points out that contrary to traditional migration theories, migration does not always occur in response to "imbalances in the means of production, with the purpose of maximising returns to their labour" (Wright 2000: 19).

Wider and more complex reasons for migration have been put forward with Willis and Yeoh cautioning, "migration has often been relegated behind issues such as employment, gender relations and reproductive rights" (2000:xi). Family union, personal independence, freedom from marital problems as well as economic factors have also been advanced as reasons for migration (Berger, 2004; Morokvasic, 2003). Another perspective maintains that "Fewer women move for 'family reunion' and more move in search of work" (Hochschild, 2002:20). Friends and women's networks, notably Mexican women in the United States of America, play an active role in encouraging, strategising and even sponsoring other women to migrate (Willis and Yeoh, 2000). Given these multiple and sometimes intersecting causes, the significance of gender in migration must also be considered.

In the early days of women and migration scholarship the quest for a gendered view focused on "adding women to existing migration

research" (Willis and Yeoh, 2000:xi). However, additive approaches and the indiscriminate interchange of the term 'gender' with 'women' proved inadequate, apologist or compensatory because of their essentialist qualities (Morokvasic-Müller, et. al, 2003:10; Willis and Yeoh, 2000:xi). The shift towards a gender perspective is "not merely to make women in migration visible, but to show that patterns, causes, experiences and social impacts of migration are gendered (because) this is still not evident" (Morokvasic-Müller, et. al, 2003:11).

Based on this argument, the gender variable transcends writing women into migration widening the scope for consideration beyond biological functions and roles. It allows us to understand the nature of women and men's relationships and how these are shaped in the private/public domain, at household, local and international levels (Morokvasic-Müller et. al, 2003; Barot, Bradley and Fenton, 1998). Gender enables us to question behavioural differences in the migration patterns of men and women long established by Ravenstein founding migration theorist that remain under explored (DeLaet, 1999:3).

Appreciation of the differences that gender brings to migration paves way for the examination of the relationship and patterns suggested by Morokvasic-Müller et. al, (2003). The following sections of this chapter attempt to put face and voice to migration by exploring some ways in which the push and pull factors have been experienced in a gendered way.

Gendered routes: faces and voices
Contrary to traditional and popular beliefs of male dominated migration and trailing spouses, women migrate in equally large numbers "representing about half of the world's migrants" (Morokvasic-Müller et. al, 2003:9) more often than not as single mothers "after all, about a fifth

of the world's households are headed by women ... 19 percent in Africa, 18 percent in Latin America ... 13 percent in Asia" (Hochschild, 2002:20). DeLaet (1999:1) attributes the invisibility of women in international migration to the traditional association of work with men and the assumption that migrants are men in search of real employment not 'women's work' (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002). Migration policies and research generally focus on men or use gender-neutral language that invariably privileges male experience as noted by Knörr and Meier (2000) Morokvasic-Müller et. al, (2003) and Willis and Yeoh, (2000). Both approaches render women invisible and/or dismiss them as appendages of the male expedition. However, increased numbers of migrating women and the question of migrant minorities and their contribution to the labour market have fuelled the impetus on women and migration studies (Morokvasic-Müller et. al, 2003; Willis and Yeoh, 2000).

The journeys ventured on by women, reasons for migration and the manner in which they experience and recount the events are interest areas for feminist study. The topical issues in women and migration, for example, relate to the feminisation of global labour circuits (Sassen, 2002; Parreñas, 2002), transnationalism (Phizacklea, 2003; Glick Schiller et. al, 1992) and migrant remittances. Other areas are the under valuing of work done by women, deskilling and underemployment, harsh working conditions and competing domestic interests (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002; Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Kelson and DeLaet, 1999). All these themes are inseparable from the routes and subjectivities of the women who experience them in place and time.

Certain routes have been greatly publicised for example, Asian (Ip, 1990; Ip and Lever-Tracy, 1999; Salaff and Greve, 2003; Salaff, 2000);

Latino (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila, 2000; Staudt, 2000; Gruner-Domic, 2000) and Caucasian migration (Morokvasic, 2000; Bush, 2000; Pickles, 2002). Ehrenreich and Hochschild identify four predominant "regional and cross-regional flows" (2002:6) firstly, from South East Asia to the Middle and Far East; second, moves from the former Soviet Union to West Europe, third from south to north America; and fourth, from Africa to Europe. In New Zealand, much consideration has been given to Asia-Pacific and Caucasian immigration (see Fraser and Pickles, 2002; the Society for Research on Women in New Zealand, 1979; Massey University New Settlers Programme publications; Migration Research Group publications; Jansen, 1990; Elliot and Elliot, 2003; Polish Women's League, 1991; Bedford, 2003; MacDonald, 1990). African immigration has, however, not drawn comparable attention, finding mention in literature on refugees or cultural difference such as Reid's *Lift the lid of the cumin jar: Refugees and immigrants talk about their lives and food* (1999).

Some works addressing gender in African migration are Santen and Schafsma (2000); Peleikis (2000); Knörr (2000) and Ogundipe-Leslie (1995). The paucity of literature on Zimbabwean women's internal, regional and international movement is increasingly under scrutiny with attempts to bridge the information gap represented in the establishment of a research and academic think tank called the Southern African Migration Project (SAMP) and in the works of Wright (2000), Schäffer (2000), Vernables (2003) and Jeater (1993).

Asia, one of the most popularised faces of migration, has two noteworthy phenomena that highlight the significance of gender in migration and its intersection with other social hierarchies. The first is the feminisation of migration through state legislation and institutionalisation of women as an exportable and tradable commodity

(Glick Schiller, et. al, 1992:274-4) from countries such as the Philippines to the Middle East, USA and Canada.

Second is the location of industrialised countries' offshore factories in the more developed economies of Singapore and Hong Kong and the collusion of state and corporate entities to import labour from the least developed parts of the region such as the Philippines, Malaysia and increasingly China (Cheng, 1999: 43-45; Tacoli, 1999; Glick Schiller, et. al, 1992) for industrial and domestic purposes.

The physical and psychological manipulation of vulnerable poor Filipino women earns their government foreign currency, serves as a public diplomacy tool to garner political support at home in the name of job creation and projects a good basis for foreign policy engagement with developed countries (Glick Schiller et. al, 1992). The Philippine government offers remittance incentives to its migrant maids and has dubbed them 'new heroes' (Tacoli, 1999; Glick Schiller et. al, 1992). The targeting of women as labour for export is strategically important for governments that believe women are more likely to remit their wages than men (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002:7). The migrant labour importing countries, on the other hand, benefit from cheap labour by enabling policies that facilitate skills-based immigration, for example Canada and New Zealand (Berger, 2004). Nanny and *au pair* visa programmes in developed countries also facilitate the importation of female labour and reinforce traditional divisions of labour by marking women as primary care givers and confining them to these roles.

The incorporation of women as workers for global capital and their export into care services where they are expected to perform "women's work" (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002:3) extends the home workshop into the formal workspace. The immigrant women's assumption of "the

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cast-off domestic roles of middle- and high-income women in the First World – roles that have been previously rejected, of course, by men" (Ibid, 2003:3) makes it possible for the host country's women to move into formal employment. Women's migration usually happens at the expense of the immigrant women's own families, particularly children left in the care of relatives in distant countries (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002).

Studies indicate that very few migrant women have successfully moved without loss of previous job or social standing. For example, the popularity of Filipino maids over other ethnicities in Singapore is chiefly attributed to their English speaking skills and the fact that most of the women have tertiary qualifications. The majority of women immigrants are "deskilling" (losing or not utilising skills) because of failure to find comparable employment because of scepticism over foreign credentials. A significant number of women migrants have opted to change careers and "reskill" (retrain) in professions known to depend on migrant skills due to labour shortages for example, nursing (Raghuram and Kofman, 2004). The work done by Filipino women in the entertainment and care industry feeds the gendered stereotyped conceptions about their roles and position in society through their construction as heroines, nurturers and custodians of the nation or prostitutes (Cheng, 1999: 47). Women's age and race are also implicated in locating the position of migrant women in society.

Centring Zimbabwean women in migration
Locating literature on Zimbabwean women migrants was a challenge. Feminist scholarship in Zimbabwe gained momentum at independence in 1980 and is still emerging, concerning itself largely with family laws of marriage and inheritance, domestic violence, HIV/AIDS and voter rights. Other information is contained in reproductive health research,

environmental impact assessments, poverty alleviation, development programmes and conflict reports [3]. Migration research in Zimbabwe has concentrated on internal (rural/urban) and regional migration, its impact on individuals, family, productivity, income, and the health implications, particularly now in the age of HIV/AIDS. Regional and international migration, on the other hand, has dealt chiefly with gender-neutral documentation of migration (Dodson, 1998, No.9).

Historical records are dominated with migration stories of white male settlers, with scant reference if any to white women. Dairies, personal accounts and literature, such as the works of Doris Lessing and Nadine Gordimer, make it easier for us to recover the silenced voices of women, particularly those of white women. Yvonne Vera and Freedom Nyamubaya are amongst African novelists and poets who are recovering and centring black women's voices in Zimbabwe. Black men enjoy room in early migration as wanders, warriors, leaders of the anti settler resistance and later as commercial farm and urban labourers. African women are virtually invisible except for the rebellious, for example, Nehanda the spirit medium who walked the breadth of the country as leader of the 1890 anti-colonial uprisings (Martin and Johnson, 1980) and women 'prostitutes' who defied the confinement of black women to rural areas (Jeater, 1993).

Early sociological research on Zimbabwe focuses on internal migration and is dominated by assumptions that men are the migrants leaving rural homes in search of urban employment remitting money to their families. These men are presented straddling between two homes, the urban and the rural one (Wright, 2000). The stereotypical identity of the

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[3] Zimbabwean women information resources: Women and Law in Southern Africa; University of Zimbabwe Women's Law Institute; Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network; Federation of Africa Media women.

wretched African wives left behind in the rural areas while men do the rural/urban or cross border job run have been discounted (Schäffer, 2000; O'Laughlin, 1998) with attention drawn instead to the resourceful and empowering networks of Zimbabwean women in internal and cross border trade (Dodson, 1998, No.9; Schäffer, 2000). The complex multiple identities of white colonials and their African born descendants in a post colonial era have also received attention with Vernables (2003) retracing her family's migration from Eastern Europe to Rhodesia and finally to Australia. These writings attest to Zimbabwean women as individuals travelling independently or reuniting with partners or spouses.

Most regional migration literature examines cross-border trader movement by Zimbabwean women to the neighbouring countries of Botswana, South Africa, Zambia and Mozambique while international migration research is preoccupied with statistical accounting of the Zimbabwe brain drain. In the absence of a gendered analysis, the general assumption is that educated and skilled men initiate emigration drawing their spouses and children out in the process. Women receive little attention in the human capital assessment studies irrespective of the fact that the earnings from their migrations are significant in sustaining households, sometimes single-handed and are a source of critical revenue for the government. It must also be noted that Zimbabwe's health sector, primarily staffed by women is the hardest hit by the brain drain (Dodson, 1998:6, No.9; Crush, 2003, No. 29; Irin, 2003).

Women and migration: Conclusion

The absence of a gendered analysis when theorising migration in terms of the search for improved livelihood, more resources, and opportunities or flight from civil and political strife and natural disasters,

renders studies insufficient to explain the migration phenomena and the complexities of current human migration (Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Arthur, 2000).

Personal motivation factors such as family reunion remain an important motivator for migration (Ip, 1990; DeLaet, 1999). However, compelling arguments for the consideration of labour and global market trends and the corresponding bilateral and corporate policies implemented to facilitate cheap labour inflows or circulation have also been forwarded (Cheng 1999; Truong, 2000). In other words, women are drawn to countries that have favourable immigration policies or, in the event of their being intending illegal immigrants, they gravitate towards regions where corporate companies and individuals can employ them regardless of their immigration status, as is the case of many Mexican women migrating to the United States of America (King, 1993; Truong, 2000).

Documented evidence exists that Zimbabwean women have highly developed social support networks that enable them to go out in groups, identifying markets and offering each other moral support in their cross-border movements in the Southern African Development Corporation (SADC) region (Schäfer, 2000). Further feminist research is needed to pay attention to the nature, extent and effects of these social networks within Zimbabwean migration. Are the networks women centred? If inclusive of men, how does this seemingly equal gesture of facilitating each other's migration change the gendered roles of Zimbabwean subjectivities and communities abroad and at home?

Finally, the failure to recognize the gender dimension precludes exploration of a number of critical areas such as: the different ways women and men experience migration; an assessment of whether or

not and to what extent the households were implicated in women's migration; and an understanding of family and societal gender-based attitudes of the roles of women migrants, including the export of female labour and the role of sending and receiving governments. Gender focus also facilitates the identification of the feminisation of migration, the gendered occupations in the home or in the formal employment sector and how these impact on identities, self worth and agency of migrating women in place and time.

Literature indicates that migration engenders the development of multiple identities. These fluid and multiple identities, according to Rapport and Dawson (1998) are best evaluated within the framework of the concept of 'home'. The ensuing literature review of 'home' is linked to the current project that is premised on the view that migration is not a single occurrence but a way of "being in the world" (Rapport and Dawson, 1998:v). The metaphor of 'home' invokes a host of feelings that go into the process of migrant identity formulation such as the sense of belonging, exclusion, safety, struggle and so on.

Migration and Home
As pointed out in the definition of concepts, the notion of home is fluid and highly contested within social science. The notion of home is gendered and is traditionally associated with women. Patriarchal expectations of women as subservient child bearers and nurturers as well as docile homemakers have led to negative associations of home with drudgery, undervaluation of women's work and subjugation to men (Firestone, 1970).

Evolving notions of home present the concept as space, behaviour and identity embodied in subjectivity. As a result, migrant identity is embedded in various spiritual, physical and material constructions of

home. In the private sphere, migrant women are judged by their housekeeping and hostess skills that, in turn, are said to reflect on their husbands' success. African migrant women in Switzerland for example, encounter numerous difficulties. Racially mixed couple marriages can be stressful with some women observing changes in their partners' demeanour in Zurich in comparison to their lives in Africa. Yet others are unable to secure work and, if they do, it is lesser jobs than they held at home. In some instances African women in Zurich have been presumed to be prostitutes (Roth and Speranza, 2000). These negative images and insecurities keep the question of home floating.

Home and identities

Migration implies deculturation and acculturation, therefore an alteration of identity. However acculturation is not straightforward and assimilationist theories like the American melting pot have been superseded by more complex considerations such as transnationalism. Assimilation theories ignore the interplay of race and gender in migration. They also imply forfeiture of past lives, memories, experiences, behaviour, mannerisms and history. The potential of self-erasure anticipates unquestionable acceptance of host country norms ignoring points of migrant resistance and agency (Glick Schiller et. al, 1992:17). The departure from the 'home' and 'away' dualism of migrant assimilation theories paves way for a holistic consideration of complex migrant identities and their multiple, multi-level interactions (business and personal) with sending and host societies and in between (Rapport and Dawson, 1998; Phizacklea, 2003; Knörr and Meier, 2000).

The most obvious points of resistance visible have been noted in the maintenance of the dress code of the country of origin, refusal to learn the language of the host country, the avid search for familiar food

ingredients for a culturally specific diet or the development of enclaves such as 'Little Manila' (Roth and Speranza, 2000). A study of Lebanese immigrants in West Africa notes that the aforementioned points of conflict and resistance are "demonstrative statements" (Peleikis, 2000:68) indicating one's point of view or preference rather than a mere failure to fit in with the dominant culture.

Women's changing identities have also been noted through the study of their naming by society based on the way the women live their lives. Women have assumed the names from the work they engage in as migrants or from the manner and the routes in which they migrate. Literature shows that disparaging identities characterise the way in which the labour of women migrants is undervalued, ridiculed and not considered as real work. For example, while the word 'Filipina' has become synonymous with Filipino maid. Zimbabwean women migrants working the regional circuits have assumed the name 'doily women' from the crotched wares they sell and/or prostitutes generated from the traditional censure and disapproval of women who abandon the assumed safety of the hearth to travel alone without the protection of a male companion. The disparaging naming of some Zimbabwean women migrants is the very opposite of their male counterparts favourably considered to have legitimately gone out to work as culturally accepted breadwinners.

Observations of European migrants affirm migration as both an identity and immigration strategy enabling the migrant to retain her roots in the home country while conducting business or working elsewhere. Mobility is also viewed as a means to an end, adopted as a way of life in response to socio-economic and immigration policy considerations (Morokvasic-Müller, 2000).

The complexity of migrant existence and identity is further illustrated by the example of a Haitian doctor who belongs to a Haitian Association in New York while at the same time engaging the New York city mayor about "our city" and refers to "our nation" (Haiti) when visiting that country (Glick Schiller, et. al, 1992:12). Such contradictory placements in place and time show a strategy against total incorporation. On the other hand, Roth and Speranza (2000) spoke with African women in Switzerland who refused to learn French or learnt the language like the black Zimbabwean women but still found it difficult to belong.

Migrant identities are interwoven with the theme of home. Home is a loaded concept with inclusion and exclusionary qualities and has been used as an analytical framework to discuss migrant experience and identity. Rapport and Dawson (1998) make the point that home and the spaces around it are traditionally associated with safety, stability and routine actions and behaviours that are part of the cultural norms of the resident(s) in their fixed locality. McDowell defines home as;

> more than a house; the term conveys simple pleasures, familial togetherness, privacy and freedom, a sense of belonging, of security, a place to escape from but also to return to, a secure memory, an ideal (McDowell, 2003:14).

The home is also presented from a multi dimensional perspective contradictorily constituted as a possible seat of oppression, a source of achievement and an active space from which to counter power asymmetries (hooks, 1981). Migrants' sense of being at home is complex and defined by their encounter with the host country society as much as it is by the sending countries and by themselves as individuals. The result is a multidimensional home with complex multiple economic, religious, political and social relationships spanning international boundaries and bringing two societies into a single field (Glick Schiller et. al 1992:1). Some migrants yearn for physical return to

their original homeland but others do not. Theorists are divided on whether migration is circular, linear or both but based on the experience of this project I am swayed by the contention that even if they do not make the physical journey back, migrants spiritually return to their origins at one point or another (Rapport and Dawson 1998; Berger, 2004; Knörr and Meier, 2000). The notion of home inflects with migrant identity and is part and parcel of the migrant's daily life experiences.

