

Katja Uusihakala

## **OPENING UP AND TAKING THE GAP. White Road to and from Rhodesia.<sup>1</sup>**

### **Introduction**

Zimbabwe's independence in 1980 instigated a white settler exodus, one of the last of its kind in Africa. During the first years of independence about 100 000 whites left the country. According to one estimate approximately 40 000 of these migrants settled in South Africa. (Simon 1988, 53.) My estimate is, however, that the number of immigrants from Zimbabwe is much higher than this.<sup>2</sup> The recent political developments in Zimbabwe have further increased the number of white Zimbabweans in South Africa. My fieldwork in South Africa was conducted among this diasporic community.<sup>3</sup>

In my dissertation I explore how the ex-Rhodesian community in South Africa socially constructs its sense of belonging, how they remember and discuss homes and homeland in their more or less self-initiated exile twenty years after Zimbabwe's independence. Reflexivity about a sense of belonging to a place as well as to a culturally and historically distinct community seems everywhere to be intensified in migrancy, when people are removed from what they conceive of as their rightful place of belonging. Migration similarly seems to intensify people's reflexivity about a culturally and historically distinct community of which they are part. Pertaining to this self-consciousness, one of the chief aims of the Rhodesia Association of South Africa (RASA), an organization, which I closely observed during my fieldwork, is declared to be the preservation of history and heritage of Rhodesians. (Rhodesians Worldwide 1985.) Furthermore, as one of my informants so aptly phrased it: "There was no such a thing as Rhodesian culture in Rhodesia. Rhodesian culture was born here [in South Africa]. What we had in Rhodesia was unconscious."

Most of the ex-Rhodesians in South Africa were by no means steadfastly settled to their present place of dwelling. Since the early 1990's white South Africans have begun to "pack for Perth", as the saying goes, and "[T]he sound of the packing of bags has become background noise to many South Africans"

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is based on eight-month fieldwork in South Africa, conducted as part of my PhD dissertation the working title of which is "Landscapes in Motion. Community, Place and Memory in ex-Rhodesian Diaspora. My research is carried out at the University of Helsinki under the supervision of Dr Karen Armstrong and Dr Jukka Siikala. The University of Helsinki, the Nordic Institute for African Studies and the Cultural Foundation of Finland have funded my research.

<sup>2</sup> These figures are raw estimates. Records of African emigration through official ports started in April 1978. Since then, the racial division of the emigrants cannot be determined. Another factor, which makes the figures inaccurate, is that many people never emigrated officially. They left 'for a holiday' and never returned. (See Republic of Zimbabwe 1990: Recorded Migration through Official Ports.) According to the 1991 Census in South Africa, out of the white population, 27 343 were citizens of Zimbabwe. (South African Statistics 1995: Population: Citizenship – whites.) However, very few of my informants had retained their Zimbabwean citizenship. They had either become South African citizens or maintained a British citizenship. The same Census shows that there were 91 228 whites in South Africa who were born in Zimbabwe. (Republic of SA: Population Census 1991.)

<sup>3</sup> Since emigration, in addition to South Africa, ex-Rhodesians have actively and reflexively constructed diasporic communities in Britain, Australia, New Zealand, United States and Canada. They

(Electronic Mail and Guardian 9. 3. 1998). During my fieldwork, newspapers were filled with removal company ads, and emigration consultants were organizing seminars on overseas moving. For example, one single Sunday newspaper included the following adverts: The *Protea Pacific Limited Immigration Consultants* induces prospective emigrants to New Zealand. The *Destination Group* to Australia, New Zealand and Canada. *Mini Moves* removes homes and cars to England, the *International Immigration Alliance* is allotting green cards to the US, the *Griffiths & Company* (a registered migration agent) advertises an emigration seminar for those interested in moving to Australia. (Sunday Times 12.9.1999.)<sup>4</sup> In addition to emigration being in the air in South Africa, Zimbabwe has begun to seriously crumble. President Mugabe's verbal attacks on the whites in Zimbabwe and the physical taking over of white farms categorically intensified the ex-Rhodesians' deep desire to understand their place and position in the world.

Rhodesia<sup>5</sup>, as a political and territorial entity, existed for a relatively short period of time, from 1890 to 1980. To a significant extent, the white Rhodesians were first-generation migrants. (E. g. Cheater 1999, 4.) According to the 1969 Census, out of the 228 296 Europeans, about 40 % were born in the country. Approximately 23 % were born in the UK and 22 % in South Africa. (See Godwin and Hancock 1999, 16.)<sup>6</sup> Regarding the process of decolonization, there seems to be a general assumption that the former colonials could and would return to their 'homelands', an idea that their sojourn in the colonies was but a brief episode after which they would retrace their steps back to where they originated blending relatively easily into the society. (Cf. Cheater 1999.) This idea is well reflected today in President Mugabe's oft-repeated admonitions for the white Zimbabweans to 'go back home', that is, England.

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also publish a quarterly journal *Rhodesians Worldwide* and maintain quite a few web sites with their contact forums and chatboards.

<sup>4</sup> According to Vincent Williams, the project manager of the Southern African Migratory Project, there actually isn't a constant trend of emigration from South Africa. He also states that the number of people who would leave South Africa if they had the opportunity was evenly spread across the races. "It's just that more whites have the opportunity." (Daily Mail and Guardian 31.5. 1999.) The societal problem then is that regardless of race, those who leave are the ones with education. The Mail and Guardian article concludes that "the threat of a mass exodus which hovered over the 1994 election has failed to materialise, suggesting that talk of "white flight" is more of a pre-election moral panic than a long-term threat to the nation's economy. " (Ibid.) But whether the people are actually leaving is only part of the problem. Perhaps a graver problem is the discourse of despair prevalent in the country. At times during my fieldwork I truly felt I would collapse under the bombardment of discontent and paralysing fear.

<sup>5</sup> The name of the country was changed several times through out its history: Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia, Rhodesia, Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, and Zimbabwe. (U.S. Department of State 1995, Encyclopaedia Rhodesia 1973, 416-419.) For the sake of convenience, I will refer to the territory as Rhodesia prior to 1980. Place names are never a minor detail and some of my informants continue to use the pre-independence names, such as Rhodesia instead of Zimbabwe or Salisbury instead of Harare. Choosing between the names was an indication of taking a stand. Where I use the old names, I refer either to the pre-independence period or highlight my informants' usage of the place names.