Literature shows that history is a factor in the consideration of the migrant's expectations of the new community and the host community's reaction and relationship with the migrant. Zimbabwean migration must therefore take into consideration the country's history and that of Africa progressing from forced migration during the slave era to self-initiated or conflict-induced colonial and postcolonial migrations (Mohanty, 2003). This relationship is not without its biases and the issue of racism and ethnic difference permeates many aspects of the migrants' experiences. As a result, migrant Mexican women working in the USA (Hondagnew-Sotelo and Avila, 2000) and African women in Switzerland (Roth and Speranza, 2000) showed transnational tendencies by having strong links with the sending countries in the way of remittances, family communication, maintenance of language and cultural mores or yearning for home partly attributable to the ostracisation of migrants by mainstream society.

Home: Conclusion

Traditionally the concept of home has been given assimilationist and conformity treatment. This linear treatment of home negates the complexity of lived experience and limits the exploration of sites in which one best knows self. Feminist writers challenge future research to desist from the traditional focus on cultural conflict and problems of social adjustment in the host country to a sophisticated treatment of

migrants as complex hybridised transnationals with an adaptable fusion of experiences (Morokvasic-Müller, et. al, 2003: 79). Such an outlook can therefore not accept a fixed notion of home but will seek for understanding that captures all aspects of the migrant's experience as being a form of home as well as a way of life.

New Zealand Immigration Policies

New Zealand is described as a home of immigrants whose foundation and aspirations for peaceful coexistence lie in the Treaty of Waitangi signed in 1840. Early New Zealand immigration policies, informed by British expansionist policies favoured white immigration particularly that of people of British and Irish descent. Economic incentives such as free passage were offered to entice single women of good virtue from Britain, mainly middle class, to work in domestic and other care services in New Zealand (Pickles, 2002:63; Ip, 2002:150).

Non-whites encountered restrictive immigration policies such as the 1871 Act that limited entry to one Chinese per ten tonnes contained on any docking ship (Ip, 1990). These policies meant that Chinese men were more likely to immigrate than women and when women did finally make the journey it was in their capacity as wives. The 1920 Immigration and Restriction Amendment Act required postal applications from people who were not of British descent. The policy was "aimed to restrict entry of 'race aliens': Chinese, Indians – and also Jews" (Beaglehole, 2002:81) with no option for appeal. The exclusionary moves were vested within Pakeha interest to ensure the growth of a 'pure' white New Zealand of British lineage (Ip, 2002). However, the rise of Nazism and the Second World War saw New Zealand opening its doors to refugees from Europe and China (ibid).

The laws favouring white only immigration to New Zealand continued until 1987 when New Zealand abolished race based immigration policies. Research interest on European migrants (Buckland, 1973) has been superseded by current immigration flows from the Asia-Pacific region and the recognition of the economic potential of aligning with Asia in light of waning British responsibility towards its former colonial interests (Bartley, 2003:16).

The shift in migration research also reflects changes in immigration policy. In 1991 a point system based on age, qualification, skills and capital resources was instituted (Department of Internal Affairs, 1996; Bedford, et. al, 2000; Bartley, 2003). By 1995 the New Zealand government boasted of having "one of the best immigration systems in the world" (New Zealand Immigration Service, 1995).

Most of the immigration, census and policy documents are, however, gender neutral but a growing body of scholarship for example, Ip (1990), Fraser and Pickles (2002), Berger (2004) and The Society for Research on Women in New Zealand (1979) amongst others, recognise the significance of gender in migration and specifically focus on the experiences of women migrants in New Zealand.

In a policy review document that set out to make a "good system better" the government effected a quota management and a points-based system of immigration (New Zealand Immigration Service, 1995). The shift from a General Immigration Category to a General Skills Category and from a Business Investment Category to a Business Investor Category was designed to attract persons of value committed to New Zealand who would contribute to the country's economy. English language requirements continue to be a key requirement for intending immigrants and are used as an indicator of the individual's potential for

adaptability and resettlement (Ho, et. al, 2000; Vernables, 2003:213; Bönisch-Brednich, 2002). From random testing of 100 English words (Ip, 2002:154) current policy requires a fee of twenty thousand New Zealand dollars to be paid for dependants to acquire International English Language Testing System (IELTS Level 5) within three months of the agreement failing which the money is forfeited to the State in part or in full (New Zealand Immigration Service, 1995).

Several problem areas for women arise in the policy requirements raised above. First, the policy is written in gender-neutral language that borders on gender blindness. Stressing Skills and Business Migration, the policy necessarily privileges men who, in the case of Zimbabwe, are more educated than women (FAWE; Shumba, 1999) and as such have by means of education or inheritance, skills, economic resources or both that enable them to opt for either immigration route. The assumption that women in developing countries have not always had the same advantage as men in education means they may not have sufficient education to merit points in the educational and professional categories. Without the requisite skills women would most likely never initiate emigration or voluntarily immigrate. If they did, they would not be able to gain independent entry, neither would they afford the required deposit for English language competency.

The large amounts of money involved in emigration and immigration have potential to have negative repercussions for the woman who is financially dependant on her husband. The pressure on the woman to gain language competency is intense. Where the woman immigrant is not the principal applicant, poor English language skills and huge security deposits for language competence tests accentuate the trailing woman migrant identity and sense of powerlessness. It would be more

advantageous to immigrating women if mechanisms were found to evaluate them based on their own merit (Berger, 2004:231).

Amendments made to the point system in 2003 attempted to redress the problem of unemployed but well educated and qualified migrants by regulating that intending migrants produce evidence of a job offer in a skills shortage category that a New Zealander is unavailable to fill. Selective screening of immigrants based on skills has already been shown to favour men. By and large men migrate as professionals or skilled persons and experience little or no job or status loss. It can be argued that their pre-migration employment gave them access to communication technologies such as telephones, computers and fax making it possible for them to secure employment or initiate job searches prior to emigration. In the absence of accessible communication technology and lack of computer skills it is highly unlikely that women in Zimbabwe will secure employment before migrating to New Zealand. The care and service industries into which migrant women are marshalled most often than not hire locally.

Finally, by stating that the Skills and Business Category migration are facilitating entry for people who can contribute to New Zealand economy, the policy privileges men who are likely to be the primary applicants as 'the real workers'. Consequently the work of women in the household that supports and enables the man to be at work, and the minimum wage work undertaken by migrant women remain undervalued as worthy contributions to the economy.

Special immigrants

Zimbabwe and New Zealand share a historical bond of having been former British colonies. The fact that both were Commonwealth nation member states and that New Zealand held the Secretary-General

position of the club at the height of political unrest and migration from Zimbabwe cannot be underplayed as a contributory factor to its selection as a final destination, neither can the fact that Sir Garfield Todd (1908-2002) the former Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia from 1953 to 1958 was New Zealand born (Commonwealth Secretariat; Harris, 1971).

Current Zimbabwean immigration to New Zealand is contentious in view of targeted policies instituted by the Labour led government to address Zimbabwean presence in New Zealand (The Scoop, New Zealand, February 16 2004 and Monday 12 August 2002). While some Zimbabweans immigrated using the skilled and business points system, an undetermined figure took advantage of the policy that exempted Zimbabweans from applying for visa before entry.

Escalating political problems and economic decline in Zimbabwe increased arrivals in New Zealand resulting in the introduction of a stringent pre-departure visa regime for Zimbabweans beginning March 2003. The current visa process is lengthy and costly requiring medical examinations and communication with the nearest New Zealand High Commission based in South Africa (New Zealand Immigration Service). As the previous discussion shows the lower levels of literacy attained by women in comparison to men, and the disadvantage limited education places on women's access to lucrative employment systematically disadvantages women in the new visa process.

Zimbabweans immigrating to New Zealand are still required to pursue the Skills, Business or Family Category options and only those landed prior to 23 September 2004 can apply for permanent residence or have the right to stay until 2006. The trailing group, if we go by traditional assumptions, nearly always women and children have to remain

outside the country until permanent residence has been granted (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004/14). The language used in the circular is universalistic, presumably intended to be gender neutral in addressing seemingly homogenous "Zimbabwean nationals".

The new policy brings a mixture of relief and apprehension because the invitation to apply is not a guarantee of residence and the 2006 window period increases current uncertainty for some. Targeted immigration policies are contentious (Fraser and Pickles, 2002). The anti immigration New Zealand First Party argues that New Zealand's immigration policies are too liberal and associates immigration with many social ills. On the other hand the National Party concedes the peculiarity of current Zimbabwean immigration and argued against annual work permits in favour of permanent resident status for those who have been working in New Zealand. The National Party went further to advocate that farming be considered a specialist skills area for immigration, a move that the Party believes would address 'the Zimbabwean situation' (The National Party, February 17 2004).

The Zimbabwe-specific immigration policies are problematic in many respects. First, they assume a single entity or homogenous Zimbabwean. Secondly, the 'Zimbabwe Situation' has become an international diplomatic standoff and, much as New Zealand develops her own policies they are influenced by policies of other governments, including Zimbabwe. Thirdly, the New Zealand government has been more reactive than proactive. Failure to make decisive determinations on the annual permits and their continued renewal (to 2006) potentially signalled New Zealand as an empathetic immigration destination, the deference presenting opportunity for new arrivals.

Finally, the policy remains inconclusive about what will happen after 2006. Presumably targeted policies were instituted with the hope that most of the immigrants who had not migrated for work would be able to return home or could be persuaded to do so. However, the political standoff between Zimbabwe and New Zealand, especially since the former withdrew from the Commonwealth group of nations does not auger well for Immigration Services. In addition, it is important to review how expeditious the immigration process is for family reunion in view of the 'humanitarian' context within which the Zimbabwe specific policies are developed? Assuming that women are, as traditionally thought, the trailing partners, consideration must be given to nature of hardships they are likely to endure as they and their children await immigration procedures to be satisfied.

The National Party's suggestions are problematic in that the proposals address immigrants who have held steady employment for a period of one year and more and farmers. However literature indicates that it is not only difficult for immigrants to secure employment but that their employability can be erratic particularly in the minimum wage bracket where women migrants rely on piece work (Berger, 2004; Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002).

The proposal to elevate farming to a skilled migration category is sound but problematic for Zimbabweans since it is based on the assumption that the immigrants concerned are farmers. Given the structure of the Zimbabwean economy and that whites are the majority-embattled landowners and commercial farmers the suggestion runs the danger of racial privileging.

Additionally, the Zimbabwean story has been flaunted in the media as the dispossession of white male landowners, breadwinners and

benevolent employers of thousands of Africans. White women have largely been absent except as vulnerable wives, mothers, widows of victim farmers and rarely as farmers in their own right. On the other hand, black women's contribution to farming in Zimbabwe is marginally acknowledged. By this token, neither black nor white Zimbabwean women immigrants are in future likely to acquire permanent residence on the basis of having tilled their peasant mother's field nor having lived or worked on the farm with their 'farmer' spouse without presenting formal educational and professional membership credentials or documented evidence of previous land ownership.

The adoption of farming to a skilled migration category calls into question what skills, what criteria, to whom and how measured? Also interesting is the consideration of who is likely to take advantage of the farming skills migration option. Labour market-driven immigration privileges those with (certified) skills, the majority of whom are men and therefore amounts to "de facto gender discrimination" (Crush and Williams, 2001, No.1: 17). The enabling and exclusionary principles of immigration policies intersect with the notion of home providing an identity and sense of belonging, temporary belonging or exclusion.

Conclusion

To conclude the discussion on gender and migration it is evident that a gender perspective in migration enables us to better understand the different experiences of women and men migrants in private and public spaces. The contentious theories on migration point to the need of a multidisciplinary approach contributing towards an "ecological system of people, institutions, and ideas, connected to each other in complex ways" (Reinharz,1992:241).

The changing and complex lives of women migrants necessitate respect of individual experience and sophisticated treatment of their identities. It also requires the unpacking of the migrant process to uncover the intersection of gender with other oppressive categories such as race, gender and education in the development of migrant identities. The fluidity of the migrant's identity compels us to problematise their consciousness and sense of home.

The extent to which migrants control their shifting identities is open to speculation. What is apparent from the global labour circuits is that government and corporate policies determine the migrants' life in negative and favourable ways over which the migrant has little or no control. In other words, while migrants can lobby for favourable policies affecting their status they do not have absolute control over the outcome. On the other hand, migrant women have exercised agency by being decisive in matters affecting their livelihood such as becoming part of migrant circulations or assisting fellow women to migrate, finding paid work and retaining their language, food and cultural mores.

One of the best ways to understand the power dynamics in human relationships with attention to individual experience is to employ feminist poststructuralist theories. The next chapter details the way feminist research methods were used in this project informed by feminist poststructuralist perspectives on the impact of discourses on subjectivity. The chapter also explains the processes used in accessing and analysing the data for the project.

Chapter Three
Methodology

Introduction: Feminist Research - Seeking another way of knowing

This chapter locates this project within a feminist poststructuralist theoretical framework, discusses the research question, methods and processes of data collection and analysis and the ethics that have informed these methods. The aims of this project are to centre and give voice to Zimbabwean women's migrant experiences, to celebrate their agency, and to identify sites of struggle on which a social action agenda can be built. Unlike traditional male centred and universalistic research methods feminist research methods were considered most appropriate for this project because they attempt to be non-hierarchical by balancing knowledge production through comparison of women and male experiences with special attention to the use and manifestation of power in human relationships (Harding, 1987; Willis and Yeoh, 2000).

Additionally, feminist poststructuralist theories advance the centrality of meaning participants attach to their lives and how these meanings are social constructs informed by cultural and historic placement. It is the centrality of subjectivities to our understanding of the world and human relationships that makes feminist poststructuralist theories most attractive for this project. The acceptance of meaning as a social construct in which individuals are actively involved is a cogent ingredient to drive agency and social change (Nielsen, 1990).

Situating this project within a feminist framework was a political statement from a theoretical and epistemological level recognising that methods are political and value laden (Weedon, 1987; Reinharz, 1992) and that a feminist researcher "inhabits the same critical plane as the women whose 'everyday world' she investigates" (Stanley and Wise,

1990:34). I used a feminist framework to challenge Western androcentric traditional ways of knowing and knowledge creation and to contribute to the expansion of research by African women, grounded in our colonial and postcolonial history, in the face of predominantly Western feminist scholarship.

The interviewees' perspectives challenge or affirm what is already known in migration studies in New Zealand and Zimbabwe and in the field of women and migration in general. Finally, feminist methodology offered an alternative and broader way of understanding gendered emigration/migration issues in Zimbabwe and New Zealand. By drawing on feminist poststructuralist theories, previously objectified Zimbabwean emigrants/migrants become humanised subjectivities embodying shifting heterogeneous presentations.

The research question

My interest in women's rights, coupled by my sojourner status presented an ideal research opportunity on realisation that there in an absence of studies on Zimbabwean women in New Zealand. The selection of the topic 'Reconstructing Home: Zimbabwean Women in New Zealand' informed by poststructuralist concepts tries to establish how gender was implicated in four women's experiences and in the formation of their identities as they migrated and settled in New Zealand.

As the topic suggests, the concept of home is central to the research project as a symbolic and structural living space in which gendered human relationships are enacted and identities created. The question relating to motivation for migration and extent of participant empowerment through migration is historically and culturally located in the adage of the Shona and Ndebele people of Zimbabwe, '*Musha ndi*

Mai/Umuzi ngu Mama' [4]. The concept embodies the common association of women as nurturers of home that has dominated social science research. However, by invoking the home as a metaphor of migrant experience, I appropriate the traditional saying to highlight the fact that it not only centres the women in the household, it speaks of womanpower. The levels of power/lessness is however different for each woman dependant on location. Nevertheless the use of the concept of 'home' as a spring board from which to explore human relationships is empowering because of the aspirations of female power, resourcefulness and scope for agency contained in this Zimbabwean maxim.

The association of home with security, permanence and comfort make it an interesting tool for examining the complexities of migration, the changing identities of the informants from their own self-image in relation to kin, sending and receiving societies and their placement in the global village (Willis and Yeoh, 2000). The project takes into consideration the material nature of home and individual cognition of 'at homeness' in place and time (Johnson et. al, 2000).

The basic assumptions were that women experience migration differently from men, that the quality of their life changed on migration, and that they were more independent, financially empowered and better placed to negotiate family, work and social relationships. Migration is usually presented as providing great opportunities and personal freedoms previously limited or unavailable in the private/public sphere prior to migration (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002). However, the project does not take for granted that migrant women are

[4] The Shona saying "Musha mukadzi" literally translated means 'home is woman'and/or wife'. A related common saying is 'Musha ndi Mai' (Shona), "Umuzi ngu Mama" (Ndebele) means 'Mother is (the) home'. The popular sayings are indicative of the strong traditional and cultural association of women as homemakers.

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emancipated by migration and so questions the extent of emancipation. The current project also considers if in fact the women migrants are differently oppressed. The 'home' is therefore symbolic as an expression of action and being that enables us to explore the women's consciousness by finding out how 'at home' each woman feels in place and time.

I assumed that their migration experiences of the four women were gendered and set out to find out in what way and with what effect on their identities. I also assumed that race would be a key consideration for the black women in their attempts to "reconstruct home" or settle down in New Zealand but at the onset of the project I failed to fully recognise the enormity of ethnicity in the life of white Zimbabwean immigrants and underestimated the impact of age in migrant lives. The limitations could be attributed to my own ethnocentricities.

Having positively identified the need to examine the implication of gender in Zimbabwean women's migration and settling experiences as the subject of this project, I identified feminist poststructuralist theoretical framework as best suited to address the research question (Bowles and Klein, 1983:38). The choice comes with the awareness that there is no feminist method or methodology *per se*. However, feminist poststructuralist theories focus on language and subjectivity, two key elements central to unpacking migrant identities.

Feminist poststructural theoretical framework

The naming, social positioning and points of struggle of women migrants are embedded in language and subjectivity. Drawing on feminist poststructuralist theories enabled me to examine the construction of meaning, power relationships and the implications of language on subjectivity and social organisation. Weedon observes that

Language is the place where actual and possible forms of social organisation and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested. Yet it is also the place where our sense of ourselves, our subjectivity is *constructed*. The assumption that subjectivity is constructed implies that it is not innate, not genetically determined, but socially produced (Weedon,1987:21).

Feminist poststructuralist emphasis on subjectivity and historical and cultural specificity was a supportive theoretical basis to achieve my intention to privilege each of the women's migration experiences while exploring the effect of their Zimbabwean socialisation on interface with socially and culturally derived meanings of those they come into contact with in place and time (Rabinow and Rose, 1994; Weedon, 1987; Scott, 2003).

Since "meaning is produced within language rather than reflected by language" (Weedon, 1987:23) feminist poststructuralism was best suited to deconstruct the power-based relationships embedded in gender, race, ethnicity, age and social status discourses and in the notion of home. This study attends to ways in which language was used to privilege, discriminate, include or exclude, dismiss or approve of the four women based on constructions of racial and ethnic superiority, biological and genetic disposition. The findings and analysis chapters of this project support the fact that the oppressions identified by the interviewees such as gender and race are not innate. They are social constructs generated and articulated usually by those with privilege or power and their supporting institutions to justify the confinement of a particular individual or group within a certain social location and behaviour mode.

If meaning is constructed, it is subject to change, therefore the way migrant women perceive and understand their situation and the perceptions of those viewing the four Zimbabwean women migrants

from different vantage points are not fixed (Gunew and Yeatman, 1993). As a result, the interviewees found themselves in shifting multi-level, multiple sometimes intersecting oppressions. The fluidity of feminist poststructuralism lends itself well to the feminist social action project of empowerment and change because subjectivity is "a site of disunity and conflict, central to the process of political change and to preserving the status quo" (Weedon, 1987:21).

The fluidity, social specificity and political nature of meaning embodied in discourses constructed the interviewees as different or other because of their migrant status, their gender, race, ethnicity, age and class. Consequently, discourses served as identity or as tool and active space for engaging and contesting constructed differences. A poststructuralist framework also provided the advantage of a complex biological and socially constructed multi-centred subject whose conscious or unconscious thoughts, actions and emotions (Weedon, 1987:32) are critical to our understanding of the Zimbabwean migrant experience in New Zealand.

While drawing on feminist poststructuralist theories to understand difference, I followed four basic principles of feminist research. Firstly, reflection on the implications of the pervasive existence of gender and the resulting inequalities in the interviewees' lives. Secondly, focus on the 'centrality' of consciousness-raising to acquire knowledge and generate new thinking with the goal of challenging patriarchy. Thirdly, identification of my researcher position as inseparably intertwined with the researched. Finally, I endeavoured to engage in a mutually beneficial and respectful relationship with the interviewees (Cook and Fonow 1990:72-3).

The research design and methods

Four Zimbabwean women migrants resident in New Zealand for periods ranging from one to five years participated in this study. Pseudonyms Sarah, Anne, Carol and Judith were used to safeguard the women's identities. The feminist in-depth interviewing method was used for data collection while the Hurricane Thinking framework (Appendix 5) in which dominant and less dominant concerns generated from the centre and later coded for frequency was used to identify and isolate dominant themes emerging from the transcripts (Kirby and McKenna, 1989). Nothing is discarded when using Hurricane Thinking. Chunks of information such as less dominant themes or other information that is not directly relevant but could prove useful called 'bibbits' are filed for future use (ibid, 135). This was followed by a poststructuralist-based deconstruction of gender and other relational sites of power experienced by the four migrant women in varied spaces called 'home' (Weedon,1987; 1999).

Recorded interviews

The project was based on tape-recorded in-depth interviews lasting between one to one and a half hours. The interview method was chosen because, unlike questionnaires, it presented a conversation opportunity for the establishment of trust and uninhibited researcher/interviewee interaction given that the project delved into the personal lives, family situations and migrant status of the four women (Reinharz, 1992:18; Bingley, 2002:209).

The dilemmas of shifting/multiple realities, fluidity and changing truths were challenges to the process. The interview method was a soul bearing, honest, collaborative construction of meaning. The intimacy of face-to-face interviews helped me reiterate the intentions of the project in person. This was critical to the establishment of trust necessary to

discuss women centred issues some of which are culturally sensitive and considered private, more so personal relationships with men. The struggle between the private and public in the lives of the Zimbabwean women interviewed and the challenge of blackness and whiteness represent a microcosm of the contested views regarding feminist articulations of difference and subjectivity as experienced by these women. The search for gendered identities and understanding that gender is a crosscutting factor in migrant women's lives may seem obvious from the privileged position of a feminist. However, women do not always view the gender dimension as the primary organiser in their lives and as seen in the current project, racism and ethnicity were perceived dominant hierarchies.

Bearing in mind cultural sensitivities around gender in Zimbabwe, my questions were probing but open ended, empowering, giving voice and room to participants to talk back, ask questions and be part of the research process as opposed to being dispassionate objects of inquiry. The face to face interviews permitted me to personally engage the interviewees, establish rapport, prompt and be flexible enough to interpret body language which in turn guided me in deciding whether or not and when appropriate to pursue certain themes. The interviews were also about the researcher listening, respecting, trusting, diligently noting and analysing the invaluable experiences (Reinharz, 1992).

The interviews took place in venues selected by the women and included the homes and hotel rooms. These choices reflected the interviewees' sense of belonging and comfort in their surroundings, a theme strongly connected to the notion of reconstructing home that is given further attention in the analysis offered in Chapter 5.

Participant selection

The participants for this study were identified with the help of my Zimbabwean social networks in New Zealand. The basic criteria was that the women should have been in New Zealand for more than one year, and, if possible, include a varied time sample of up to five years as this could give an extended time appreciation of the immigrants' experience of reconstructing home. It was also desirable that the women be of varied civil status in order to allow for comparison of experiences to understand whether or not and to what extent married, attached or single status affected their experiences as immigrants.

Having obtained Massey University Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC) approval (Appendix 1) to conduct the research I outlined and discussed my project with individual Zimbabwean women migrants known to me. While a number of these acquaintances were keen to take part in the study I opted to work with new contacts after weighing the insider/outsider advantages and disadvantages of conducting research on friends outlined by Neal and Gordon (2001:99). Another consideration that strengthened my resolve to work with strangers was the need to protect participant identity. It would not be difficult for a knowledgeable person reading this report to trace my pre-and post-migration relationships within the Zimbabwean diasporic community in a small country like New Zealand.

Reaching outside my current circle of contacts enabled me to forge new relationships that can survive beyond the duration of this project. The bonding was not imposed. Working with new acquaintances was refreshing and to some extent free of pre-existing assumptions based on earlier social interaction. I invited the women to participate in this project mindful that we may have no intentions of future contact (Reinharz and Chase, 2002:229).

I shared the Participant Information Sheet (Appendix 2) with the key contacts and narrowed down a list of over twenty potential participants to a list of six based on race and geographical spread. The intention was to work with a sample of four in view of the time limitations and requirements of this academic project. Furthermore, contrary to scientific methods of inquiry, feminist qualitative research is not singularly concerned with numbers or controlled validation of data. Emphasis is instead placed on women's subjectivities and their understanding of the meanings of their lives (Reinharz, 1992; Weedon, 1987).

As a result, although it would have been ideal for me to strike a racial balance of two black women to two white women or two black and two non-black, I ended up with three black women and one white woman within a reasonable geographical spread of New Zealand. The racial balance failed to materialise partly because of the limited time factor of this project in which it was not possible to inculcate the trust required to draw out potential participants, some of whom attribute their emigration to political pressure, others whose uncertain future in New Zealand was dependant on political will and some who simply had very busy schedules. This is not to say that it was any easier to enlist the participation of black Zimbabwean women as they were equally elusive for more or less the same reasons as white women. Both racial groups had individuals who resented the 'exposure' to another Zimbabwean of their devalued status in the light of their previous social status and migrant expectations.

Telephone calls to the selected six possible interviewees were followed by a written invitation to participate in the research project in the form of the Participant Information Sheet. Three women returned a positive response, two indicated interest but had a conflicting schedule and one

was "worried" about the consequences of taking part in the project. Falling back on my original list of 20, I enlisted the support of two participants, one of whom agreed to take part in my preparatory or test interview.

Participants signed a letter of consent to participate in the project (see Participant Consent Form, Appendix 3). I talked the interviewees through their rights making sure that they understood that their names and interview material would be protected.

Data collection

Data was primarily obtained by way of face-to-face recorded interviews that lasted for one to one and a half hours. After offsetting conversational warm up preliminaries I requested the interviewee's permission to turn on the recorder and reiterated participant rights. The questions were open ended, basically allowing free flow of information (Interview questions Appendix 4). For example the question, "What can you tell me about your migration?" was an open ended and loaded conversation trigger. I used prepared questions to steer the discussion towards the thematic areas pertinent to the study and minimised potential for straying to topics that could be interesting but were not within the scope of the project. The request to speak off the record would have been accommodated but it never arose. On the other hand, post interview conversation sometimes yielded important information requiring me to ask the interviewee for permission to switch on the recorder, a request that was always met with favour.

Transcription of interview tapes was a long and daunting procedure that I carried out as soon after the interview as possible to avoid losing the essence of what had been said and failing to fully note or make sense

of observations of what transpired during the interviews such as body language and clues from interview space/environment.

In the feminist spirit of non-abstraction I viewed the interviewees as co-producers of knowledge who had a say in the production of the final report through a verification process by which they could edit and exclude sensitive material from the interviews as well as own a final copy of the findings chapter. The process of collaboration and verification did not override "the intensely private qualities of writing" (Bondi, 2002:5) nor excuse me from responsibility over the final product.

Data analysis

Listening to the interviewees talk in person and on tape and reading through the transcriptions, themes of difference or otherness and belonging were most resounding. Hurricane thinking was used to sift through issues of concern and to highlight recurring themes within the women's experiences in the family, at work and in the community (Kirby and McKenna, 1989:147).

Material pertaining to each interviewee was coded and filed separately. Using highlighters, I marked positive, negative and ambiguous experiences of the women's migration stories. Having listed these, I grouped and labelled them in descriptive categories that exposed emotions of belonging and exclusion based on socially definitive differences such as gender, race, ethnicity, age and social status. The dominant experiences identified by the migrant women revolved around their consciousness of difference and were also based on the perceptions of those they encountered that conceived them as different. However, the delineation of research findings defied straight categorization due to overlapping categories and grey or contradictory

experiences. The two part analysis chapters 5 and 6 articulate these differences in relation to the processes of the four migrant women's home reconstruction processes in New Zealand.

Ethics

This research project was undertaken under the ethical standards laid out by MUHEC that are in agreement with the expectations of feminist research (Reinharz, 1992; Fonow and Cook, 1991; Babbie, 1989) and social science research in general (Kvale, 1996; Warren, 2002; Denscombe, 2002). Denscombe notes that "Ethics concerns the system of moral principles by which individuals can judge their actions as right, good or bad" (Denscombe, 2002:175). The MUHEC binds researchers to be law abiding, respectful of cultural norms, obtain relevant approval, give participants adequate information and obtain written consent. It also advocates for honest, unbiased, unobtrusive research.

Participant consent and protection

Participant consent is a "grey area" (Denscombe, 2002:190) entailing more than a simple agreement or refusal to participate. Bearing in mind that participants are known to agree to participate in research for varied reasons ranging from enthusiasm to feeling pressurised or obligated, I endeavoured to give the interviewees as much information as possible to enable them to make an informed decision regarding their participation (Denscombe, 2002:187; Babbie, 1989:472; Reinharz and Chase, 2002). The interviewees were also informed of their right to discontinue their participation at any time they deemed appropriate.

The questions raised by Denscombe (2002) regarding the extent to which participant consent applied to discussions prior to or after the interview and the admissibility and use of material obtained from

observation or any other avenues other than those expressly agreed to by the participant was in this study partially addressed by way of sharing the transcription texts and my analysis of the interview with the interviewee for feedback prior to finalizing the research findings in Chapter 4.

Participant protection was paramount and care was taken to avoid stressing the interviewee. In order to safeguard the identification of the contributors I did not disclose particular details of the participant profiles in view of the small Zimbabwean population in New Zealand and the sensitive nature of information extrapolated from in-depth interviewing. Pseudonyms were used to identify participants instead of their real names. All research records, tapes and transcription material were securely kept and confidentiality and anonymity were maintained. The data gathered will, as approved on application to MUHEC, be destroyed on completion of the project.

Researcher location: insider/outsider/both/neither

The issue of disclosure is highly contentious. Personal interest in the subject, my sojourner status and location as an educated black Zimbabwean woman amongst other factors posed an ethical challenge regarding partiality and value of the research (Reinharz, 1992). At the same time there were advantages of making use of my "indigenous-insider" position as "someone from the community perceived legitimate enough to carry out this kind of research" (Acker, 2001:9). Ironically, the research process problematised my location in that I failed to fit into the dualised insider/outsider paradigm as did the interviewees who, like me, exhibited multiple subjectivities dependent on location, situation and our individual interpretation of the power relationships at that time.

So while traditional research directs students to focus on the participant avoiding the distractions of self-disclosure, I minimised chances of "a distant and hierarchical relationship" (Reinharz and Chase, 2002:227) by identifying myself openly and in relation to the interviewees. Although I disclosed the current study to be a feminist project, I found it necessary to sometimes minimise reference to my being feminist, preferring to underscore the woman centeredness of the project. This situational discretion not to be "100 per cent truthful" (Denscombe, 2002:178; Achebe, 2002:10) arose from the long-standing cultural backlash regarding the origins and intentions of the feminist project in Africa.

Conclusion

Efforts to delineate methodology, method and ethics are to clarify processes undertaken in this project. In reality these areas are interrelated. The project affirmed the advantages of feminist interview methods as an interactional tool for knowledge development and the research process showed the challenges of the insider location because of shifting subjectivities. Deconstruction laid bare the mechanics of power in discourses of difference reposing possibilities for change in the very nature of social constructions of meaning.

Participant introduction and profiles

The following is a group profile of the four interviewees so that their privacy is better protected. The names used are not the women's real names and similarity with any Zimbabwean immigrants in New Zealand is unintentional. Anne is a white Zimbabwean while Carol, Judith and Sarah and are black Zimbabweans living and working in New Zealand for two to five years. The women's ages range between twenty to sixty years old. Anne, Sarah and Judith are mothers.

Sarah a black Zimbabwean is a registered nurse, mother and head of the household. Sarah works in the same job as she did in Zimbabwe.

Anne is a white Zimbabwean and daughter of a British immigrant to Southern Rhodesia now Zimbabwe. She is a mother and grandmother who followed her son a skilled migrant in New Zealand. A former manager, Anne now holds a clerical position.

Carol is a single young black Zimbabwean who entered New Zealand as a visitor and has benefited from the Zimbabwe specific immigration policies. Carol, a college graduate and wage employee, is yet to find a job in her field but is hopeful and intends to acquire a New Zealand professional qualification to enable her to be more competitive.

Judith is a black Zimbabwean. She is a wife and mother who migrated under the family category to join her skilled husband in New Zealand. A former clerk, Judith now works as a care worker and is also a full time student nurse.

In the next Chapter, I present a summary of the research findings as they emerged in the women's daily experiences at home, work and in the community.

Chapter Four
Research Findings

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the interviews held with Zimbabwean women migrants in New Zealand based on their daily lives. Drawing on poststructuralist theories I sought to deconstruct Sarah, Anne, Carol and Judith's migrant experiences in the home, at work and in the community. The interviews were open-ended in order to ascertain the extent to which gender was experienced in the motivation for migration, the level of ease or 'at homeness' felt by the participants in New Zealand, their sense of connectivity with Zimbabwe and the level to which they felt empowered by their immigration.

As this chapter will demonstrate, home was not a fixed locale but a physical, spiritual and social location influenced by the women's encounters with race, gender, ethnicity, class and age. Therefore migration presented multi-level, intersecting freedoms and oppressions for the interviewees.

Motivation for Migration

Sarah, Anne, Carol and Judith migrated from Zimbabwe in search of what they all termed a "better life". Falling standards of living were a key motivator for the women's migration. Anne worried that on retirement her pension would be too eroded because

> I could see pensioners struggling and I knew that my savings would not be enough for my upkeep on my retirement. I worried about health care. Medical staff were leaving the country.

Sarah a health professional who migrated to New Zealand confirmed Anne's fears. Sarah said there was a chronic shortage of basic commodities like bread, milk, sugar, fuel and drugs.

Family considerations such as concern over affordability of education and future prospects for their children and grandchildren were important in Anne, Judith and Sarah's decisions to move. Anne said

> Many young people had nothing to sell up and if they are to go back they have nothing. A young couple had no prospects of buying their own home, practically nothing of buying their own car. Family and cost of schooling was escalating so young people of any race were having a hard time.

Carol, an unattached young woman, cited economic reasons and adventurism as motivators for her emigration. She was on the look out for increased and more rewarding job opportunities because "my friends who came to New Zealand before me seemed to be doing well". Equipped with a university degree but without much work experience, Carol felt that the saturated and dwindling job market in Zimbabwe would be restrictive. She also hoped migration would enable her to further her education. Carol said, "here the sky is the limit. You can do any course you want as long as you have the money".

While the four women cited economic and political reasons for emigrating there was a difference in the way in which they experienced these motivators. For example, Anne a white Zimbabwean, is herself a daughter of an immigrant. She said "grandmother went to Zimbabwe when father and my uncle were small boys". She therefore felt that her reasons for emigrating were a combination of race, gender and age. Since her children had emigrated they were concerned for her safety. Anne said her children "insisted that I join one of them" .

Anne felt insecure and pushed out of "home" as a white woman in a country in which the majority black people were reclaiming their land rights from their white "colonisers". Sarah, Judith and Carol shared a sense of insecurity too, but none indicated direct personal political threat. They seemed wary of the potential of the country to degenerate into civil chaos that would further undermine their already weakened economic status and threaten human security. On the contrary, the women's family and social networks attested that New Zealand "was a quiet country (and) politically stable" (Sarah).

Home and Family

All four women identified Zimbabwe as 'home' with Anne emphatically stating, "home is still and will always be Zimbabwe". Sarah and Anne, the older of the four women, expressed reservations about leaving 'home' because they had to sell and collapse decades of their lives into a suitcase. Sarah recalled

> It was very difficult to take off from home *you know* ... to sell everything that you have and find someone to rent the house. At the end of the day you literally say, now I have nothing. I am going to New Zealand to start again.

Anne echoed the "pressure" to move saying, "I sold all my property including a car and house but the returns were virtually nothing, they certainly wouldn't support me here". Anne lamented her "home and a job, car, friends and all the things that you needed". Anne was "very settled" and "gave it all up" and has none of these comforts "here and none of those things in Zimbabwe any longer". Sarah and Anne's feeling of loss is missing in Judith and Carol's narratives and could be attributed to the fact that they are younger.

Judith emigrated under the family category as a dependent of her husband who had gained residency under the skills migration scheme.