<sup>6</sup> The 1904 European Census shows that 52.9 % were born in England and 41.6 % in South Africa. In the 1911 Census the percentages are as follows: Rhodesian-born – 13.7%, UK-born – 40.8 %, South African-born – 30.7 %. Accordingly in 1931 29.2 % were born in Rhodesia, 26,3 % in the UK and 34.5 % in South Africa. In 1941: R 34.1 %, UK 26.4 % and SA 27.9 %. (See Kennedy 1987, Appendix.) After the Second World War there was an influx of immigrants coming from Britain on various soldier

However, being classified as ‘British-born’, as in the above censuses, does not as such equate to a sense of England as home. Of people classified as such, many had migrated to Rhodesia via other territories, particularly South Africa. The 1952 Southern Rhodesian Annual Report shows that many of the immigrants categorized as British-born, in fact stated South Africa as the country of last permanent residence. (National Archives of South Africa: Southern Rhodesia...1952, 2.)<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, for the contemporary ex-Rhodesians in South Africa, having a British passport has very little to do with their factual ‘sense of home’ in Britain. People will admittedly go through lengthy bureaucratic struggles to prove their descent and obtain such a passport so as to be able to ‘return’ ‘if worse comes to worse’ in today’s South Africa. But this is done more in order to secure oneself what is conceived of as a financially and security-wise safe old age than it has to do with an idea of ‘return’. And, as is well-known, the idea of return to a society once left behind, (among others, see Runblom 2000, 9-10) is a misconception, since the ‘homeland’ – to the bewilderment of many who have attempted to ‘return’ – will have become something altogether different during the years of the migrants’ absence. This raises a shower of general questions pertaining to my research; what is home and what is homeland for a multiply migrant community? What places matter in a history of movement and how? How do these places relate to one another? How does a place become domesticated into a home? Does a home travel? Can a place travel? What does it mean to belong?

A sense of belonging and a sense of commitment do not necessarily require an age-old connection with the land. But it does help. In the ex-Rhodesian life histories, as well as in the life histories of former colonials in contemporary Kenya, whom I have previously studied (Uusihakala 1995, 1998), knowledge, credibility and authority within the community are forcefully established through the length of genealogical connection with the land. The Rhodesians – formerly only men - who were direct descendents of pioneers could be admitted to the Rhodesia Pioneers and Early Settlers Society, and framed certificates of membership in this society decorated many a wall in the homes I visited. These people often referred to themselves as born and bred Rhodesians, sometimes as ‘Africans’. (“I’m an African whether you like it or not”, “I may be white but I’m a bloody African.”) As one of my chief informants, Charles, whose grandfather, in 1896 at the age of 17, had immigrated to Rhodesia from England, put it:

I always look at myself, as a native of Rhodesia from a point of view that not only was I born there, so was my father. So *I wasn't there just for a while*. I intended to live there. And I intended my children to grow up there as well. (...) So I wouldn't go to country, live there just to get what I could get out, knowing that I'm going to go and live somewhere else later on. (Charles)

On the other hand, Frank, who, like so many others, had come out to Rhodesia with the Royal Air Force during the Second World War seemed rather perplexed about home. He didn't feel at home in

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settlement schemes. Simultaneously, however, there was a growing interest to leave South Africa for Rhodesia after the National Party had won the elections in 1948 in South Africa.

<sup>7</sup> The ‘British’ itself is a muddled class. The above Report distinguishes between British Home Born, British South African Born, British Dominion Born, British Born Elsewhere, British Naturalized, British Asiatics, and British Coloureds. (National Archives of South Africa...1952, 3.)

South Africa, Rhodesia does not exist anymore, he hasn't lived in England since the early 1940's and couldn't afford to live there now.

I've never settled in South Africa (...) All my years in Rhodesia, we used to refer to England as home, so many of us did. You know, 'going home in two years time on a holiday.' But when I came here, then Rhodesia became more home than England. (Frank 3)

Thus, the ex-Rhodesians in South Africa – like any other migrant community - are a group of people in whose self-construction many 'homes' matter but in distinct ways. Even Charles, whose 'Rhodesia' was a genealogically defined homeland, not an intermediate landing, felt relatively 'at home' in England while he was training there, because, as he said: "England is part of my heritage."

It is by now a truism to state that the interconnections between places and people are not given natural facts. "[C]ultures", Gupta and Ferguson note, "are no longer (were they ever?) fixed in place" (1997, 4). What Gupta and Ferguson are tackling here has partly to do with what they see as anthropological representation of cultures as bound entities within fixed territories. Cultural territorializations, they argue, are socially and historically processed and it is these processes that anthropologists should focus on rather than the pre-given culture-territory entities. (Ibid.) Furthermore, Rapport and Dawson note, the contemporary movement in the world puzzles the image of socio-cultural 'places'. (1998, 5.) Rather than bound up in totalizing 'places' individuals and groups are now "entering and leaving spaces" (ibid., 6). Movement has become a fundamental element in the processing of identity. (Ibid.) However, although this age of movement (postcolonial, transnational and so on) is certainly qualitatively and quantitatively different to those preceding it, the experience of individuals and communities leaving and arriving, remembering past belongings, relocating and reconstructing homes are not pertinent to this age only. People move, have always moved, either willingly or by force. (See for example Parkin 1998, ix; Siikala 2001.)

It is true that there is nothing naturally given and taken for granted in the connection between people and places. But in spite of movement, some places always matter more than others. Some places become layered with significance, both for individuals and for communities. Very few people in the world of movement are at home *wherever-they-lay-their-hats*. Cultures may not be fixed in places but from the perspective of those who live them – culture *is* fixed in places. Social knowledge is encased in historically and socially experienced places. Places are rendered meaningful through cultural conceptualization, through social enactments in and with the places. Some places speak (such as the Matopos mountains in Zimbabwe). In some places God speaks (such as in the un-named wilderness). When people tackle ever-present existential questions such as who we are, where we come from and

where we belong, they very often express themselves through places. When people migrate on large scale, when they inhabit 'borderzones' or live in 'transnational territories', or whatever, they remember and speak of places that are invested with meaning.

What then does it mean to belong? How, in the context of multiple migrations, is belonging socially constructed? Belonging is a concept, which inheres senses of memory, loss and emotion. As Elspeth Probyn has highlighted, belonging has an affective dimension. It is not only about be-ing, but longing as well. (Cited in Bell 1999, 1.) According to Nadia Lovell, belonging implies a notion of loyalty to a place.

[A] loyalty that may be expressed through oral or written histories, narratives of origin as belonging, the focality of certain objects, myths, religious and ritual performances, or the setting up of shrines such as museums and exhibitions. Yet belonging is also fundamentally defined through a sense of experience, a phenomenology of locality, which serves to create, mould and reflect perceived ideals surrounding place. (1998, 1.)