Judith said, "He had to work long hours and even took up www.com [5] jobs" taking him "a little over a year to save for my airfare and that of our three children". Judith, like Carol, had apprehensions about leaving the 'known' to venture into the 'unknown'. However, the two were excited first time international travellers leaving the country at a time when "a lot of people were leaving Zimbabwe" (Judith). Judith said her family "are happier here because the standard of living is better".

Commenting on her family's reaction and support as she prepared to migrate Carol said

> My mother was very supportive, both financially and spiritually. My father was sceptical. He is not an adventurous person although he has lived outside Zimbabwe. He was not keen on my leaving home to go so far away. He kept asking my mother why she was encouraging me to go to New Zealand when she herself had never been there. He felt I was too young and vulnerable especially because I am a single woman.

On the issue of remittances, the black women, unlike Anne "have to look after the New Zealand family and the extended family in Zimbabwe. Pressure to be responsible daughters, sisters, and daughters-law in terms of remittances is stressful on the three black women and Judith laments "the expectations are so high and you can't be seen to be failing". Carol said she helps her family "when she can".

Sarah, Anne, and Judith moved to New Zealand primarily for family reasons in what could debatably be self-sacrificing circumstances in as far as they connected the centrality of their presence in New Zealand to the comfort of their families. The three women were mothers, with Anne's central role being that of a 'trailing' grandmother responding

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[5] www.com. Zimbabwean slang for menial work in the Diaspora.

amongst other things to the letters of "distress at changed circumstances" (Anne) coming from her family in New Zealand.

Sarah fulfilled the super mom role by providing a home and emotional support for her children as well as working to meet their educational and material needs. Sarah came to New Zealand a solo mum partly motivated by her estranged relationship with her husband who remained in Zimbabwe.

Judith came through as the wonder wife, the accompanying spouse, keeping house and home, looking after the children, enrolled in a fulltime nursing degree program while employed as a care worker. Judith said being far away from home she and her husband had the opportunity to focus on their core family "without interference from the extended family" or too many obligations to them. However, Judith found New Zealand more pressured than Zimbabwe. She worried that financial constraints forced her to spend less time with her husband and children or have time to enjoy a rest. Judith felt that her work negatively affected her family life. She said, "I sometimes feel like a zombie. I come home very late and the children will be fast asleep, my husband too".

Judith and Anne, as mothers and grandmother, were concerned about the impact of migration on their young grandchildren and children, respectively. The children were minors readjusting to life without maids, limited garden space, new schools and friends. Anne noted the difficulty her daughter experienced "without home help and working new jobs. It is very hard". Judith found herself relying on her daughter aged 11 to care for her siblings, referring to her as

> great with her hands. She is a great cook and good with
> the needle. She is a great kid, so responsible. She bails
> me out but I feel sorry for her because if we were home

the situation would be different. I shudder to think what the (former) maid would say if she saw me emptying dust pans and pushing strollers of other women's kids.

Carol considered her lone migration an empowering challenge to prove her capabilities and in her own words "to become somebody". Migration was also an opportunity to be independent from her parents. Prior to emigration she lived at home. Carol laughed

I would probably have stayed at home until I was moving out to be married! I understand the benefits and the love but I also enjoy my independence. I am happy I came. I have matured.

However Carol intimated that migration was weakening her family ties.

Telephone calls are expensive and the time differences don't make it any easier. I feel as if my family will be strangers should I go back home in five or so years (Carol).

The women considered New Zealand to be 'different' from Zimbabwe. It was a 'home' away from 'home' in which they experienced different types of difference. Anne, confined by resources was resigned to staying in New Zealand permanently saying "I don't think I will ever be able to go back". Carol and Sarah were unclear whether or not New Zealand would be their final destination. Carol claimed that her career aspirations were yet to be realised, while Sarah said she has "a profession that is recognised in other countries" implying freedom of professional mobility. Judith was quite content to make New Zealand her new 'home' and would only move back to Zimbabwe after putting her children through tertiary education.

Work

The rationale for migrating to New Zealand was based on the belief that jobs were readily available. Sarah, Carol and Judith were keen to "earn hard currency" (Sarah), live a decent life in New Zealand and

have surplus to send "dollars through Western Union" (Carol) back home. Anne had no extended family obligations but wished to be gainfully employed so that she would continue to be independent of her immediate family.

Carol's pre-emigration Internet research led her to "about 500 job vacancies" in her field but on arrival she found it extremely difficult to get placement. She spoke of "many barriers" including the realisation that "employers do not trust migrants", doubted their qualifications and are sometimes racially biased. They "don't trust your capabilities because you come from Africa" (Carol). Sarah argued that employers were racially biased. She said "the same wouldn't happen to a white person from Africa. It is a colour issue" (Sarah).

The black women felt they were under scrutiny and suspicion in the work place. The professional qualifications were challenged through institutional registration requirements part of which focused on English Language competency. Sarah said

> They wanted us to prove our competency in English first yet we write Cambridge and London English examinations in Zimbabwe. When a nurse educated in Britain comes here to New Zealand she can immediately work.

While Sarah considered English language competency testing unfair and irrelevant for Zimbabweans educated under the London and Cambridge School Examination Boards, Carol conceded that communication difficulties had been a factor in her failure to get competent placement:

> The barriers were language, communication, and suspicion of foreign credentials. The Kiwis speak too fast and it was difficult to understand them at first. I would go to job interviews and be shown around the office in such a friendly manner I would think this is it, only to be turned down (Carol).

Judith too cited initial communication difficulties especially when she was at college:

> The Kiwis spoke too fast for me and I found it difficult to understand them. I had never used a computer before and now had to type my homework and research on the Internet! Now I can do all that on my own!

Carol finally shelved her hope for a junior management position, resigning herself to agency work until she landed an office assistant job in which she feels under valued.

> The people are nice and I am happy they gave me a chance to work, to get used to their culture and get some New Zealand business experience but I do not have job satisfaction.

Interviewees indicated that fulfilling the mandatory registrations, evaluations and conversions, and pre-employment training-cum-supervision did not guarantee easy job placement. Sarah said b she found it "difficult to break through in their hospitals" but got a job immediately in a rest home. Later on when she was employed in the hospital system, Sarah realised clients and colleagues also queried her qualifications giving way to racially induced frustration. She said

> They just look at you and wonder. They don't believe you have gone through the same training as the others (locals) and have the same certificates. They would ask, do you have the same training like we have here? Do you learn in English in Zimbabwe? Even when I got into bigger hospitals and wore the same uniform as my colleagues a client asked me "are you the watchman today?" Why does she have to identify me as a watchman? Why does she not say, are you the registered nurse on duty? They just do not think that people from Africa could be registered nurses. This frustration goes on...

Sarah maintained that incredulous colleagues asked "where did you learn to drive a car?" and double-checked her licence before issuing her a company vehicle. She noted that once her 'capabilities' were

recognised by the evaluating person(s) she was immediately viewed as an exception. Sarah said

> They actually say, "You are lucky, very lucky, how did you manage to get your education since most of you are not educated in your country?" They are also quick to want to isolate you, to single you out from the other Africans saying "Ah she is the only one". They do not know that there are educated people in Zimbabwe. They think we are just people out of the bundu [6]. It is very difficult...

Sarah felt monitored and continually challenged to excel and resented the misrepresentation that she was an exception to the rule.

Judith too failed to get a clerical position similar to her previous position because

> they would *never* put someone like me in the front office! Most of us are doing heavy lifting, scrubbing or standing work. I hate it and sometimes wish I could have my clerical job back. But the Kiwis are tough. They won't hire us to do anything more than cleaning.

Judith had conviction that her work dissatisfaction and failure to cope with some family expectations constituted a temporary phase in her life because she was in the process of acquiring professional qualifications. She said

> I am very happy since coming to New Zealand because at home I was a just a clerk. Now I am training to be a nurse. I am studying with some women who had better jobs in Zimbabwe, teachers and accountants...we work side by side with them in the dot.com jobs. New Zealand is an equaliser (Judith).

Judith's career selection was motivated by the fact that "nearly all Zimbabwean women are training to be nurses in New Zealand" because of the recognition of "nurse shortage" and conducive mature

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[6] Bundu. African bush.

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entry requirements. She worried though about the value of her qualification "back home" because she does not have good passes at "O" Level and was enrolled on mature entry. Judith's concerns raise a number of questions. Does the mature entry policy's effort to give a chance for education to marginalised people lead to their (dis)empowerment? Will the New Zealand trained nurse be stigmatised as inferior to the Zimbabwe trained nurse? Since women significantly populate the nursing profession does the mature entry provision assume that candidates, mostly women are not competent enough to gain entry based on a superior grading system? If so does this not denigrate women's capabilities? The area will always be contested, but what is unmistakable from the participants' narratives is the room of empowerment and opportunity such a system provides.

Judith was satisfied that her husband is professionally well matched and occupied in the same trade he worked in Zimbabwe. Since Judith joined him in New Zealand

> he has relaxed his schedule a bit. He no longer does agency work and all those humiliating jobs. He sticks to his technical trade. He has full time employment (Judith).

Anne was unprepared for the ethnic and age discrimination she encountered in the New Zealand work environment. She responded to over a hundred jobs advertised in the paper and was invited to many interviews. She discovered that

> there is a resistance for age. They don't want old people in their work force and they also do not want anyone who is not a New Zealander. I am not talking about race in terms of black or white, just nationality. I didn't want a huge chunk of their turf, I just wanted a nice little job and I didn't think it would be so hard to find. I had experience in a number of fields. I am an efficient person and have excellent references (Anne).

Regardless of extensive experience in finance, personnel management and administration, Anne ended up doing volunteer work and accepting caregiver work before securing clerical work through a family friend. She was reduced to applying for "shop assistant" positions without success. Anne is stuck in a job that cannot adequately sustain her needs.

Sarah was satisfied with her salary and benefits. She said, " It is far much better to have permanent resident status in New Zealand. My daughter at university is now paying almost one third of international fees". Sarah provided for her family's material needs with ease and could afford a holiday. She also managed to pay for a family member to visit New Zealand. Carol, the youngest of the women interviewed expressed dissatisfaction stating that although her work environment was very good, she was under-employed and had not met her intended "target and plan" for emigrating. Judith conceded that her family's life style had improved with emigration but complained of "hectic" hours and the compulsion to "work as many hours as possible to get more money because wages are low and my family is big". Judith's wages are complemented by her husband's income and both have family obligations in Zimbabwe.

The men in Anne and Judith's families immigrated to New Zealand first and drew the women after them. Anne's son and Judith's husband migrated as "skilled migrants" and found work in technical fields related to their previous employment. Anne's son got a job offer soon after his arrival while Judith's husband did agency work for five months before gaining steady employment. Sarah being in the medical field and the two technically skilled men fared better than Anne, Carol and Judith because their skills are in critical shortage areas. Despite racial and ethnic challenges and gender difference, Sarah and the men in the

women's lives are currently enjoying the same job status they had prior to migrating. In fact their social standing in the migrant communities and sending communities has been enhanced by migration.

Immigration regulations also restricted the women's job mobility. For example, Sarah worked as a caregiver in a home for a year as she could not change her work permit because she said "they want to bind you there until you get your resident permit". Carol believed her work permit limited her potential. Carol said that she was on "an open work permit like most Zimbabweans". Carol maintained "we were so many with visitor's permits and due to the situation back home the New Zealand government decided to give all of us open work permits". The problem with the 'special' immigration arrangement was its uncertainty. It was dependent on "the situation back home" and the good will of the New Zealand government. Carol said

> I am working to get work experience to enhance my points and chances for residence status. The problem is that immigration laws change but I am confident I will get it in the end.

In spite of the challenges encountered in their search for employment, the four women were resolute on their suitability for competitive employment in New Zealand if given the chance. Anne echoed the sentiments of Judith, Sarah and Carol in her comment on New Zealand employment, "some operational systems are similar, others different but nothing that one cannot manage".

Community

Interviewees' responses to their interaction, acceptability and participation in New Zealand society revealed multiple and often intersecting communities. The four women were unanimous that "New Zealand's economy is stable and the country is peaceful" (Carol). Carol thought New Zealand had no glaring economic disparities and

hierarchy evident in Zimbabwe "between the higher and lower classes. Everyone is sort of the same and living in the same areas" (Carol).

Their experiences as women in the community defied polarised categorisation such as 'accepted' or not 'accepted'. While all four maintained that Kiwis are very hospitable, they also felt 'different' and presented situations in which they enjoyed immersion, experienced rejection and instances where they consciously or unconsciously played the excluding role. According to the four women's experiences, social gate keeping emerged as a result of racial, ethnic, gender and age differences. These differences were so acutely felt that they form the thematic base for the organisation of the analysis of the research findings chapter.

Cultural and racial differences in the community were most poignant in Sarah's experience. On moving into a new neighbourhood, Sarah wanted to make contact with her neighbours "as we do back in Africa" because "neighbours are supposed to look out for you, *you know*" (Sarah). Sarah was snubbed by her white neighbour whom she says, "does not want to talk to us and sweeps our car tracks off the road". She described a positive relationship with her Maori neighbour indicating "Most Maori are very nice. They consider us as sisters, maybe because we are all classified as blacks". Sarah and her Maori neighbours met regularly for barbecues.

Sarah felt betrayed when a work colleague she considered a friend drunkenly blurted out;

> you Africans what are you doing here? We do not want you here. Go back to your country! You immigrants, we fought for this country...

Sarah was stunned and said "his family originally came from Ireland. He believes whites are the owners of this country. People are different

and entitled to their own opinions I guess". This experience highlights anti immigration xenophobic sentiments and claims to white superiority in New Zealand. The outburst raises some important questions such as whom or what is a New Zealander and what does it take to be a New Zealander? Who can live in New Zealand and when does an immigrant stop being a migrant?

Religion is an anchor in the four women's lives. Carol said that she tried to join a local church and found it 'different'. She then joined a "Zimbabwean women's weekly prayer group for encouragement, mutual support and to de-stress and focus" (Carol). On the issue of the host country's receptivity, Judith commented

> The Kiwis are friendly but a bit distant. Our neighbours are very friendly though. We go to church and the people there are nice. The church people were helpful in getting us settled ... giving us furniture, blankets and other things. We go to prayer meetings and occasionally have group activities.

Anne too found New Zealanders aloof "different, they have different ways of doing things. They are friendly not warm, not ready to be involved" (Anne).

Acknowledging the importance of language in acceptability and social interests were important in the community. Judith encouraged her children to speak in English because she felt it would increase their chances of fitting into New Zealand society. She observed

> My husband and I speak our mother language, listen to Zimbabwean music and are attached to home. My children are speaking English all the time and I just think, why not? It will make them fit better and have better chances out here.

Sarah and Judith remarked on a cultural difference concerning care for the elderly. Their work in residential homes as care givers to the

elderly was a good exposure to New Zealand life. However, Sarah maintained, "we keep our old people at home. We do not send them away to die alone".

My privileged location as a Zimbabwean insider made it obvious that the 'we', 'home' and way of dealing with elderly parents referred to by Sarah is not a general Zimbabwean experience but a cultural aspiration of black Zimbabweans. In my interview with Anne, one of the reasons she migrated related to her uncertainty over the standards of 'old people's homes' and her welfare as a pensioner. In Anne's white world in Zimbabwe, homes for the aged are a norm. While Sarah's statement regarding the care of the elderly is the cultural norm amongst black people, poverty and loss of offspring to HIV/AIDS and emigration compromise the maintenance of desired cultural practices. We also have to be critical and question whom "we" referred to by Sarah is because failure to do so veils the cultural specificity of the statement and the gendered nature of care of the elderly in African homes. Indeed men can take in their aging parents but the onus of daily care falls on the women.

Reflecting on Zimbabweans in New Zealand Judith identified three racially divided communities:

> There are many Zimbabweans around. The white Zimbabweans basically keep to themselves, but the coloured and black Zimbabweans keep in touch. Most of us are slogging away all the time it is difficult to meet. But social gatherings do take place, the occasional celebration, prayer meeting or just plain get together. But get-togethers are expensive and people try to minimise them because of costs. The men still go out for their TGIF (Thank God its Friday) thing of course. I am usually at work.

Anne said

Zimbabweans get together on a personal level. You don't want to get together because you are critical but because you share an attitude, sense of humour and you want to express that with people from your own country. We were having tea with a couple of friends and some of the little things we miss are the little geckos (lizard family reptile) on the wall.

When asked what advice they would give to intending Zimbabwean migrants wanting to establish home in New Zealand, the women all responded that they would be encouraging but emphasised the need to new migrants to understand the obstacles of race, ethnicity, gender, age and class discrimination. Anne advised

If you are moving make sure you appreciate the different needs and that people are different and go along with it. You can't be too critical. You cannot make new friends by being critical of their ways. You have to accept that you are in a different country and compromise.

Carol said new and intending immigrants

need to be patient. No one was honest enough to tell me you could spend a whole year without getting a job and the prejudices one encounters. I would tell them my honest experience and allow them to make informed decisions.

Judith said New Zealand offered more options and potential than Zimbabwe and would encourage others to emigrate. She would however caution intending immigrants on having high expectations;

People must not expect too much at first. They must be prepared to work hard and do jobs they would never dream of doing at home. They must be prepared to take the knock and survive. Half a loaf is better than nothing.

She also called for respect of the migrant community from the Zimbabwe government saying,

I also think the government should stop criticising us because we are doing www.com jobs. Our money is important to them so they should respect us (Judith).

Conclusion: Home, Work and Community

Within the discursive fields of home, work and community I noted similarities, differences and contradictions in the use of language in structuring subjectivities. Some points raised during the interviews which do not fit into either of the given categories but are nevertheless important in the overall appreciation of the women's gendered migration experiences.

All four women primarily cited economic and political instability as the major reason for their migration from Zimbabwe. They all commonly believed New Zealand to be a peaceful and accommodating country offering better economic possibilities than Zimbabwe. Family motivated migration is important in the women's lives particularly for Anne, Sarah and Judith. Judith migrated as a "trailing spouse" (Yeoh and Khoo, 2000: 415) to join her husband working in New Zealand. Carol, the younger woman ventured into New Zealand independently but on the strength of the material and moral support of her family.

Judith, Sarah and Anne felt that the move was a necessary sacrifice for the long-term wellbeing of their offspring, including grandchildren. Participants Anne and Judith, however, considered some negative effects of the migratory process on children, a pertinent area for future research. Carol and Judith welcomed the possibility of further study and Judith was empowered by her enrolment into a tertiary institution where she is studying forwards a nursing degree.