Thus, belonging is being part of somewhere. Often the ex-Rhodesians conceptualized this somewhere as soil; "the land is calling us" they might say when they speak about their longing for Rhodesia. Belonging, therefore, is about the establishment of origins. It signifies a social construction of 'being rooted'. Again, this is not to say that such connections with people and territories are naturally given. (Cf. Malkki 1997.) But arborescent metaphors are very evocative cultural conventions for expressing belonging. (See Autio, 2001, 105 ff 7.) 'Roots' imply love, commitment and authority over the land in which they wind. Charles's daughter, Yvonne, writes about her parents' emigration in the following way:

When they look back on the events of 1980 [they] see so clearly the hand of the Lord guiding them through the process of emigration, which is partly what eased the pain of leaving a country that they loved dearly. Charles comes from Pioneer stock, so the roots of Rhodesia are well intertwined with those of his own family. (Duff 1998, 16.)

For others, that somewhere, which the sense of belonging refers to, is a time: the ex-Rhodesians long for Rhodesia as a past experience they have shared. They long for a way of life of a by-gone era. In spite of the fact that Rhodesia does not exist anymore, Rhodesia – not so much as a territory, but as a community and a way of life the community is seen to have shared – is present in people's thoughts and talks daily. Thus, following on Greg Urban's line of thought, Karen Armstrong writes that in diaspora, the place of belonging is no longer a lived-in, phenomenal place, it is the remembered and talked about place. (Armstrong 2002, 3., cf. Urban 1996.) But in a sense, in spite of physical

displacement, Rhodesia *is* present in the lived-in worlds of the ex-Rhodesians; the people they associate with – their best friends, their mechanics, their doctors - are very often other ex-Rhodesians, and the houses they live in are furnished with Rhodesian furniture and decorated with Rhodesian memorabilia. Rhodesia is thus present in the objects, in their *belongings*, that have travelled with them.

In the preceding pages, I have laid out some general questions pertaining to my research. The scope of this article will be narrowed down. I will discuss narratives of the two core moments in the ex-Rhodesian self-conceptualization: the immigration into and the emigration from Rhodesia. James Fox, in his introduction to *The Poetic Power of Place* (1997), defines common patterns in narratives that characterize landscape in Austronesian locations.

A prominent feature in many of these narratives is the recounting of a process of domesticating the landscape in which houses and settlements of origin figure prominently as do the memories of previous sites of residence. (...) Equally prominent, as part of the same process, are narratives that define paths through the landscape, setting forth ancestral journeys or recounting the passage of objects from place to place. (ibid., 8.)

In the following, I shall look into the two narratives that “define paths through the landscape.” I will present two shared experiences, two moments of movement, the social memories of which are repeatedly constructed in the self-definition of this particular community: the arrival to and the departure from Rhodesia. These are journeys or paths, the processing of which tie well into broader questions of belonging. The arrival, or the ‘coming out to Rhodesia’ is a pioneer story. It is a story of origins as well as a story of domesticating the landscape. It is a path of excitement, initiative and promise. The journey is vividly described, the physical landmarks carefully crafted. The second journey, that of withdrawal, is silent about the land. The road is quiet, the journey unremarkable. It is a narrative of *belongings*: of lounge suites and dining room tables, of old cars and trailers, of grannies and cats. It is a passage of belongings that can be packed and ferried. The road is the same but the journeys are antithetical. These two paths, and the journeys on them are key elements in the social construction of belonging in this diasporic community.

### **Opening up the Country: The Pioneer Story**

Rough stony road after leaving Mangwe starting Eastwards through thick bush country and turning abruptly towards the North, gradually ascends the Pass, finally coming out on to high ground with extensive view of country to North and West and the endless Motopo Hills to East and North East. The road winds through the hills for some miles and during wet weather is heavy with black mud. Water during dry season can be obtained near most of the Post Stations, and at O’Brien’s Store nine miles from Mangwe and near the Motola Hotel, 8 miles beyond O’Brien’s. The road here is free from the hills and fairly good. Water in spruit near the road. Road runs over undulating open bush

country, sloping to Westwards on the Zambesi watershed. Heavy black mud during rains; water in both rivers. (From Cape to Bulawayo... 1896, 28-29.)

The route chosen for the 1890 Pioneer column<sup>8</sup> was over difficult country, with thick bush and forests cut by many rivers. A road to be hacked to get the wagons through, and over each sandy river bed a track had to be laid with tree trunks. At the larger rivers, where the water was too deep, the wagons were unloaded. The oxen swam over and the men carried the goods across and reloaded the wagons of the farther side – a long and tedious process with 117 wagons to be dealt with. But remorselessly the trek went on, and each night saw them a few miles nearer their destination. (Great Spaces Washed with Sun 1967, 10.)

The first extract is from a book directed to prospective pioneers in the late 1800's. The book describes in elaborate detail every possible practical aspect of travel from the Cape Colony to the Territory of Southern Rhodesia. From the South African port towns of Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London, it was possible to take the train as far as Mafeking (870 miles from Cape Town). From there onwards, one had to rely on coach, horse or mule cart, mule, bullock or donkey wagon, riding, walking or bicycling to reach Bulawayo. The un-named author of the book, who calls himself "One who has done it", i.e. the journey from Mafeking to Bulawayo, describes four alternative routes for the journey. The quote refers to Route number one on his list. (See appendix for a full quote of the route.) The landscape is illustrated in terms of its 'natural' character. The text describes the seasonal variations regarding the passability of the road, it depicts landmarks that can be used for orientation, it comments on the thickness or openness of bush as features of the vista, but importantly, as markers of orientation without the moral connotations attached to 'openness' or 'emptiness' in subsequent pioneer accounts.

In its form, the 'Route number one' is like a screenplay. The column (see Appendix) on the left consists of fragments relative to landmarks and physical survival: "Kop on west of road. Water in well belonging to coach contractors." The second column lists names of places and mileage in-between them: "to Mahosa Kop 12 to Litching 16". In its fatiguing repetition, the reader can almost sense the road and the slow movement along it. A very slow movement indeed, since the 525-mile journey from Mafeking to Bulawayo took two months to cover on ox-wagon. (E. g. Baxter 1975, 29.) It is interesting that the 'openness', 'emptiness', 'namelessness' and 'historylessness' so often linked with the pioneering accounts of experiencing the landscape, is not to be found in the first text. On the contrary, it carefully lists local language names of hills and rivers: Mahosa Kop, Lotsani River, Seruli River and so on. The text also notes the names of the chiefs whose territories the roads were passing, in this section of the route, Chief Khama. Significantly, it marks the concrete extensions of colonial rule to the ground: wells belonging to coach constructors, stores, hotels, post offices, border police, customs and the like. In short, it depicts a lived-in, historically contextualized landscape.