Anne and Sarah sold their property and personal effects to finance their move. Carol received family assistance to make the move, while Judith's husband paid for her and the children's passage after more than a year of work in New Zealand. All four women felt removed and dispossessed in Zimbabwe with all of them stating at some point of the

interview that they felt that Zimbabwe is home but that they have "nothing" to go back to. Anne simply concluded she was "too old" to start again. Finally, although participants migrated independently, their narratives indicate the multiplicity of push factors.

Although united by their dispossession in Zimbabwe, the women's financial situation in New Zealand is varied. Sarah had her own car and "can afford anything we want and go where we want". She was economically stable and happy in her professional job. She was pleased with the benefits of residence status for herself and her children. Sarah was financially better off than she was in Zimbabwe, enjoying a higher pay in the same job she held at home, and lived in a big house with her children. Sarah could afford more than basic needs.

Anne had a car "to get around on my own" because she "likes to be a very independent person". She longed to afford a home of her own but her failure to secure a well paying job made her grateful to be a live-in grandmother. Carol said she enjoyed basic comforts such as owning a car "because anyone in New Zealand can buy a car". She said that she had more buying power than she had in Zimbabwe but wished she could afford not to share a rented apartment.

Carol and Anne both felt under employed because they were working in jobs of less professional value than their educational and experience expectations. On the other hand, although holding a less attractive job since migration, Judith regarded her financial situation as better than before. She felt happy and appreciated as an equal breadwinner at home but acknowledges the stress of balancing heavy manual work and long hours with her maternal and wifely duties. Her family had no house in Zimbabwe and she is happy her family is buying their own "big house" in New Zealand.

The three black women share a sense of alienation and difference in the work place. Two noted initial communication difficulties. All four interviewees reported feeling foreign and three experienced racial prejudice while one experienced ethnic discrimination in New Zealand. It was noted that project participants did not directly raise gender differences as sites of struggle in their migration. When asked if being women made a difference to their migration experience they all under-played gender preferring that their experience as Zimbabweans was more predominant in everything they did. Race and ethnicity emerged as *the* key social organisers in their lives. It is possible that interviewees took for granted or accepted as normal their marginalisation as women because all four reiterated the common Zimbabwean saying regarding female endurance, *(zvinoda madzimai)* "it takes a woman". This popular phrase was used by the interviewees to exemplify their resilience through the adversities of migration.

At home Carol was resigned to the over protectionism given to her as a female child. However in accepting "it takes a woman" or the oft repeated *"you know"* used by the women in their discussion with me (as a way of establishing common understanding based on my being considered one of them) the women were implicitly acknowledging their socially constructed roles. The avoidance of confronting gender differences could be based on cultural and family loyalties, even racial allegiances. The identification of race as the key difference for the black women's experiences in New Zealand and its intersection with black male experiences blurs the gender divide. The failure to separate black female experiences from those of black men affirm the collective nature of African communities and bonds of colonial experience noted in Africana womanism:

> we are inseparable and one--as the other, I should say
> the other side of the coin from the Africana man--
> collectively struggling, as we've always done as

Africans: A people collectively working. We come from
a communal past (Reed, 2001).

Unity affirmed in race and common experiences breed loyalties that
made it difficult for the women's consciousness to acknowledge
interpersonal power relationships (Collins, 2003).

Statements relating to the nature and load of work in the private/public
sphere, the cooption of the girl child into playing a 'mini mother' role,
allusion to financial empowerment and increased self worth and
women's social networks pointed to the gendered nature of the migrant
women's existence. Interestingly, Anne was the only one who included
marriage and mothering experiences as work in her narration of her
work experience. Sarah and Judith appreciated the work that goes into
servicing a household but felt that the work is too undervalued to
warrant mention in the formal work place. These viewpoints are
embedded in the women's varied historical and cultural locations.

Religion was of high significance in the lives of the participants. The
participants were ingratiated to the host country to the extent of
excusing themselves when sounding too critical of local challenges to
their settling. Some participants felt that New Zealand is family friendly
and less pressured than Zimbabwean experience in Britain. Overall,
the participants were unanimous that New Zealand was a good country
to settle in and that they have benefited from the move regardless of
some difficulties.

There were several points raised that related to the women's migrant
experience that seemed to contradict other statements in the same
interview. For example the persistent struggle between rejection and
accommodation, opportunity and lack of it, satisfaction/unfulfilled
expectations and so on. The women said they were treated as

foreigners and that New Zealanders were aloof but at the same time, they said that they were accommodated, had good neighbours and were given a chance to prove themselves at work. The four voluntarily made reference to what they considered to be potentially disempowering attributes of a welfarist system, which they viewed as "hand outs". The extent to which participants dwelt on this point was quite unexpected but probably informed by the scarcity of those services in their own country of origin that in turn generated individual resourcefulness which the women relied on in New Zealand. An Act Party statement echoes the women's aspiration for employment and aversion to handouts.

> Experience shows us that people from Zimbabwe assimilate within New Zealand's culture well. Generally, Zimbabwean immigrants are very hard-working with a low incidence of social welfare dependency. They tend to be well-educated and fluent in English (The Scoop, New Zealand, Monday 12 Aug 2002).

Overall, the interviews presented a myriad of issues the majority of which revolved around difference and power. The next chapter is devoted to the analysis of power and difference based on the women's accounts highlighting interviewee agency and empowerment.

Chapter Five

Analysis I: Doing difference.

Introduction

Zimbabwean women's experiences of reconstructing home in New Zealand were situated in a context of gender, racial, ethnic, age and class 'difference'. This Chapter addresses the reconstitution of migrant identity based on social constructions of difference arising from the participants' perception of their 'being different' as well as the onlooker or outsider view of their otherness. The experiences of difference have a strong bearing on the participants' efforts to reconstruct home in New Zealand as will be shown in the next chapter that focuses on 'home'. The current analysis draws on Weedon's (1987, 1999) theoretical presentations on difference.

The women's stories indicated that gender, race, ethnicity, social status and age mediated power in "local and extra-local relations of ruling" (Smith, 1990:6-8). These factors functioned as social regulators influencing Sarah, Carol, Anne and Judith's participation and position in private/public life in their new home New Zealand, their homeland Zimbabwe and the international work place. The interviewees professed experiencing 'difference' predominantly as "lack and inferiority" (Weedon, 1999:9). The following contribution from Weedon presents an insightful departure point for discussing the manifestation and implications of difference:

> Difference between individuals and groups – between sexes, classes, races, ethnic groups, religions and nations – become important political issues when they involve power. Power takes many forms, affecting access to material resources as well as questions of language, culture and the right to define who one is (Weedon, 1999:5).

Drawing from the cited quotation two critical issues of analysis arose in relation to the notion of difference. Firstly, the consideration of power and its exclusionary qualities within and amongst different groups (gender, race, ethnicity, age, social status) and secondly, how power was implicated in self-definition. Although given as two different points for consideration the two factors are interdependent because they thrive on their very difference. Power thrives on disadvantage. Bearing this operation in mind I now proceed to deconstruct the five thematic sites of power illustrating the process and effect of their (dis)empowerment on Sarah, Anne, Carol and Judith and how the women in turn exercised agency in a bid to reconstruct spatial areas of struggle, consciousness and respect they could call 'home'.

The right to self-definition and respect ran through the experiences of the four migrant women. The most poignant differences experienced related to racism and ethnicity. The journey of these racial and ethnic tensions must be traced back to British colonisation of Zimbabwe (1890) followed by the attainment of Zimbabwean independence (1980). The rollercoaster shifting power relationships from indigenous black majority rulers to white minority rule and the reversion to black majority rule with white control of key economic resources, the failed attempts to create a balance and the emigration to a white majority country were integral to the interviewees' experiences and identities. Anne, a white Zimbabwean declared, "I am Zimbabwean" while the black Zimbabweans Sarah, Carol and Judith claimed indigenous 'Mwana wevhu' (Daughter of the soil) status. Indeed the women's claims to national identity and heritage as is the case in the bicultural politics of New Zealand are complicated by racial and ethnic differences (Larner, 1993).

Black and white opposites

Racial difference was unanimously identified as both identity and organiser for the black women Sarah, Carol and Judith. Racism is a social and cultural construction that sets people apart on the basis of physical and biological characteristics. The denigrating language of racism devalues others as lacking and inferior. In some instances racism romanticises difference as pure or untouched (Weedon, 1999). The three black women were visibly and physically different from the white majority population of New Zealand while Anne felt racialised in Zimbabwe amongst a majority black population.

The appropriation of biological differences to affirm privilege and domination is rooted in the history of Caucasian superiority over non-white racial groups. Likewise nationality, language and culture are used to affirm and privilege the domination of one group by another (Weedon, 1999:153; Mohanty, 2003). Colonial constructions of indigenous people as uncivilised and inferior informed the perception that Sarah was "lucky" to have had the opportunity to join 'civilisation' in New Zealand. The measure for civilisation here is derived from modernist theories of development that use First World countries' scientific, technological and economic prowess to exemplify modernity and development. What racism ignores is that some of the economic progress alluded to was gained from slavery and that the so-called superior white race is not a monolithic bloc but one with different stages of development and often, competing interests (Hulme and Turner, 1990).

As the colonised underdogs, black Zimbabweans provided nursing care, and performed service jobs for their white masters. The continued lack of privilege and servitude of the majority of blacks to white capital in Zimbabwe's economy today maintains historic social

and economic imbalances and racial prejudices that continue to construct black Zimbabweans, in Judith's words, as "lazy", "uneducated" and "incapable". Colonial constructions of "unsophisticated" (Judith) Africans attaining "civilisation" (Sarah) in New Zealand and the negative image of Zimbabwe as a Third World country cast a shadow on black Zimbabwean individual migrant and group experience and their ability to successfully reconstruct 'home' even if they are professionals like Sarah.

Employment emerged as a site for work and a field demarcating and accentuating differences. The remark made to Sarah "Are you the watchman today?", regardless of the fact that she wore a nurse uniform and was actively attending to patients, revealed racial stereotyping. It shows racial prejudice that expects to find black people in certain types of employment, particularly low-level manual work (Weedon, 1999). The intelligence and superiority claims of racism are baseless in view of the intellectual abilities of the women in this project and the fact that New Zealand's skills-based immigration continues to rely extensively on expatriate staff including African trained professionals to fill critical shortage areas (New Zealand immigration Service).

The black migrant women's expectations of an egalitarian New Zealand collapsed in an ironic sense of *déjà vu* when they recognised and experienced racial difference in similar ways to Zimbabwe. Stripped of the comfort of numbers, Black Nationalist sentiments and geographically removed from 'home ground', the black women were racially bereft of power in New Zealand. Their self-esteem was challenged and they often had to ignore racial slurs in fear of jeopardising their migrant status and work.

While there are always two sides to every story, Sarah was adamant that her misidentification as a security guard instead of a nurse was racially motivated because of the inability to conceive black people as professionals. Although Sarah said her polite response to the denigration was motivated by "professionalism" it can also be assumed that she felt helpless to react otherwise. The anger and despair she registered during the interview when she retorted "Why does she not say, are you the registered nurse on duty?" can be viewed as an indication of powerlessness arising from her undervalued status as a black migrant woman nurse. Sarah's story of misidentification and the suspicion with which her work colleagues held her credentials show that her registered nurse status was perceived secondary to her race. The grudging acceptance of Sarah based on her excellent work performance shows that the manipulation of the body as a referent to justify inequalities is "cultural rather than natural" (Weedon, 1999:23) and institutionalised to create hierarchies that accentuate power differences and privileges for some.

As mentioned earlier, racism's tactics either reject all that is different or romanticise the difference in a patronising way that privileges the dominant culture. Sarah maintained that once her work competence had been ascertained she was idolised as an exception. This differentiation also created social status sub groups within the migrant group based on education and type of work.

Sarah, Carol and Judith's experiences presented other interrelated challenges associated with racial discrimination such as the questioning of educational qualifications, competence, professional standards, and language. The difficulties the three encountered to get work placement commensurate with their qualifications because of discrimination, registration requirements or both, confined the women,

particularly Carol and Judith, into wage work that further entrenched the stereotypical images of unskilled black migrants. Those who are successful are considered exceptions to the rule (Weedon, 1999).

Qualifications of poverty, incompetence and backwardness captured the construction of racial stereotypes of the three black Zimbabwean women's migrant identities rooted in Western hegemonic constructions. It was evident that institutionalised racial stereotyping also thrives on ignorance and limited or manipulated information. For example, Judith lamented,

> It is hard being a foreigner and a black one because you stand out. People wonder whether I am from the Islands. When I tell them I am from Zimbabwe they either don't know where that is or they start talking about the political repression and starvation. It makes me feel bad (Judith).

The assumption that Judith was from the Pacific Islands was due to racial processing centred on skin colour and physical features. As a result Sarah observed that Pacific Islanders and Maori are "black like us". The four women noted that Pacific Islanders like Maori were vilified as inferior, potential troublemakers and government beneficiary parasites. Given that migrants have been blamed for the same transgressions, common identification with other peoples of colour in the Pacific region not only showed the breadth of marginalisation of non-white persons in New Zealand but also signified possibilities of alliances against racism.

Sarah attributed continued racial tensions to "negative images of remote Africa" that make New Zealanders regard (black) Africans as "just people in the bundu (bush)". The popularisation and romanticisation of Africa by the print and electronic media as an untamed game paradise and some International Aid Organisations'

fundraising advertising also reinforce negative perceptions that continually attach to the African women's identities.

Anne, a white participant presents an interesting dimension to the analysis of racism. Whereas racism in simplistic terms is usually treated as difference to all that is Caucasian, Anne experienced racism from black Zimbabweans. In the events leading to her emigration Anne experienced insecurity and threat resulting from being a member of a minority racial group perceived as the enemy whether one held title to land or not. In these circumstances, how do we deconstruct racism and what are the racial implications of a "black like us" grouping referred to by Sarah? The women were, in most circumstances, perceived as part of a group and not as individuals therefore the blanket statements of white privilege and black poverty. A feminist poststructuralist analytical framework is therefore advantageous because it allows us to disaggregate the experience to the lowest factor.

The move of Anne's family to New Zealand was amongst other considerations influenced by a conviction that New Zealand's European racial and ethnic constitution converged with her colonial heritage. In this respect she thought it would be relatively easy to fit in and 'reconstruct home' in New Zealand. To this end, Anne's experience provides a convenient entry point for the examination of ethnicity as a power relationship that defines, privileges and excludes some groups of people.

Shades of 'difference'?
Ethnicity is closely related to racism but is different in that it signifies cultural expressions of shared customs, language and institutions. Ethnicity, like racism need not denote negative difference although it has been manipulated to privilege certain groups over others. Anne

found New Zealand both welcoming and excluding. Ethnicity worked in her favour to overcome difficulties she encountered in securing a job through formal channels in view of unspoken non-New Zealander exclusion. At the same time, ethnicity was not enough to prevent exclusion because accent and nationality mattered. Regardless of being a white native speaker of English Anne observed, "They do not want anyone who is not a New Zealander. I am not talking about race in terms of black or white, just nationality".

Nationality was a basis for discrimination faced by all four women and will be revisited in the following chapter. The complexity of evaluating the privileges accruing from ethnic ties was evident in Anne's employment and promotion by someone of her race also known to her family, albeit in a less satisfying job. The fact that a non-qualified friend of Anne's, also a Zimbabwean white, secured a decent job as a teacher's assistant when Judith, and Sarah's black acquaintances who were qualified teachers failed to get teaching jobs, strengthen assertions of ethnic empathy. It also lends credence to Judith's contention that "white folks look out for each other" in order to keep white Zimbabweans in New Zealand out of menial jobs. The same allegation was made of whites in Zimbabwe. It is based on the idea of maintaining white superiority by privileging race over qualifications. The black Zimbabwean women immigrants felt that when hiring, Pakeha privileged white Zimbabweans over black Zimbabweans.

Possibilities for such collusion exist but are not exclusive to Pakeha and Zimbabwean whites. Racial and ethnic empathy in employment has also been noted amongst Africans and Mexicans in America and Asians and Europeans in Australia (Arthur, 2000; Ip, 1990; Berger, 2004). Anne's insider/outsider position in white New Zealand was elusive depending on one's critical placement. The assumption that

"white folks look out for each other" is potentially reductionist and universalistic. Assuming binary subjectivities based on acceptance or rejection forecloses inquiry into the changing identities and wider experience of white Zimbabweans in New Zealand that otherwise highlights problems with ethnicity or social status differences amongst people considered to be of the same race or ethnicity.

Also noteworthy was the fact that ethnicity was underplayed in the black women's stories regardless of its politicisation in the 'Zimbabwean situation' and as presented in media web sites such as www.newzimbabwe.com. From the perspective of the women interviewed, migration seemed to positively diffuse ethnic and sometimes racial estrangement thereby providing a basis for social interaction and action based on shared nationality and culture. Similar agency is noted amongst internal migrant women in Sierra Leone who refuse to regroup along ethnic lines making "Freetown and Freetonian lifestyle ... the primary source of social and cultural identification" (Knörr and Meier, 2000:12). In this regard, it is important that social scientists explore the possibilities migration offers in bridging ethnic tensions and the central role women's social groupings could be playing in overcoming ethnic disharmony in the Zimbabwean Diaspora.

In addition to ethnicity, Anne's lack of fulfilment arose from a variety of factors such as the erosion of the pre-immigration white middle class social status. This observation leads me to evaluate the significance of social status in the migrant's attempt to reconstruct home.

To be somebody
The manifestation of the meaning of social class in the interviewees' lives was multifaceted, including the neo-Marxist commodification of labour. Indicators of wealth and capital such as education, occupation,

life style and social interests were pertinent to subjectivities and the construction of class-based identities of the four immigrants. The title of this section derives its name from the youthful and ambitious Carol who repeatedly insisted "I want to be somebody". Her aspirations come out of a particular cultural placement informed by the women's pre-emigration social status, their position within the Zimbabwean migrant group, New Zealand immigrants in general and in relation to New Zealand society as a whole.

Sarah, Anne, Carol and Judith's appropriation of the American dollar as a daily unit of exchange, although they are paid in New Zealand currency, confirmed the integration of their labour aspirations within the international labour market and its bourgeois consumerist culture (Weedon, 1999; Glick Schiller et. al, 1992). Incorporation into the global village may explain the restlessness and continuous evaluation of New Zealand currency against major international currencies that made Sarah the nurse and the hopeful graduate Carol consider possibilities of future emigration to Australia or the United States of America.