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<sup>8</sup> The pioneer column consisted of the Pioneer corps, a force of 212 men, 16 of whom were civilian, raised to occupy Mashonaland in 1890 and an escort of 500 police of the British South Africa Company. The troopers of the Pioneer corps were each to receive 3000 acres and 15 gold claims on the

Such physically detailed and historically contextualized descriptions of the landscape stand in certain contraposition to how Jean and John Comaroff, among others, discuss missionary writings on passages to the field in the Southern African landscape. “African landscape was presented [in the missionary writing] as virgin, devoid of society and history, waiting passively to be watered and tilled by evangelical effort. The texts [portrayed] the ‘dark continent’ as a vacant stage on which to enact a Promethean myth.” (1991, 172.) The Comaroffs continue to note that the journey from the coast to the interior became for the missionaries a certain rite of passage, the retelling of which lay in the belief that the author’s passage was emblematic in itself and hence worthy of record. However, although the physical environment that the travellers’ and the missionaries’ paths crossed consisted of the same geographical features, the same desert and bush, the same rivers and *kopjes*, the implications of the landmarks were different to different travellers.

The second text does not relate to exactly the same road, but the geographical landscape is more or less the same. Whereas the first traveller’s narrative is a description of what was there, the second narrative is more of a description of what was lacking, i.e. proper roads and bridges. The focus is laid on the trek itself as well as on the prominence of the destination looming in the horizon. It is direction and speed that define the journey. Thus, rather than being about geography, this one is about landscape woven into a story of a mission. Whereas the ‘Route number one’-text is a first-hand account offering journeying information, the second one is retrospection on the journey. By the time of its writing, the pioneer journey had become firmly structured by conventions of narrative. It had become a mythical origin story.

In the first account, the reader can sense the rhythm of the movement, its percussion on the ground. The latter account is stripped down. The emphasis is shifted from detailed movement towards certain distinguishable categories through which one has to pass in narratives of the kind. The journey has become a *trek*, which is a Dutch word meaning an *organized migration* of people. In the transformation of the landscape story into an origin story, the bush, the forest and the rivers are moved to the background. They constitute an un-named and undefined setting: scenery of obstacles against which the core action can be played out. In a sense, this journey takes place in a blank space. The ‘thick bush and forest’ and ‘each sandy river’ could be any bush, forest or river. Hence, in re-telling the landscape, it is de-decorated. When the rivers and bush and piles of stones become more familiar, when they become individually paced out, seen, smelt and felt, they no longer seem to require meticulous description. For those who have shared the landscape, small allusions are assumed to be adequate to provoke sense, emotion and memory. Thus, through sensually sharing and collectively narrating, the physical landscape comes to be socially constructed.

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arrival to Mashonaland. The police received 4500 acres and a quit-rent. By 1896 there were 5000 Europeans in the country and by 1901 already 11 000. (Palmer 1977, 12; Encyclopaedia Rhodesia)

Hence, if the first extract is a route story, the second one is a root story. It has myth-like quality in a sense that it is a story of the beginning. It connotes to the beginning of the place as well as to the beginning of *us* in the place. This myth inheres a temporal allusion; it refers to a time when the world was the white Rhodesians came to know it achieved its form and location. (Cf. Basso 1990, 115.) The root story is a moral description of a journey though the landscape, towards a destination, a difficult and tedious journey won over by remorselessness of heroic men and a few women. The men on the road in the first account are no heroes. They can become such only in retrospective collective representations. The second narrative account asserts the ancestral journey, the forefathers' handwork that was put into the crafting of the landscape, the "opening up of the country." Meanings attached to the journey unfold in stories and rituals; the voyage of the ancestors is recited both in family histories as well in diasporic commemorations.<sup>9</sup>

The 'new' landscape will come to be woven into a shared framework of knowledge when people experience and sense it similarly. They see the same granite boulders and kopjes, open, yellow-grassed stretches of land, they feel the caressing wind, they smell the fragrance of sun-burnt earth and the sweetness of flora, "the fragrance of the promised land" as one author (Mansfield, year ?, 50.) phrased it. It is a socially replicated complex of sensation. But this shared experience is subsequently elevated to another level, a level, which can be referred to as metareplication. (See Urban 1996.) It means that in telling stories of landscape and of journeying the landscape people are linking their individual memory, experience and knowledge to a familiar corpus. One journey narrative, for example, is never the exact replica of another, but it is always similar enough, in its form and contents, for the participants to recognize as a particle of the corpus.

In the ancestral story the country is being opened up: the road is crafted both concretely and metaphorically. Allow me to quote two poetic versions of the story to indicate the recurrence of both the theme and the way the experience is narrated:

This road we built for you  
But son, no single mile we made  
Without long toil, we few!  
Remember then these dauntless hands,  
That built this road for you

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<sup>9</sup> The path of the pioneer column was reproduced and re-enacted in 1990, in a centenary commemoration of the column's arrival to Fort Salisbury a hundred years before. A temporary pilgrimage site for ex-Rhodesians was constructed in South Africa near the Zimbabwean border for the ceremony to take place. The site was named *Rhodesianaland*. The action was 'reproduced' as carefully as possible following the many existing historical accounts and pictures about the raising of the flag in 1890.

-Kingsley Fairbridge<sup>10</sup>

Once a column came a-marching  
 In the long, long, long ago,  
 And they came to found a country  
 That the world would come to know;  
 It was built on toil and courage  
 Out of what was wilderness:  
 So they gave us this our country  
 To preserve and ever bless.  
 -Jack Watson<sup>11</sup>

The full significance of both crafting roads and of being on the road fall beyond the scope of this article. But in pioneer reminiscences the road is invariably present. It is repeatedly emphasized that the earliest pioneers were making the roads themselves, by their own hands, which implicitly refers to the fact that in latter years heavy manual labor was work done by Africans. Building roads is of course about connecting places, making possible the transportation of people and goods. Thus, in much of the Rhodesian narrative canon the road is the key symbol of progress and modernization. I was incessantly reminded of one Rhodesian invention, the strip road – two parallel strips of concrete, bituminised stone or asphalt macadam laid on a dirt road. (The Rhodesian Book of the Road 1974, 8-9, see also Focus on Rhodesia 1978(?), 11.) The strip roads “became such a feature of the Rhodesian scene that at the end of 1969 three sections, no longer used as main roads, were declared national monuments” (Encyclopaedia Rhodesia 1973, 346).

But in addition to building on the land, being on the move, travelling and traversing the land are equally significant. In the life-historical interviews I conducted landscape and motion were almost inseparable. Landscape was known by moving through. Based on the South African model, land in Rhodesia in the early days of occupation, was measured in morgens. According to Robin Palmer, it became a custom in the South African ‘frontier’ that a man could possess all the land within half-an-hour’s ride from his house on the center, equalling to about 3000 morgen (6350 acres). (1977, 19.)<sup>12</sup> This pioneering understanding of the interconnectedness of space and movement seems to have persevered. In remembering Rhodesia, the experience of the wilderness is inseparable from the independence and freedom of movement. Rhodesia is remembered as a place “where one can go without fear on an open road” ( Spurling 1994, 6). Consequently, the ex-Rhodesian life-histories seemed to be not so much memories of place as they were memories of movement between places.

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<sup>10</sup> Quoted in Maclean 1974, 139.

<sup>11</sup> Quoted in Bolze and Raim 1966. Lyrics to a winning song in the National Song Contest.

<sup>12</sup> William Beinert notes that morgen was an old Dutch measuring unit, which only gained this interpretation in South Africa. (Personal communication, July 2000.) One Cape Morgen equals to 2.12 English Acres; 47,24 Cape Morgens is equal to 100 English Acres. (Forbes and Ross 1910, 34.)

It is also significant that both of the above verses were quoted in books published after 1965, when Unilateral Independence was declared in Rhodesia. The extreme nationalism of the moment engendered and increased the demand for such origin narratives, narratives of dedication, handwork and loyalty. The fact that the country was occupied by settlers rather than administrators has played a significant part in the white Rhodesian self-conceptualization. Although the majority of whites, throughout Rhodesia's history, were born outside of its boundaries, the whites seemed to feel that they had gained a right to the country – and particularly to the land – through the pioneer occupation. (See Palmer 1977, 12.)<sup>13</sup>

Thus, as I have noted previously, authority and legitimacy to claim a belonging to Rhodesia was, in the ex-Rhodesian discourse, most strongly granted to those who could establish a genealogical connection with the pioneers. Let me narrate one such story, which is exemplary of this. It is a story of a 17-year-old young man 'coming out to Africa'. The author, Yvonne, is his great-granddaughter, a woman in her late thirties, a mother of two school-aged children and a wife of a well-to-do husband. She is currently writing a book about her family's history in Rhodesia, reading through diaries and letters; thus, she is very familiar with the story she's narrating. She is also an analytical and self-reflexive storyteller, giving thought to various motivations and hopes and fears that her forefathers might have entertained.

My great-great grandfather was in the civil service in India. So my great-grandfather was born in India. He went and he got a British school education, probably one of the better middle-class boarding schools. He had been at a university in Germany for a year and his father came and saw how he was spending his time and decided he wasn't spending it well enough, and so he was given the ultimatum that he must stop wasting money and go and do something useful. So he was sent out to Africa, because "There were lots of opportunities for young men in the colonies!" So he came full of idealism. He was 17 when he arrived, young and naïve and full of ideals. Not knowing what he was going to do. I've got letters that he wrote on board the ship that he sailed on where he says: "Some of the men here say that there are many opportunities in a place called Bulawayo in Rhodesia. So I think I might go up there." So that's what he did. His letters are very optimistic and full of bravado, but later he admits that he was terrified. He really didn't have a clue!

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<sup>13</sup> In a book *White Tribes of Africa* (1965) Richard West writes a critical account of the Rhodesians: "The Rhodesians are a weirdly neurotic lot (...) They're obsessed with the myth of the pioneer, although most of them came to the country since the war. Nine out of ten of them live in towns, yet they still like to imagine themselves as intrepid settlers, heirs of the men who came with the covered wagons and fought with the Shangani Patrol." (Quoted in *Illustrated Life Rhodesia* 1971, 10.)

He came up from Cape Town. He got as far as Mafeking and then got stuck in that part of the world because he ran out of money. And he worked as a sort of a bartender-cum-accountant-cum-everything in a little hotel in some place out in the middle of no-where. There was the hotel and 12 white people associated with the hotel in one way or another. And then there was a location of the kraal, something like 12 000 black people just near-by. During that time, at one point, he got lost in the veld and he nearly died. And that made an impression on him, and the chap that he was with, he did die. They went off thinking they were going to shoot some buck and went following after the buck. And then suddenly they didn't know where they were so they parted company. And his friend became lion food. By strike of luck he (Great-grandfather) was rescued.

He was then recruited for a force of soldiers that were going up to the Matabele rebellion at the time. So he joined the column, the Matabeleland relief column that went up to Bulawayo. And so that was his introduction into the country. He had thought that he was going to go up there and sell vegetables, kind of be a farmer. And instead he went up as a volunteer soldier. Of course, being young and British, they had this very gung-ho attitude to war! Kind of like: Haven't seen a battle yet! But he wanted to get in there and see some action and eventually he did and that was good for him. Because he was a young man in search of adventure.

This family-historical narrative ties in with questions I have tried to elaborate in this article so far. It traces out the paths leading to Rhodesia, mapping out a very colonial scene. The great-grandfather came from an Anglo-Indian civil servant family, obviously attended a public school in England, and consequently was sent to Africa, because 'there were opportunities for young men of his class and background in the colonies.' Thus, he fits extremely well with the general idea of a gentlemanly colonial. He travelled the route described earlier on this chapter, and Yvonne narrates it in a way that his personal history, like that of her whole family is intertwined with the history of Rhodesia.

She marks his journey by bringing forth a few places significant to the pioneer story. Cape Town was the great-grandfather's entry point to the African continent, just like it was for so many European settlers before and after him. Mafeking was a place of his adventure, his first engagement with wilderness. It was also a starting point for his travel towards the destination, Bulawayo. She punctuates the ancestral story by her great-grandfather's involvements in the significant historical events of the time: the Matabele Rebellion, the Mashonaland Rebellion, the Anglo-Boer war and so on. The

fact that the forefather concretely took part in such major historical episodes solidifies him into an almost mythical character. Yvonne's father, Charles, in recalling the family history, recites the same anecdotal, adventurous instances in his grandfather's entry to Africa, confirming a very established family legend, moreover, a legend the form and contents of which confirms to that of the pioneering story in general.

This pioneering story seems to fit neatly into the shared canonical origin story of white Rhodesians. It needs, however, to be emphasized that such sedimented, circulating stories, "stories of stories of stories" as David Cohen calls them (1994, 21) are not merely re-productions or re-publications of a pioneering genre. Individual hopes and desires always surpass the limits of just one genre of communal narrative. The pioneer imagery reflected in biographical narration is an example of a cultural representation that through time becomes an essential part of the group's self-conceptualization. It does so by sheltering a repertoire of anecdotes and images that seem almost inevitably, even for those individuals most self-conscious and critical about the objectification the genre inheres, to become "personal memories" canonically recited. Life-storytelling is never a mere presentation of remembered experiences. Less so of course when what is 'remembered' is personally experienced through circulating family legends. Stephen Crites, for one, notes that life-storytelling is a recollection of those experiences ordered by the contextual conventions of narration, by the present view of the past (1997, 35; 37.) However, this is not to be interpreted in such a way that the past would self-consciously be 'made' to serve present needs. (Cf. Rosenwald and Ochberg 1992, 6.) The past from the present is available for reinterpretation, for omissions and inclusions, but it cannot as such be unmade.