Expectations of higher earnings, rapid savings and limitless opportunities motivated Judith, Carol and Sarah to migrate leaving behind equally high expectations of immediate remittances amongst family and friends. Judith categorically stated that "you can't be seen to fail" while Carol said "I want to be somebody". From a feminist perspective, it is important to unravel what constitutes 'failure' and what 'being somebody' means for women. The interviewees' perceptions of success were modelled on bourgeois male aspirations that favour big cars, big houses and big gardens. In Zimbabwe expressions of success are also inspired by colonial extravagance.

The women drew on their historical and cultural background to measure the level of success or comfort in New Zealand.

Irrespective of individual experiences with difference, each interviewee's ability to afford the airfare to New Zealand temporarily placed the four women in one privileged group. The women in this project confirm the observation that "migrant women often do not come from the poorest classes of their societies" (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002:10). However, if skills-based migration is, as the women indicated, the most popular route for Zimbabweans immigrating to New Zealand the assumption that women migrants are "typically more affluent and better educated than male migrants" (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002:10) is open to scrutiny.

However, a reversal and/or shift in social positions occurred and continued to take place as a result of the migration. Social status differentials such as education and financial independence were noted. The women with tertiary qualifications belonged to a class that believed education should give them better advantage in the work place than those with minimum education. However, Sarah's superiority as a member of the salaried professional group placed her in the same privileged category with the skilled migrant men who enjoyed the same job positions they previously held in Zimbabwe. However, Sarah's social status frequently merged with the less educated women like Judith in social interaction, in racial solidarity or national empathy. Although those in the nursing profession were eventually "fortunate" (Sarah) to escape job status depreciation, de-skilling, retraining or underemployment observed in Asian women migrants in Canada by Raghuram and Kofman (2004), institutionalised marginalisation in the work place based on racism often resulted in black nurses like Sarah working in care jobs.

Distinctive material separators such as type and location of housing, model of car or recreational interest and public or private schooling for the children used as social class barometers in Zimbabwe were similarly applied in New Zealand indicating a fusion of the sending country culture, assumption of host country tastes and globalised standards of success. For example, all interviewees shared the importance of home ownership or sole rental without subletting. Anne, Carol, Judith and Sarah believed their ability as women to provide or contribute to the provision of a house for themselves or their families was a value of their worthiness. They also believed that their housekeeping abilities were a yardstick to judge the cosiness and prosperity of their families. As a result the women endeavoured to maintain impeccably adorned homes as proof of their material and personal success. Judith's housekeeping capabilities were also extended first and foremost to reflect on her husband's success in selecting a good homemaker for a wife and as a sign of his ability to provide the material resources to adorn the place.

Owning a car was considered classy, signifying financial wellbeing and independence. The cultural significance of car ownership for Carol, Sarah and Judith was overwhelming because the number of black women owning a car that is not a company or family car in Zimbabwe is small. Hence financial independence, vehicles and house ownership were social status symbols strongly associated with men (Weedon, 1999:134) and the model of the car reflective of membership within a certain group of purchasing power. While buying a car and renting decent accommodation was fairly affordable in New Zealand, access to these material possessions elevated the women's standing in their migrant communities and in the sending country.

The most poignant reversal of social status occurred in the proletarisation of Anne and Carol who switched from salaried, policy and management employment to waged labour. The four women were dispossessed of their pre-migration 'Madam' status becoming 'Maids' themselves on arrival in New Zealand. They were ashamed of their new jobs and lived with the dread of word leaking back to Zimbabwe about the nature of their employment. At the same time the four women lauded their own resilience in adversity.

Wage labour strained the women who endangered their health by working longer hours, sometimes holding more than one job in order to earn more money. The outrageous hours mentioned in the interviews point to the need for more rigorous policing of wage labour hours and exploitative hiring of casual and migrant labour. Migrant women are under constant pressure to give their best in behaviour and work. The women said Zimbabweans are popular with employers for honesty and hard work.

Religion: faith of our mothers

The dominance of women in the religious fellowship groups showed the gendered constitution of religion and its aspirations to control and cultivate the 'perfect woman'. That men in Carol's social circles participated in the formation of a fellowship group but unceremoniously opted out demonstrates the use of religion in regulating the lives of women. Judith had no more social life and rest than going to church, a ritual contentiously providing relief as much as it manifested the cultural control of the women's mind, body and behaviour through the construction of an ideal, prayerful, pure, Zimbabwean woman, domesticated and loyal to husband and family.

While religion is contentious the current project highlights participants' celebration of its liberating qualities. The three black women played religious musical cassettes by Zimbabwean artists in their cars. They said it helped them to pray, to feel closer to Zimbabwe and to persevere in making a home in New Zealand. Sarah and Carol presented the church as a place of refuge, and comfort while Judith revealed material benefits of fellowship and its surrogate family role in the absence of the social networks enjoyed in Zimbabwe. The women appropriated religious spaces for their own empowerment. As a result, religion provided spiritual relief and the prayer meetings safe woman space to relax and interact. However financial implications associated with religion such as tithing and the manner of giving in some non-traditional churches stressed some of the women migrants. The role of the church in the spiritual and social life of migrant Zimbabweans is provides interesting area for future research.

While generalisations can be deceptive, the subjectivity of Zimbabwean women migrants at work and the image of the traditionally good prayerful woman operate as a measure for stress relief, resistance and a strategy for negotiating various levels of difference that perpetuate inequality. Consequently religion was expressive of the four women's social status as much as it dictated their behavioural patterns (Weedon, 1999:138).

Too young and too old, none too good

Age like racism, ethnicity and gender, relies on essentialist characteristics of the body to denote difference. Age was constructed as both identity and a measure of capability in employment, migration and care for aged family members.

Carol's father based his apprehension of her intention to migrate on her youthfulness and sex. She was a young daughter, a woman going into the unknown without male protection or parental guidance. New Zealand immigration requirements for residence status are not favourable to young people like Carol who struggled to meet the points required for work experience. Older women like Anne found the reverse to be true. Decades of Anne's work experience were undervalued as she faced rejection in the work place because "New Zealand has no room for old people in the job market" (Anne). Immigration approval did not guarantee the women employment.

Sarah's comments regarding care for the elderly and Anne's apprehension over her future welfare presented different accounts of experiences and knowledge regarding the treatment of the old in the same country. Either account was informed by the interviewees' racial and class positions and serves to illustrate the subjectivity and diversity of Zimbabwean women. Although the women's assertions are subjective, they presented a general notion that the elderly in the black community are cared for in their families while those in the white community retire to old people's homes. The assertions indicate cultural aspirations as opposed to the fluid circumstances on the ground.

Nurse, mother and daughtermaid

Although interviewees found race and ethnicity more fitting to describe the uppermost sense of empowerment or disempowerment in New Zealand, gender was pervasive in all aspects of their lives. Anne, Judith and Sarah classified homemaking as work that is usually taken for granted. The difference was that while Anne considered a stay-at-home mum situation valuable work, Judith and Sarah conceded that housework and parenting work had diminished status and felt

empowered in paid employment outside the home. Interviewees found motherhood challenged by competing interests, busy work schedules and the no work, no pay regime of minimum wage work. The preferences are culturally placed and subjective arising from the fact that housework is hardly considered experience for any job other than for domestic maid positions and even these are increasingly becoming certificate oriented. The availability of an allowance or personal finances is also a factor in the value the women attribute to housework.

Before departing Zimbabwe the interviewees were aware of the feminisation of care work abroad and the feminised taunts associated with it. Judith's acceptance of her multiple positions as worker, wife, mother and homemaker while at the same time feeling gratified that her husband no longer had to do humiliating jobs that she ironically performed, was indicative of competing interests and the intersection of gender, culture and social status. She commended her daughter's industriousness as befitting of a good woman oblivious of her role in creating and reinforcing the 'daughtermaid' stereotype. At different places, Judith, Anne and Sarah suggested that "it takes a woman" to endure the rigors of migrant life. Their comment draws on essentialist qualities of difference and shows how language perpetuates gender asymmetries.

The women confirmed that migration provided opportunity to disengage from strained marital relationships or to strengthen personal relationships. For example Judith, who migrated with her husband, claimed increased personal freedom, self-fulfilment and respect from her spouse who appreciated joint breadwinnership. That immigrant status was said to reign in potentially abusive partners for fear of deportation was ironic as it rendered the women's private lives equally vulnerable to introspection by the law. Whatever benefits migration

might have on male/female relationships a feminist perspective does not lose sight of potential areas of struggle that may mutate as a result of the very protections women claim from the host country laws. In other words, the fear of deportation could make partners devise insidious and not so obvious ways of harassment in the domestic sphere that may be difficult to prove in a court of law and therefore make women less willing to come forward to report the abuse.

Conclusion: Multi-level, intersecting freedoms and oppressions

This analysis has explored diversity as difference between, within and amongst Zimbabwean women and their New Zealand hosts. It was noted that while gender, race, ethnicity, age, and class exclude and mark persons as 'other', they operate within institutionalised frameworks of power that extend beyond individuals. It was evident that Sarah, Carol and Judith rooted their 'difference' in blackness in relation to whiteness. Their polarisation of 'difference' in black/white parallels was problematic producing silence on persons of Asian descent and other non-whites who make up multicultural New Zealand.

The affinity Sarah showed with the Maori ethnic group because "we are all classified as blacks" (Sarah) and Anne's realisation that accent and nationality mattered within the white racial group reinforce Ip's (1990) study of Chinese women migrants in New Zealand and Johnson and Pihama's argument that "physical characteristics, as well as language and culture" (Johnson and Pihama, 1995:80) count as difference in New Zealand.

Sarah appeared unaware of her own racial prejudice and circumscribed presentation of Africa. When she referred to "people from Africa" she meant blacks like herself so excluding whites born in Africa. Can black people be racists and what is an African in the light of

the ethnic discrimination suffered by Anne as a white woman amongst fellow whites? Additionally, what is an African in face of interracial marriage, genetic engineering, adoption, and long absences from the continent or in relation to children born in the Diaspora who have never been and feel no connection with Africa? Sarah was convinced her misidentification as a watchman "is a colour issue (and) the same wouldn't happen to a white person from Africa". Equally, were Anne's reminiscences and nostalgia about the lizards in the sun tantamount to romantic Eurocentric constructions of Africa?

Social status was even more complex because its fluidity meant that a marginalised woman at work could well enjoy some level of autonomy and power at home or in her position in the religious group that did not translate to the workplace. Or she could hold a supervisory position at work and enjoy power that she might not have at home. Identifying and unpacking the sites of difference allowed me to show how the women's subjectivities and cultural location influences gender, race, ethnicity, age and social status and how it connects with the way in which 'home' is experienced. The project showed that it is not possible to make categorical statements about whether or not the women were fully settled and (dis)empowered by migration because of the fluidity of the environment, the multiple sites of oppression and the corresponding responses of each participant shaped from 'home'. The next chapter focuses more closely on the analysis of 'home'.

Chapter Six
Analysis II: Reconstructing Home

Home ... is where one best knows oneself
(Rapport and Dawson, 1998:9).

Introduction

The previous chapter has argued that reconstructing home for Sarah, Anne, Carol and Judith took place in an environment charged with 'difference' and 'belonging'. The house embodied in subjectivity continually reconstituted itself in the private and public arenas in response to dominant discourses. I use the term 'reconstructing home' because 'recreating' home implies unselective importation and replication of life as it was in Zimbabwe and an uncritical interface with New Zealand society. 'Reconstruction' suggests continuous struggle, engagement and regeneration in which the migrant woman is at the centre of the construction process as both subject and agent of change.

Notions of home as personal space in the work and social environment have recurred in earlier chapters because it is not possible to make a clean separation of home from the subjectivity and identities the women inhabit at different times. It emerged that "home is attached to a particular locale as an extension and expression of bodily routines" (Young, 1997:161). This definition defied the dualities of the 'home or migrant' framework (Knörr and Meier, 2000) confirming the complex, contentious and fluid notions of home best described as the place "where one best knows oneself" (Rapport and Dawson, 1998:9).

I will now analyse the "loaded" (McDowell, 1999:71) meaning of 'home' drawing on my previous discussion of gender, race, ethnicity, age and social status to show the relatedness of these themes and their

challenge to Sarah, Anne, Carol and Judith's efforts to reconstruct 'home' in New Zealand.

The nation state as home

The ambiguous question "Where is home?" elicited the unhesitating response "Zimbabwe", from the four women who yearned to one day return there. Grounded in the politics of birthplace and citizenship, the response presented a variety of challenges including but not limited to, identity, romanticisation, ostracisation and unity. Identification by nationality potentially romanticises the homeland giving a false sense of homogeneous belonging (Young, 1997; McDowell, 1999). The racial, ethnic, social status and age differentials resounded throughout this research suggest otherwise. The black/white view of racial relationships formed in Zimbabwe ensured continued parallel positioning in which either race was more comfortable socialising across racial or ethnic boundaries as long it involved non-Zimbabweans. However, it was positive that Sarah, Anne, Judith and Carol's relationship with their homeland gave them grounds for common identity, a recognition that could be channelled for positive influence on the home country and a basis for celebrating diversity in difference.

When interacting with the world outside Zimbabwe, the interviewees' identities were frequently inflexed with that of the country resulting in assumptions that the women were refugees when they were not. Historically and politically derived racially constructed identities were framed and interviewees were often associated and judged by situations outside their control. The construction of the white victim *vis à vis* the black thief and human rights abuser informs the contentious position of post 2000 Zimbabwe immigration to New Zealand. The black women were induced to felt guilty by racial, cultural and national

association when confronted with questions of the political impasse in Zimbabwe.

Ironically, Sarah, Carol, Anne and Judith said the Zimbabwe government castigated emigrants as "unpatriotic" with the blacks further branded as "sell outs" (Judith). In Zimbabwe, Anne was grouped as a white racist Rhodie (Rhodesian) who failed to coexist and was going back 'home' (wherever that might be as long as it was in Western countries). However, New Zealand only became an option for Anne because her children had moved there and her family was concerned about her lone white aging woman status in a politically unstable environment.

Political party discourse earns mileage from conjuring up the white returnee. The dilemma, however, is that the Zimbabwean whites are neither British nor New Zealander. The historical British connection did not entitle Anne to automatic New Zealand citizenship and rights. Overplaying the Eurocentric connection creates a universal category of whites and collapses national boundaries into a non-existent white man's land just as identifying black people with Africa potentially reduces the vast continent and its Diaspora into a homogenous entity.

In fact many of Anne's associates encountered difficulties because they have dual citizenship (with other countries not New Zealand) and the Zimbabwe specific policies were primarily directed at people without recourse to any other another country than Zimbabwe. Thus the critical view that New Zealand government policies are designed for white Zimbabweans becomes contestable. In fact towards the end of this project Carol felt that the New Zealand Immigration Service Amendment Circular No.2004/01 favourably addressed apprehensions regarding her annual permit.

The relationship of Zimbabweans in the Diaspora and their government is precarious. The economic value of the *émigrés* is not lost on the government hence the love/hate that characterises their relationship. Unlike the Philippines where remittances are fairly successful business for government, the ambivalence between the Zimbabwe government and its Diaspora curtails the women's transnational character and activities as they attempt to reconstruct home. The interviewees expressed lack of faith in the economic recovery programmes of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe such the HOMELINK money transfer facility instituted in order to tap remittances opting instead for other ingenious ways of remitting to their families and investing in Zimbabwe. The four were at home in both places yet not fully comfortable in either place. Anne, appeared to blend racially in New Zealand but was confronted with ethnic exclusion, which, when it gave way to empathy, accommodated her in an unequal position, though better than that of her black counterparts.

In her study of eighteen immigrant women from developed and developing countries including New Zealand, Berger notes the existence of multiple and fluid migrant identities but at the same time accedes that it is "inevitable" that the migrant inhabits two worlds (Berger, 2004:193). However, if we problematise home and agree to its multiple and evolving connotations we accept the complexity of migrant spaces and the resultant fluid identities. It then challenges "the living two worlds" or "coping with duality" concept (Ibid:193), particularly in the context of the complexity of Zimbabwean identity embedded in the confluence of British, Zimbabwean and Rhodesian culture. Arguments for the dualised migrant life could perhaps be made in circumstances where there is difference in two dominant groups and where ethnic commonalities shield insidious power conflicts.

The two worlds theory, is however, insufficient to address the complex and intervening worlds of difference between Zimbabwean whites and Pakeha. Vernables (2003) illustrates this very clearly. She notes how the effort to establish home in Rhodesia meant the forfeiture of the family's (East European) native language and the acquisition of English language skills in an effort to fit in with the dominant group. Vernables cites ethnic prejudices and rejection in Rhodesia and Australia but celebrates the fluidity and breadth of African born white identity. But how are African born whites perceived by black Zimbabweans and other racial groups? The dilemma of postcolonial identity has to contend with the rewriting of history that sometimes attempts to write off certain cultural heritages. For example, can the white interviewee Anne be identified as Rhodesian and therefore inhabiting culturally specific Rhodesian space/home or do we reduce her to being British simply because of her British ancestry and whiteness? If not, what is she? Vernables (2003) notes that ethnicity did not gain her immediate acceptance in Australia. Anne spoke of similar experience in New Zealand.

Home: more than an address

On a material level, the house was a commodity whose ownership interviewees felt represented security and independence, more so if the official documents reflected their names. Home ownership signified affordability, financial well being and placed the owners in a class superior (Weedon, 1999) to those who did not have or could not afford to purchase their own homes.

Interviewees derived various levels of power and satisfaction in individual or joint ownership of property. There was compulsion to replace the loss of property in Zimbabwe in some way in New Zealand. First-generation migrant insecurity was evident in the desire to secure

a home on 'familiar' territory in Zimbabwe as insurance against the uncertainties of migrant life. Owning a home, full or shared tenancy reflected the women's financial status and therefore assigned them to a desirable or undesirable position particularly within the Zimbabwean migrant community. The four women shared the male dominated values of Zimbabwean success reflected in the lifestyles of the contemporary upper and middle classes. They emigrated with the aspirations of joining or maintaining standards of this privileged community. As a result, interviewees were of the opinion that their home said a lot of their adjustment to New Zealand, particularly when viewed through the lens of a Zimbabwean eye. It was obvious that peer assessment and financial status differentials affected the way they related amongst themselves within their community of Zimbabwean migrants. My invitation to the homes of interviewees who felt free in their homes and the excuses of the women who shared their space with others illustrate this point and affirms the finding that

> The social and economic organisation of commodified housing thus makes the value of home a privilege, and constructs many as relatively or absolutely deprived (Young, 1997:143).