Selective memory and significant silences are always present in the production of histories. They condense around particularly delicate conditions, which may be rendered unexplainable and unspeakable (Cohen 1994, 247.) They are, as Doris Lessing, in another context puts it: too deep to be vocal (1982, 32.) There are emotions, visions, sensations, agonies and fears that have no narrative forms ready and available to account for them, irrespective of the extent to which they are commonly known and shared within the community. In addition to the conventional,

established and narrativized histories, the social construction of belonging relies on that which is not articulated, which leads me to the silent road of departure.

### **Taking the Gap**

#### *The Leaving*<sup>14</sup>

On the day you were born  
 I breathed love into you,  
 I breathed life into you.  
 Through every storm  
 That lit up your world  
 In split second sheets of silver,  
 I gasped my power into you.  
 I infused my contrasting colours into you  
 Where they blended into harmony.

I cleansed all your hurt  
 With a medicated blue sky;  
 And the essence of me  
 Courses through you veins.

And now,  
 Blood of my blood,  
 Child of my soil,  
 You say you must go,  
 And I cannot stop you.

#### *Peace Dream*<sup>15</sup>

May the mountains standing by you ever guard you.  
 And the rivers wash your spirit bright and green.  
 May the animals and birds sing of the peace that is to come  
 And the glory of the land that might have been.

The disappointment, disillusionment, pain, blankness, sadness and yearning tying in with leaving the country are seldom expressed in the compact and meagre utterances on emigration. However, they are revelatory ways expressed in song and poetry. Whereas the pioneer story was a story of opening up the land, the emigration story, like these lyrics illustrate, is a story of closing off the landscape. The scorching sky, the soil of sweat and dust, the flooding, impassable rivers of the pioneer passage are metamorphosed in the lyrics of leaving. In both of these departure poems, it is the animated elements of

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<sup>14</sup> The poem was written Yvonne, when she was 18, four months before her family emigrated from Zimbabwe to South Africa. (Duff 1998, 17.)

nature that nurture. While the pioneering landscape is depicted as full of hazard and danger, something that has to be overcome and survived, the landscape of emigration poetry is protective, tender and caressing. But it is sealed-off to a never-materializing future, into a *land that might have been*.

As part of my research, I had wanted to compare the two experiences of being on the road, the journeys in and out. I wanted to see how the ex-Rhodesians crafted their departure concretely into the ground. Quite irritably our material sometimes fights against our attempts to squeeze it in our neat little structures. The recollections of the actual departure journey were, more often than not, brief and prompt<sup>16</sup>, precise lists of things packed. Rather than speaking of the road, they spoke of packing-up their home and attempts to unpack it in South Africa. Between these two solids is the inevitable gap. The ex-Rhodesians themselves often refer to their leaving as gapping, which very appropriately describes the experience. According to the Collins English dictionary (1995)

A **gap** is 1) a space between two things or a hole in the middle of something solid. 2) A period of time when you are not busy or when you stop doing what you normally do. 3) If there is something missing from a situation that prevents it being complete or satisfactory, you can say that there is a gap.

In other words, when the ex-Rhodesians speak of gapping, they refer to a specific space, to a particular period of time and to a key event. The silence of the route out of the country speaks of the gap. The promptness and brevity, the factuality and lack of emotion in narratives of leaving speak for those who have shared the experience of emigration.

Most emigration narratives were silent about the actual journey. Most people drove down and there was nothing spectacular about driving down to South Africa. There was nothing remarkable about the road. Unlike those people who were immigrating to places like Australia or New Zealand, the ones gapping to South Africa, knew exactly what they were coming to. The white Rhodesians had regularly spent their holidays on the South African shores, either in Durban or on the Cape peninsula. Fishoek, a small pensioner town on the road to the Cape of Good Hope, was referred to as 'Rhodesia-by-the-sea'.<sup>17</sup> Likewise, the ones who had come towards Durban knew the road, they knew the time it would take them to cover the distance. They knew where they would stop to have lunch and to refuel. Most didn't speak of the road, most didn't mention closing the doors or bidding farewells. When they did talk about crossing the border, they did not talk about leaving the country; they talked about the exchange controls and worries about getting caught at the customs.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> First verse of a ballad by Clem Tholet. (The Rhodesia Centenary Album 1890-1990.) Tholet was one of the most popular patriotic songwriters in Rhodesia. He is the son-in-law of Rhodesian Prime Minister, Ian Smith.

<sup>16</sup> Karen Armstrong notes a similar thing in the Karelian evacuation narratives that she has studied. (2001, forthcoming.)

<sup>17</sup> There used to be a hotel by that name in Fishoek. Holidays from Rhodesia were sponsored by the Rhodesian State Lottery "for those who weren't quite so well off as others" (Storry 1990, 11).

<sup>18</sup> There is of course always the exception to the rule. Felix's emigration story rewinds the pioneer narrative, reversing the route from Bulawayo to Mafeking. He tells about his emigration in a telegraphic style – a style distinctly different from his usual lengthy pondering sentences: "I came down by train. I came down October 21<sup>st</sup> 1981. I left Salisbury. I went down to Bulawayo by train.

When they did share their emigration experiences with others, it was sufficient to minimize the experience into a snapshot. The brief and anecdotal coverage of the experience of leaving was a very typical way of creating a bond of togetherness and of mutual understanding by saying very little. In tracing the experience, the men in particular, often seemed to try to out-do each other in the extent of roughness they'd had to put up with when taking the gap.

I was once present in a conversation where two ex-Rhodesians met for the first time. They had been conversationally mapping each other out over drinks for some time. Such charting dialogue seemed always to include the establishing of one another's emigration experience. Stuart and Ken covered the experience very briefly:

‘Do you know that for the first two weeks in South Africa I lived on a balcony in Hillbrow [a not-so-nice suburb in Johannesburg],’ Ken said.  
‘Well, I lived at Jan Richter<sup>19</sup> for four months!’ Stuart boasted.