The desire and level of connection with Zimbabwe varied with individuals with the younger women Carol and Judith and the children who migrated young or those born in New Zealand being less rooted. The potential for professional mobility offered by the international shortage of nurses created a notion that home is where one can make a decent living. Possibilities of further migration prompted by labour demands confirm Sassen's global circuits (2003) of women's quest for survival and the continued incorporation of women from Third World countries in the service of developed economies (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002:4, 16). Accordingly, home was also the global village and the international market place defined by global capital and the impact of terrorism on transnational mobility.

Reconstructing home in New Zealand meant establishing a physical locale as much as it meant rejecting racial, ethnic, age, gender and class discrimination and creating alternatives. For example, social interaction created spaces the women could call home. Sarah and Carol present the church as a place of refuge and comfort while Judith reveals the material and spiritual benefits of fellowship. Thus the Church plays a surrogate family role in the absence of social networks enjoyed in Zimbabwe.

Home also embodied social, cultural and historical values of the migrant women. Anne the grandmother stood as foundation and pillar of the family, an anchor and repository of history and culture in the home. Anne, Judith and Sarah as mothers were the comforting matriarch, anchor of the home and the memory and link between the new home and the homeland. Their nurturing role and inculcation of cultural values cannot be underestimated.

The gendered nature of home and household as a place in which women's work is undervalued while fulfilling the gratification of others has received much feminist attention as has the significance of home as a place of struggle and pride for black women (Weedon, 1999). Young's (1999) analysis of home and subjectivity are relevant to the understanding of home but her focus is Eurocentric and does not account for racism, a dominant theme in this project. The intersection of subjectivity with home and racism is apparent in that

> However much an individual might want to escape racial categorization and be seen merely as an individual, s/he finds her/himself confined by white societies' implicit and explicit definitions of whiteness and otherness (Weedon, 1999:152).

The predominance of racism as an organiser of difference for the black interviewees shows the extent to which racism is central to their

access to meaningful life in New Zealand. However, as in the manipulation of racial identities, the insidious way the different forms of discrimination operate and their institutionalisation at private/public, local/transnational and global levels requires attention. Weedon asserts,

> These definitions are not merely the property of prejudiced individuals, they are structural, inhering in the discourses and institutional practices of societies concerned (Weedon, 1999:152).

Challenged by racism, ethnicity, gender, age and class in their endeavour to reconstruct home, Sarah, Anne, Carol and Judith were resourceful. They subverted exclusion in multiple ways appropriate to each situation. For example, Anne exploited her white social kin ties to gain advantage into an office job. Sarah whose qualifications and competency were questioned at work because of her colour decided to "just keep quiet" but prove her capabilities through action. Carol and Judith decided that acquiring a New Zealand qualification would give them better chances and make them more competitive on the job market. Judith strategically enrolled in a course leading to a profession in which she noted New Zealand has employee shortage. The measures taken are not absolute but the spaces that can be called home that the women created in resistance or response to their situation offer them varied degrees of self worth.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that theorising home should be holistic, fluid and accommodating of new conceptions of home. The implications of race, ethnicity, gender, age and social status on access to home as an architectural structure, or the spaces in which one searches for personal comfort, the identities constructed around 'home' and relationships associated with 'home', show the intertwining and

inflection of these themes with the individual. Home is experienced as a living space, a way of life and relating to others.

Within the metaphor of 'home' the interviewees' multiple identities emerged as nostalgic 'patriots' that ironically felt betrayed; mothers, custodians of culture and family griots [7] that keep the family's values and mores alive; workers and students. 'Home' presents itself as part and parcel of actions and behaviour of the participants showing how cultural mores guide individual perceptions of the world and of being in the world. Therefore, the racialisation and other discrimination experienced that have a bearing on the level of how 'at home' an individual feels in place and time are not natural but expressive of a system of relationships of power found in language use.

Reconstructing home is therefore not an onerous task of moving from the cities of Harare or Bulawayo in Zimbabwe to Auckland or Wellington in New Zealand. The women's experiences render the notion of migrants inhabiting two worlds futile presenting instead, sophisticated identities bred in a complex single telescoping of varied situational homes. The 'home' metaphor is a euphemism for a continuous process of identity construction and renegotiation taking place in the daily lives of four heterogeneous migrant women from Zimbabwe. Reconstruction is continuous, its methods flexible and reliant on attitudinal change to obliterate power-based asymmetries such as ethnicity, gender, class and age that thrive on difference.

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[7] Griots. African oral historians and family praise poets.

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Chapter Seven
Conclusions

Introduction

In the way of concluding this thesis I offer reflections on what I have learnt from Sarah, Anne, Carol and Judith, remarkable women each one different yet familiar. I also review the research process and findings in relation to existing literature and the feminist project. My thesis is that women and men experience migration differently and that the process of reconstructing home in New Zealand is influenced by multiple factors centred on social constructions of identities based on normative behaviour and cultural mores of the dominant discourse. Therefore, the extent and level of ease with which Sarah, Anne, Carol and Judith are 'at home' in New Zealand is relative to the extent to which the interviewees are aware or made aware of their 'difference' in the various spaces they inhabit and the identities they assume as women, ethnic women, mothers, single women, old and young, well-to-do or as accented women from Africa.

The subjective experience of difference is influenced by one's culture and location in place and time. As a result, 'home' is fluid, historically located, constantly reconstituting itself in relation to subjective interface with gender, race, ethnicity, age and class. Because of their migration, the women contradictorily experienced empowerment and gained additional dimensions of struggle and agency.

Migrant women, identity and home: The Literature
The stories of the four women interviewed prove without doubt the mobility of Zimbabwean women and the inseparability of identity and 'home' as a way of being in the world. Contrary to traditional perceptions that migration is something that men do, the narratives of

Sarah, Anne, Carol and Judith affirm feminist scholarship assertions noted in the Literature Review in Chapter Two, that women too, are and have always been part of the migration story. It is therefore revealing that statistics from the New Zealand Census of 2001 and a comparative research survey on South Africa and Zimbabwe (Crush, 2003, No. 29) indicate higher migration figures amongst Zimbabwean women than men and a higher propensity to emigrate amongst Zimbabwean women than South African women.

The distances travelled by the interviewees in this project and by women interviewed in other studies subvert commonly held beliefs that women tend to move to places closer to home. According to Morokvasic-Muller et. al, (2003) women comprise of half the world's migrants therefore, more research is needed to understand why women who are traditionally relegated in migration studies are, as in the case of Zimbabwe proving to be more mobile than men. Such revelations and reasons of adventurism and personal growth noted by Carol necessitate rethinking dualistic paradigms on the causes, reasons and methods of migration particularly the trailing wife or family/spouse reunion.

Literature indicates that migration studies ignored the presence and role of women in migration until feminist pressure resulted in the unsatisfactory 'addition' of women to migration research in the early 1980s. However, by the 1990s the recognition of gender differences in migration broadened the framework of enquiry and lead to further scrutiny of linear migration and economic based Neo-Classical, Marxist, Third World theories of migration. Feminist scholarship contends that migration is more likely a result of multiple causes growing out of combinations of economic, personal/family, political and

social considerations (Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Morokvasic-Müller et. al, 2003; Kelson and DeLaet, 1999).

Economic reasons of poverty and the demand for cheap labour by the First World coupled by the role of institutions such as the Philippine government and multinational companies in promoting and exporting 'feminine' qualities play a big part in how and why women migrate. The reasons for migration are inseparable from migrant identity formulation and subjectivity and from the social and cultural influences that give rise to them. Consequently, major themes emerging in this field include issues of women migrants as workers in the global labour circuit, the legalities of migration, increased feminisation of migration by appealing to assumptions of feminine sensibilities and normative roles of women as dutiful nurturers capable of enduring the rigors of domestic, care and nursing jobs abroad without losing sight of regular remittances.

Generally, migration has been attributed to the search for better livelihood and work, family reunion, war and natural disasters. Four routes have been most studied in women and migration research, namely South East Asia to Middle and Far East; former Soviet Union to West Europe; South to North America and Africa to Europe. With respect to New Zealand, early literature is focused on chronicling male centred Caucasian immigration with marginal mention of other ethnicities and women. Changes in government policies and closer business and political ties with Asia and the Pacific have resulted in increased interest in these regions. The result is a host of research and literature on Asia-Pacific immigrants. The dominance of certain routes over others however runs the danger of eclipsing supposedly minor routes such as the Africa-Australasia one which this projects draws attention to.

While the shifts in academic focus have been taking place, interest exemplified by Fraser and Pickles (2002) in the recovery of women's voices and place in migration from the early colonial period to date has increased. However, the passage of time has changed but not erased the view of women as legal or trafficked exportable labour to service industries including prostitution or as women of good character to be wives for colonial settlers, Internet brides from Eastern Europe or as wives of 'skilled' migrants or business men (Fraser and Pickles, 2002; Kelson and DeLaet, 1999). The supposed gender neutrality of migration policies in fact helps to shield women's subjectivity and consideration of their migration potential as individuals with certain capabilities. Migration policies do not value women's work as skilled work neither do they acknowledge the contribution made by women in the running and maintenance of migrant households (Berger, 2004).

Existing feminist literature therefore advocates for a gender analytical framework in order to balance female and male experience and find out who is going where, why, how and with what effect and consequences to human relationships. In addition feminist scholars look beyond the woes of migrant acculturation to salvage stories of resilience. Likewise, Anne, Carol, Judith and Sarah's stories challenge a variety of commonly held beliefs about migration. Judith and Anne's resourcefulness to fend for themselves negate the 'trailing' wife or dependent stereotype while Sarah and Carol ventured out alone. All four women are working, fairly independent and found many positive aspects in their immigration.

Lessons from the Civil Rights Movement (hooks, 1981; Collins, 2003) and nationalist fervour fuelled by migration nostalgia indicate that a gender analytical framework and poststructuralist concepts deconstruct racial, ethnic and social status loyalties that otherwise prevent analysis

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of women specific issues and differences within the category of women. Consequently, the 'we are one' notion of Africana feminism is as deceptive as the insistence on a single group of exploited Africans in the Diaspora or a single Zimbabwean identity. Social class, age, gender, ethnicity and education have to be considered. Although Sarah, Anne, Carol and Judith's narratives empathise with their men folk as marginalised immigrants, immigration resulted in a negative shift of their social and work status. As observed of Asian women migrants by Raghuram and Kofman (2004), the four Zimbabwean women experienced deskilling and job loss with two contemplating retraining.

The Zimbabwean men in the interviewees' lives aided by gender blind migration classification as skilled migrants experienced temporary to no diminished job or social status. Indeed it may be argued that men do undertake care jobs just as Judith's husband did on arrival, but the question is what proportion of men performs these duties in comparison to women, with what attitude and for what duration? The woman's body is therefore, an expression and extension of normative behaviour and actions found in discourses of difference dictated by the dominant culture.

Same Batik, Shades of difference?

As I progressed through this study I found myself drawn to the Sadza Batik (Appendix 6) an artistic art form credited to and used by grassroots women in Zimbabwe to dye fabric for sale. The technique employs the artistic manipulation of 'sadza', a thick corn meal paste and dye, to achieve individualised, non-replicable effect yet each piece ultimately finds home in the single collection called Sadza Batik. The flexibility of technique, the unpredictability of the outcome and the manifestation of the method as both art form and grassroots women's

social and economic agency epitomises the transformative drive that parallels the aspirations and complexity of the interviewees.

I found the Sadza Batik metaphor befitting to describe positive attributes of the difference and unique ways of experiencing difference found amongst and within the group of Zimbabwean women who took part in this project. The Sadza Batik can also be used to represent the differences Zimbabwean women migrants have with New Zealand women, women of other races and ethnicities who enter their daily lives and women migrants in general. The commonality of gender discrimination is unmistakable, but as feminist poststructuralism shows us, the way that the oppression is expressed differs with individuals and is influenced by cultural and historical placement. As a result, the global sisterhood project is not sustainable because it essentialises women's experiences and negates the temporary and fluid nature of subjectivities. It also ignores different ways women experience marginalisation and the ways with which women themselves knowingly or inadvertently contribute to the maintenance of patriarchal structures through exclusion by race, ethnicity, age and social status.

The Sadza Batik, like the women in this project, has found international appeal and is therefore at home in the global village, showing off and selling its best attributes in the search for an individualised home. In a similar manner that Anne, Carol, Judith and Sarah draw on their best personal, social and professional qualities to find 'home' as women migrants.

Each of the four women had experienced some form of racism at some point. The black women felt that although racial discrimination was against the law, it remained an unwritten prohibitive factor in their ability to get good jobs in New Zealand. Therefore, racism was a

drawback on their material progress. Sarah, Carol and Judith were unprepared for the racism they encountered because part of their emigration was motivated by a romantic vision of an egalitarian, multicultural New Zealand also protector of human rights from their Commonwealth experience. Gendered, nationalist and racist language was used to identify and exclude or single out the women as exceptional cases and in their individual capacities they exercised agency. For example, Sarah chose to ignore racial humiliation, Anne opted for a lesser job, Carol sought community in the black Zimbabwean Church and Judith resolved to balance home, school and retraining for a job with critical staff shortage in New Zealand.

The women maintained ties with Zimbabwe mostly because three were first generation immigrants, remitting to families or just keeping in touch with friends. However, that Anne is equally attached although she is not a first generation migrant (because her father migrated to Rhodesia as a boy) presents the question whether a family history of migration makes any difference to descendant migrants and if so how identities change over space and time? The interviewees' exclusion and feelings of 'difference' in New Zealand and the way they were regarded in their home country also contributed to the construction of their transnational characters, identities and behaviour.

Deconstructing sites of difference cited by the interviewees provided alternative ways of understanding human relations in the context of migration. The level to which these women successfully reconstruct home in New Zealand was dependent on a variety of actors sometimes beyond their control, for example: state sanction of international migration; bi-lateral and corporate agreements that respond to the core-periphery capitalist effects on migration; the incorporation of migration into national politics by conferring patriot status on those who

remit money back home; the feminisation of migration; and structural inequalities between women in developing and developed countries. These differences should not, however, overshadow the common experience of gender discrimination that women go through because of their sex, irrespective of their race, ethnicity, age or social status.

Recognising that there is value in focusing on positive aspects of difference and the advantages of central positioning, feminists need to name and shame the differences discussed in this project thus finding agency or 'home' in areas where alliances can be built. This project endeavoured to draw attention to the lives of Zimbabwean migrants with the hope of creating better understanding of who they are and whom they are 'rooming' with, where, how, why so that their conditions can be improved.

Feminist methods revisited

The question to what extent was gender implicated in Sarah, Judith, and Carol's migration was explored. Gender difference was pervasive in the women's stories but although it was a key social organiser it rarely operated alone but in conjunction with other markers of difference such as race, ethnicity, age and class. The result was that the interviewees experienced multiple, multi-level and intersecting oppressions. However, this project is not a mere chronology of the negative experiences of women migrants. Difficulties were noted in order to ponder resolution while celebrating the agency exhibited by the interviewees because

> Before we can hope to find activist solutions, we need to see these women as full human beings. They are strivers as well as victims, wives and mothers as well as workers - sisters, in other words, with whom ... the First World may someday define a common ground (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002:13).

Indeed the feminist poststructuralist framework used compelled me to excavate personal stories of 'full human beings'. The interviewees were privileged as individuals and not as a homogeneous entity. Attention to individuals showed how discourses construct power-based identities and behaviour. The women's history and culture were valued as part of what makes them who they are, act and think in the manner they do. However subjectivity changes as do perceptions and strategies as new situations present themselves. The identification of sources, methods of exclusion and response strategies humanises Zimbabwean women migrants as does their willingness and apprehensions to take part in the project. The women's consciousness and individual or group agency is important to the feminist project.

I began this project with the confidence of one treading familiar ground in order to give voice to the experiences of my compatriots that in some way touched on my own. However, the research process presented profound insights, challenges and alternative ways of thinking about power relationships within the Zimbabwean migrant group as well as the relationship of the researcher with the researched.

Focusing on Zimbabwean women and identifying them as such was potentially reductionist of the heterogeneous composition of women from Zimbabwe. However, their identification as 'Zimbabwean women' was made in recognition of the situatedness and subjectivity of each experience. During the project, I discovered the problematic of a Zimbabwean identity and recognised that shared nationality is not a guarantee for inclusion, trust or openness; neither are gender, race and motherhood a basis for empathy. I experienced what it is like to feel like an insider/outsider within a group (including black Zimbabweans) I claimed to be my own and recognised the pitfalls of

romanticisation of the homeland and the problem of assumed sisterhood.

In seeking women's migrant experiences the project did not seek to displace male experience but locate women's experiences at the centre. The literature review acknowledged the privileged space of western women in social science research and again, this project rejected polarised existence but drew on the literature to emphasise the necessity of sharing the platform as equals albeit the differences. Convergence at the centre provides room for identification of common experiences and platforms of empathy from which women can organise.

Education, visa conditions, occupation, material status and social pursuits worked as class organisers in New Zealand as a whole and amongst the Zimbabweans, thus creating subdivisions and categories within categories. I was a student researcher and Zimbabwean 'eye' sometimes held with suspicion, caution or trust. These simultaneous and sometimes contradictory placements highlight the fluid power relationships at play in the research process. I also realised that the private/public domain should be demystified and the various specific locations identified, more so in view of the fact that the areas represented migrant spaces and relationships that incorporated them to the not so obvious spheres as international markets, policies and politics.

The self-exploratory journey that transported us to the various homes inhabited by the interviewees was empowering because during the interviews the women were aware of some although not all the connections of the sites of struggle in their lives. Their awareness, albeit disjointed increased as the project progressed. The interviewees

knew they had to resist the constructions of difference posited in their way and they had to find a way to break through the constructs of power. Face to face interviewing enabled the interviewees and myself to bond. I benefited from assessing non-verbal communication and found it useful to bridge gaps or open up leads for more information.

The four women cited racism and ethnicity as central organisers in their lives, regulating access to employment thus influencing their livelihood and social position. Their down play of gender as a basis for discrimination, as opposed to racism and ethnicity, when the transcripts indicated its pervasive presence in all aspects of their lives, may be cultural, fierce nationalism, a result of their being non feminist, inadvertent acceptance of normative standards, the fact that gender was not of consequence to them or simply thinking it was obvious and that as a fellow Zimbabwean woman we shared certain universal knowledge which feminist poststructuralism hold to question.