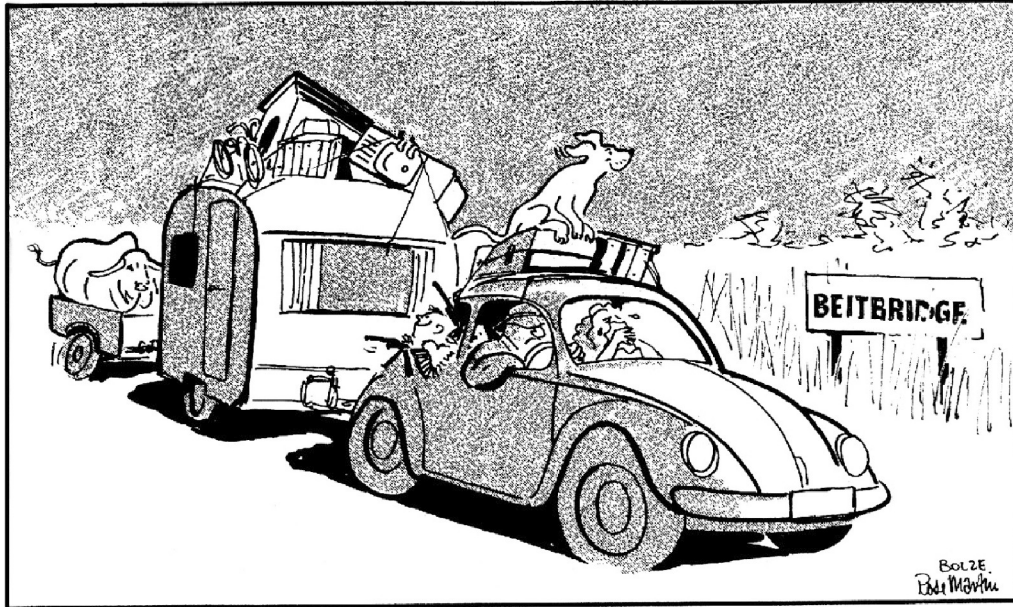
And then they both laughed amicably. They knew - without having to spell it out - the significance of highlighting the very basic, even rough, living conditions they had had to put up with. When you are living on somebody's balcony, you are truly homeless: You've left behind your home, your family and your belongings. The names of these places carry these shared experiences. The recital of the placenames was sufficient to call forth memories. There is no need for further explication or analysis. When they speak of the balcony or the boarding house, they spoke of the journey and of the way of life, which was left behind. In so doing they expressed a shared membership in the community of Rhodesian exiles. Keith Basso speaks of the way that the Apache placenames frame historical narratives, which recount events that bear abiding moral significance for the members of the community. (1990, xvi.) Shrinking the emigration experience – a key historical event in making the exile community – into a compact exchange of placenames, is to my mind exemplary of a similar phenomenon.

But if the people seldom spoke in so many words about the exile road, what did they speak about? They spoke of their belongings. In every house I visited I felt as if I was also ‘introduced’ to the furniture and told about its packing and removing. I was told how appalling the exchange controls had

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Visited the folks-in-law down there, said good-bye to them. I kissed the ground of the Bulawayo station before I left. The longest railway platform in Africa. I climbed on the train with what I could basically carry. Into the luggage compartment. Emigrants were not allowed to take very much with them. There were so many restrictions. All your white goods. Car. God knows what. Then that train left. It was in the evening. Nice warm October day. Pulled out and I remember it went through Plumtree and I remember looking back and seeing the Ramaquabane border, the Rhodesia Railways had marked the border with corrugated iron sheet on poles. And I remember looking out of the window and I saw it go by. [Snaps his fingers.] Ramaquabane. [Snaps] The River. That little river.” (Felix 3)  
<sup>19</sup> During my fieldwork, I lived next door to Jan Richter, an unattractive block of flats originally built for student accommodation. Later on it became a boarding house. Today it offers accommodation for the elderly. The rooms are very small. In his interview, Stuart had elaborated on the room: “I actually lived there in a room that you couldn't have got that couch into it. (He points at an ordinary sized sofa that sits three people.) There was a bed and on that side was a basin and at the end of the room there was a shower. And there was a sort of little desk and a sort of shelf at the end of the bed. And that was where I lived for four months.”

been, how difficult it was for them to sell their houses, how little they got for them (how much the houses would be worth now), how they had to sell their new cars and buy old ones, how the money they had to leave in Zimbabwe has shrunk to pittance. The incessant talk about packing and unpacking is about the beginning of an exile community. It is about the arrival of us narrated through the arrival of objects. It is about the collective unpacking of a sense of home.



What you see in this cartoon is illustrative of how the emigration story is generally told. A little old car is towing a heavily loaded caravan, which is pulling a bull-carrying trailer. The car is approaching the border; Beitbridge is the border town between Zimbabwe and South Africa. There is a nuclear family with a sulking father driving the car, wearing a bush hat and a khaki shirt. The mother beside him is crying. The kids on the back seat are playing with their guns. The only enthusiastic member of the family seems to be the dog sitting on the top of the luggage on the roof of the old VW beetle. The family in the picture has obviously packed in everything they could part with, including the kitchen sink.

This particular picture by Louis Bolze and Rose Martin (1978) is presented and represented perpetually in various ex-Rhodesian publications. As such it has become the emblem of the emigration experience. Seeing the picture awakens personal memories and evokes the whole narrative of the gap. The collective experience of emigration and the shared memories of the event seem to be inscribed in the image. The image has the power to trigger those memories, it seems to insist on individual input to the imagery of emigration. It operates as a template onto which people can attach their experiences. (Cf. Armstrong 2002.) Yet, the picture also shapes and structures both the way the event is remembered and the way it is narrated. The very same picture is reprinted in an article, where Yvonne tells about her parents' emigration plans:

As people who prefer not to react impulsively to the challenges of life, Charles and Anne had formulated three contingency plans for emigrating from Zimbabwe. Plan A, in the event of an Angola-type situation, involved Anne loading the kids and a couple of key belongings in the car and making a dash for the border. Plan B, if there was a little more time and less panic, allowed for packing a container to send out of the country with the family. Providentially, Plan C prevailed. In August 1980, Charles and Anne, together with their teenage daughters, along with Anne's mother, who was living with them at the time, moved "down south" with all their belonging, plus the cat and the dog. Anne packed *everything* she thought they might need, right down to cushioning fragile possessions in boxes with a year's supply of "Wish" toilet rolls. While the "Wish was used up within a year, there are still a few boxes lurking in the garage that haven't been unpacked yet! (Duff 1998, 17)

The amount of money emigrants were allowed to take out of Zimbabwe was strictly limited. During the 1970's, the nationalist government of Ian Smith had practiced strict exchange controls. Until 1975, a family could take out Rh \$5000 (~US\$ 6000). After that, the amount was lowered to Rh \$1000 per family or Rh \$500 per individual. After Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, President Mugabe carried on with the regulations of Smith's regime. The number of personal effects that could be taken out of the country was limited to clothing, one lounge suite and one dining room suite per family, one bed per person and a car, which was at least four years old. (Eaton 1996, xi.)<sup>20</sup> The regulations varied from year to year and evidently from case to case.