Questions for feminist agency and social action

Many areas of Zimbabwean women's lives remain unexplored and those studies undertaken require to be revisited for evolving dimensions of marginalisation and agency. How does feminism respond to the structural inequalities between women, particularly the challenges of polarisation arising out of for example, First World women's dependency on Third World Women for domestic labour?

It was apparent that there is need for further exploration of the notion of a 'Zimbabwean'. Zimbabweans who in/voluntarily emigrated carry with them subjective memories and cultural practices relevant to both sending and receiving countries and ultimately to the international community. How far would the debate on 'Zimbabweaness' contribute to the resolution of the so-called ' Zimbabwe situation'?

Anne said "I have a lot of history there" (in Zimbabwe) while Sarah projects the view that "people from Africa" are black. Is there a way that the national rights and history of Anne and Sarah embedded in colonialism and post colonialism can be reconciled?

The problematic 'Zimbabwean' annual permits and their place in the creation of stereotyped identities pose serious social and policy implications. Future research may also compare the changing identities of post independent Zimbabwe migrants particularly the 1980 and 2000 watersheds. Taking into consideration Anne's white Zimbabwean migrant experience and gender, racism and ethnicity's historical connections, it is also important to explore what it means and does to black and white Zimbabweans to find their roles reversing or intersecting in the way that they do in New Zealand. Can these two polarised racial groups find common ground? If so, how and where?

Conversely, how can the differences between these Zimbabwean immigrants, their country of origin and their host society be bridged? What do these additional, multilayered differences mean to New Zealand in the light of the differences addressed by Johnson and Pihama (1995)? Vernables, a Zimbabwean immigrant in Australia, also grandchild of an Eastern European immigrant to Rhodesia, suggests

> perhaps it is a shared history that builds up over time that brings about the sense of belonging. The points of connection between immigrant and resident, and between colonial and postcolonial, become closer (Vernables, 2003: 109-10).

How far can "shared history" diminish the differences encountered by Sarah, Anne, Carol and Judith? At what point and to what extent can they be said to share a common history? Where do we look for the common history – is it in their gender, race, ethnic and class differences, or in all of these?

What can be made of the silences regarding interaction with other people who are neither black nor white? A fleeting mention was made of Zimbabweans of mixed blood who also immigrated to New Zealand referred to as "vazukuru (grandchildren) ... one of us" (Judith). Can we assume that Judith's experience adequately reflects the Zimbabwean Coloured people's migrant experience? No mention was made of the ethnic dynamics of the black Zimbabwean women in New Zealand. Who are the 'other' Zimbabweans in New Zealand and how do they experience their migration? How do Zimbabwean ethnicities regroup in New Zealand? Does the Zimbabwean Diaspora underplay racial and ethnic tensions amongst themselves and to what extent can migration provide hope for bridging these differences?

As an activist I am interested in how feminists theorise "to become somebody"? How do we present alternative (feminist) knowledge that "to become somebody", in the manner Carol yearns for, arises from oppressive frameworks and that we need to deconstruct the white male middle class centeredness of who or what is normatively "somebody"? In addition, how does feminism link "being somebody" to the larger systems of relationships within and outside the racially constituted black and white house that is so significant to the participants in this project that Weedon (1999) and Scott (2003) attribute to the manipulation of discourses? How is being somebody played out amongst the various competing and intersecting interests of the larger 'women' body politic?

The effect of the women's migration on their children is also ground for further research. Anne's grandchild who had problems adjusting at school told the school teacher that what he needed most was "space". Anne said, "This is how New Zealand makes you feel, restricted, like

everything is in miniature". On the other hand Judith insisted that her children speak only in English in order to adapt and that they are enjoying spacious accommodation. What do all these changes mean to the children and how do they cope with them? The changing identity of the girl child in the black migrant family also requires consideration because of the implications of her mutation from a child cared for by a nanny in Zimbabwe to becoming a 'daughtermaid' in New Zealand.

Policy considerations

Based on the literature review and experiences of the four interviewees it would be most meaningful and useful if policies were not only said to be gender neutral but employed gender sensitive language. Neglecting specific attention to gender creates the assumption that men and women experience migration in the same way. In such instances, gender-neutral language maintains the status quo and continues to marginalise women as noted in the Skills, Business and Family Migration categories. So far the majority of categorised 'skills' privilege male migration, as they do not recognise female household duties as work. In the event that agriculture becomes a category for skilled migration how will the 'skill' be evaluated? Apart from degrees and diplomas, will women's uncertified contribution to Third World agriculture be acknowledged? Without such attention to gender, men would continue to have the upper hand and to enjoy the benefits of gender-neutral policies.

Targeted policies have their merits and demerits. The 'Zimbabwean situation' is a long drawn political standoff and diplomacy has to be encouraged on both sides. In view of this the New Zealand government needs to make conclusive decisions for Zimbabweans in New Zealand to whom the special laws apply. The proposed 2006 date is problematic because it causes uncertainties – the neither here nor

there situation does not auger well for Carol, working and contributing to the New Zealand economy, paying tax yet living out of a suitcase. The uncertainty for women with children and for old people can be serious. Increased and wider consultation of Zimbabweans in New Zealand in addressing the current situation may be fruitful.

It has been noted that although interviewees perceived communication difficulties, this was mainly to do with adjusting to accent and local expressions. The Zimbabwean migrants shunned English language courses for migrants because they felt that they are pitched at a lower level. In such instances, efforts should be directed at informal social activities that promote immersion. Support is also needed in terms of career choices and job placement services for migrant women as it would empower migrant them as individuals and assist them to be more effective parents who are able to discuss career paths their children.

The hiring of casual workers needs to be investigated and with view to protecting workers, particularly migrants, from unfair labour practice, such as long hours. While this might mean a policing and reduction in hours worked therefore less income for the families, systems need to be put in place to promote healthy and balanced working mothers who can also spare time to be with their families.

This project and related studies have shown that women are adept travellers in their own right, legally or illegally seeking employment, business or educational opportunities and refuge from political and domestic threat (DeLaet, 1999; Berger, 2004). The women's migration experience is not linear neither can it be categorically stated that they were or were not empowered by their migration. Rather, the multiple and intersecting 'differences' between and amongst the interviewees,

the communities they lived in and within the different categories they found themselves in at different times, variedly located them in positions of advantage or powerlessness. At the end of the project the number of women were still experiencing job loss and deskilling dropped from three to two. Generally, the women were optimistic about their prospects and those of their children. One of the most outstanding qualities of Anne, Carol, Judith and Sarah is their belief in themselves and their unanimous "it takes a woman" belief in womanpower. Such levels of resilience are themselves empowerment and evidence of awareness of the capacity of individuals to drive social change thus creating a space they can call home.

Appendices

Massey University

15 March 2004

Appendix 1

Re: HEC: PN Application – 04/05
Reconstructing home: Zimbabwean women in New Zealand

Thank you for your letter dated 11 March 2004 and the amended application.

The amendments you have made now meet the requirements of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Palmerston North and the ethics of your application are approved.   Approval is for three years.   If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, a new application must be submitted at that time.

We note that in the Information Sheet, paragraph 1 (one), you have given your address as part of the introduction. We would like to suggest the removal of this detail as this may breach your privacy. With reference to your email of 11 March, please forward hard copies (on letterhead) to the Secretary of the Committee for filing with the original application.

If the nature, content, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise the Secretary of the Committee.

A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents "This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, PN Application 04/05. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor Sylvia V Rumball, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Palmerston North, telephone 06 350 5249, email humanethicspn@massey.ac.nz"

Yours sincerely

Professor Sylvia Rumball, Chair
Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Palmerston North

cc   Dr Jenny Coleman
School of Sociology, Social Policy & Social Work
PN371

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Massey University

Appendix 2

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Sociology, Social Policy & Social Work
Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North
New Zealand

Re: Invitation to participate in an MPhil Research Project.

Reconstructing Home: Zimbabwean Women in New Zealand.

My name is Mercy Jumo. I am an international student from Zimbabwe studying at Massey University, Palmerston North Campus. I am inviting you to participate in a research project that I am undertaking as part of a course requirement for the Master of Philosophy (MPhil) degree program. The Supervisor for my research is Dr. Jenny Coleman who is who is also Coordinator of the Women's Studies Programme.

The project entitled, *'Reconstructing Home: Zimbabwean Women in New Zealand'* is part of a larger academic desire to understand why people emigrate and how they cope with readjusting to life in their new home. This study will therefore attempt to understand your motivation to move to New Zealand and the challenges you have faced with setting up a new home, making friends, getting work, accessing schools, hospitals and other services which make life comfortable. I would also like to know how language considerations, and other cultural expressions including food have been dealt with. In short, I would like to know how you have managed to make a home away from home economically and socially as individuals, family or as a community of Zimbabweans/Africans in New Zealand.

You are one of four women selected to take part in this study because you are a Zimbabwean now resident in New Zealand and are known to me or have been recommended by a friend who is known to you and me. This means that if we have not already met, you are a friend of a friend, therefore a friend, as we would say back home! The reason that I am focusing on women's experiences is because during my 14 years of working on social justice issues in Zimbabwe, particularly gender equality and vulnerable children, I became aware of the scant documentation of women's voices and experiences. Although both men and women migrate, the woman's perspective is particularly of interest to me given the Shona saying 'Musha Mukadzi' a woman makes the home". I would like us to explore what the concept of woman as pillar of the home means for us in a home away from home.

I would therefore, like to interview you regarding your migrant experiences and will be very grateful if you agree to work with me on this project. The research will take place over a maximum period of 4 weeks in which you will be requested to devote a maximum of 4 hours. A work schedule will be developed together with you but should any stress

arise out of competing interests or any other considerations please let me know immediately so that we can renegotiate the way forward.

I have developed a personal information form for general background details and contact purposes. I have also prepared a schedule of questions to guide us in what is intended to be an open discussion between you and me. I will record our discussions and play the tape backs to you so that you can okay the content before I do the analysis and report. The only other person who may listen to the tapes is Dr. Jenny Coleman, my research supervisor. All personal details, interview tapes and materials relating to our discussions will be securely stored by me under lock and key in a bureau to which only I have access. I will, with your permission, destroy *all* confidential information on completion of my research project at the end of the 2004 academic year.

Given the nature of the research I will not identify you by name in the project. You also have the right to ask any questions about the study at any time during participation and can address these directly to me or to my supervisor, Jenny Coleman at (6-)5055799. I will make an effort to have a face-to-face interview with you, but may resort to telephone interviews where necessary. I will be calling you at all interview times but will provide a calling card to enable you to make contact with me or with Dr. Coleman should the need arise.

Please be assured that the information you will be providing will not be used outside the scope of this project without your consent. (You will be asked to approve the content of the tapes before their final analysis and you will receive a copy of the summary of the research findings section of my final report.)

You have the right to:
- decline to participate;
- have my name protected;
- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study at any point during the research project;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- listen to a play back of the recorded interview and authenticate factual information before final submission of the thesis
- a copy of the thesis chapter that summarises the research project findings when concluded;
- ask for the audiotape to be turned off at any time during the interview.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, PN Protocol 04/05. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor Sylvia V Rumball, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Palmerston North, telephone 06 350 5249, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz.

Sincerely,

Ms. Mercy Jumo.

Massey University

Appendix 3

Reconstructing Home: Zimbabwean Women in New Zealand.

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF FIVE (5) YEARS

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being audio taped.

I agree/do not agree that the interview and personal data be destroyed by Ms. Jumo on completion of the research project.

I agree/do not agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: ....   **Date:** ....

**Full Name
- printed** ....

Appendix 4

Reconstructing Home: Zimbabwean Women in New Zealand.

Interview questions

Please tell me about your life in Zimbabwe and what motivated you to emigrate.

How did you make the decision to leave home?

What information did you have on New Zealand and how did you come by that information?

Did you know anyone who had migrated to New Zealand?

What was your main occupation in Zimbabwe and how does it compare and fit into what you are doing right now?

How did you mobilise the financial and material resources required for the move and how long the travel plans take before you actually left Zimbabwe?

How did you and your family (husband/children/immediate/extended) react to your decision to emigrate? What role if any did family members play in the whole process?

What were your views of New Zealand before you arrived? Do you hold the same views now? If not what has changed and why?
Is the desire for a better life being met?

How does it feel to be a woman migrant?

Home, Family and Community
Tell me about your first few weeks in New Zealand. How did it compare to Zimbabwe? Do you have the same feelings now?

What can you tell me of family life in New Zealand in comparison to Zimbabwe? Are there any significant differences or not?

What can you tell me about you relationship with husband and children since coming to New Zealand?

How do you balance your commitments? (sharing domestic responsibilities/time for self/family/leisure)

How long do you think you will stay in New Zealand and why?

How welcome do you feel in New Zealand?

What language are you using most, where and why?

Have you made Kiwi friends, joined local groups and clubs?

What interaction if any do you have with other Zimbabweans in New Zealand?
What links if any do you have with Zimbabwe?

What does home mean to you and where is home?

Out of the challenges of immigration what positive experiences if any make the move worthwhile for you?

What are the negative experiences and what do you think can be done to change them?

Do you feel that your being a woman affects your migrant experience at all? If so how?

Work

Are you employed here in New Zealand? If so what work do you do? Are you doing the same work as you the one you did back home?

(If married) Is your spouse working? What job does he do?

Are you (both) satisfied with your employment? Why?

What can you say about your general welfare: income, access to health care, education, housing, food and clothing? (Any qualitative improvement in life style?)

What difference is there in your life as a woman living in Zimbabwe and New Zealand? Is there anything you would change?

What advise would you give to other Zimbabweans intending to move here?

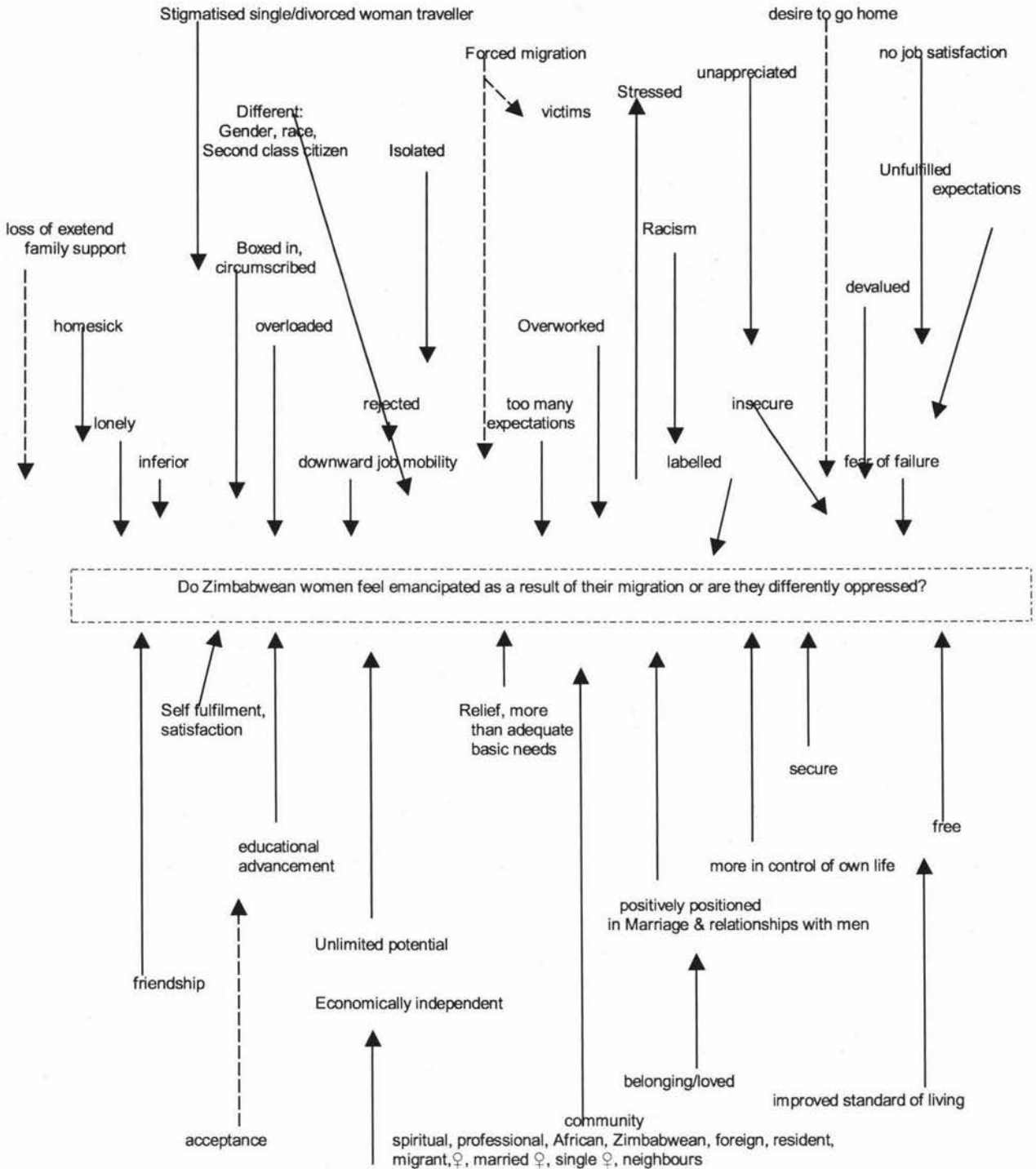What message do you have for Kiwis regarding immigrants and your experience as one?

If you had audience with the policy makers in New Zealand and Zimbabwe what would you say to them regarding your migration?

Is there any thing else we have not covered that you would like add?

Appendix 5

Hurricane Thinking
Zimbabwean women migrant experiences in New Zealand based on their perceptions.

Stigmatised single/divorced woman traveller

desire to go home

Forced migration

no job satisfaction

victims

Stressed

unappreciated

Different:
Gender, race,
Second class citizen

Isolated

Unfulfilled
expectations

loss of exetend
family support

Boxed in,
circumscribed

Racism

homesick

overloaded

Overworked

devalued

lonely

rejected

too many
expectations

insecure

inferior

downward job mobility

labelled

fear of failure

Do Zimbabwean women feel emancipated as a result of their migration or are they differently oppressed?

Self fulfilment,
satisfaction

Relief, more
than adequate
basic needs

secure

educational
advancement

free

Unlimited potential

more in control of own life

positively positioned
in Marriage & relationships with men

friendship

Economically independent

belonging/loved

improved standard of living

acceptance

community
spiritual, professional, African, Zimbabwean, foreign, resident,
migrant, ♀, married ♀, single ♀, neighbours

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Appendix 6

Sadza Batik

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