In hushed tones, people whispered how they had either managed to take or considered taking money out of the country. Everybody knew somebody who had spent a lot of money on jewellery, antiques, Persian carpets, leather jackets, ivory etc, hoping to be able to sell them abroad. People enjoyed telling stories of how they had managed to outwit the assessors who would come to check out that regulations were followed when furniture was going to be removed. Marjorie tells in detail, the story of a dining room table.

The classic thing was that dining room table [points to it] cause you couldn't take that. Cause they allowed no dining room stuff. No dining room, no lounge. I was literally bedroom. But you could take kitchen tables. Now, this is Stuart's mother's. And before we left, we had that re-done, and it was re-surfaced and polished. And I said: "All right, we've gotta take this. What can I do with it?" And I phoned the people who had re-varnished it and I said: "If I stick contact plastic on that table, will it ruin? When I pull it off, will it take all that varnish?" And they said: "No, put Vaseline on the back of it but let it stick on the side and underneath." And then he said: "But why are you asking?" And I said: "I'm not prepared to tell you on the phone." I was that nervous. And that's what we did. So that it looked like a kitchen table. (...) And the furniture removal people used it in the kitchen all day and it was the last thing they put in as the kitchen table. Well, we got it here and we peeled it off. (Marjorie 2)

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<sup>20</sup> An article in the *Illustrated Life Rhodesia* in August 1978 explores how emigrating Rhodesians attempted to move out their assets: "Sales of high quality furniture have increased in recent months because Rhodesians are converting the money they can't take from the country into assets they can shift. With only the permissible \$ 1000 in their pockets, when they leave the country, most emigrating Rhodesians have a tough time setting up a new home elsewhere, so more and more of them are

Sitting in the lounge, surrounded by their familiar, comfortable Rhodesian furniture, Marjorie and Stuart appeared very settled. There was the Zeederberg lounge suite, that Marjorie sneaked out of the country with a help of a friend, the heroic dining room table, old armchairs decorated by rose-printed cushions by the un-used fireplace, framed re-prints of Baines' Victoria Falls, Stuart's impressive collections of Rhodesian knives, beermugs, stamps, copper plaques, maps, spoons and the like. "We are comfortable, we brought home and Rhodesians do this." I was often told.

Thus, they "brought home" in things that travel. When I compared photographs of people's Rhodesian interiors to their contemporary South African ones, they very often looked like replications. I recognized the lounge suites, the cupboards, the sideboards, the tables, the landscape paintings and the photographs. Things – ordinary, everyday things like tables – however, gather new meanings when they travel. The significance of Marjorie's dining-room table rests on these very aspects: its ordinariness and its history of mobility. The table is authentic, and in its authenticity, it interlaces the lost home and the present place of dwelling, where people endeavour to re-establish that home. The dining-room table thus bears a metonymic connection to the 'proper place'. Furthermore, its symbolic meaning is also grounded in the fact that it is something that survived. People may have made haphazard choices about what to take with them and what to leave behind when they were taking the gap. But once an object has managed to travel and arrive safely, it becomes something that carries its own life-history. As something that has survived, it speaks of that which was lost and demolished.

According to Anna Bohlin, who analyzes the display of objects at the District Six<sup>21</sup> museum in South Africa, such objects evoke "the full social and cultural setting of which they used to be part. In this way, the objects can be regarded as material aspects of a 'myth', evoking the narrative of District Six." (Bohlin 1998, 175-176.) Although the Rhodesian homes were in most cases not demolished, they were given up and left behind. In wrapping up, packing and ferrying the belongings, the homes were wrapped up conclusively. In this sense, the surviving items can be likened to the objects Bohlin is referring to, objects that have the power to call forth the whole setting of a home of which they once were part.

Many ex-Rhodesians claimed that they could always tell a Rhodesian home. "We all have the same things." These *same things* referred to *Wilgrove* tableware, things made of copper, such as trays or clocks in the shape of the Rhodesian map, re-prints of Rhodesian landscapes, brass wall plaques, stone sculptures, baskets, fabrics, Rhodesian books and so forth. What is interesting is that many of these items were largely missing from the pictures of their 'proper' Rhodesian homes. This is memorabilia by and large produced but even more often obtained *post*-Rhodesia. These are items purchased on visits to Zimbabwe after emigration. These are gifts from their South-Africanized children. This is

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attempting to take their homes on their backs, or at least enough in the way of furniture to be able to feather their new nests. (17.8.1978, 17.)

<sup>21</sup> District Six was a multi-racial residential area in central Cape Town demolished during the Apartheid years. The area has never been rebuilt and the deserted land "acts as a powerful icon symbolising the pain and humiliation of apartheid" (Bohlin 1998, 171.)

memorabilia made as such. People do not consciously differentiate between these elements – the metonymic and the memorabilia objects. Together they form the pleasantness and ease of home. These objects, however, refer to different directions. The metonymic objects, ordinary everyday items - but items, which have taken the gap - refer both to the past lost home and to the continuity of a sense of home. The memorabilia objects, however, are objects, which do not hold a direct connection to past places. Yet, they awaken deep memories connected to places. The memorabilia objects refer to Rhodesia in a particular way: they are essential in creating a sense of belonging to the exile community.

In a sense then, the ex-Rhodesians did “bring homes” as they say. But they have also created Rhodesian ‘showcases’, shared representations of home as Rhodesia. Through these collections, through the travelling furniture, through poetic sealing off of landscape, they can hold Rhodesia as home. In re-membling their kitchen tables and lounge suites, they are putting together things that have been separated. Thus, in a way, home does travel, but during its journeys it is re-surfaced in layers the scraping of which I have attempted to do in this article. Communities in exile cannot build their sense of belonging solely on the past places, on leaving and loss. A sense of belonging is both discursively and practically constructed within the realms of the new place.

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**APPENDIX: Route number one.** (Source: From the Cape to Buluwayo; or how to travel to Rhodesia through British Territory by one who has done it. 1896. Vryburg: Townsend and Son.)

<p>Kop on west of road. Water in well belonging to coach contractors</p>	<p>To Mahosa Kop 12 to</p>
<p>Road begins to get a little sandy; good grazing and water. Animals should have good rest here before the very last trek into Palapye.</p>	<p>Litching 16 to</p>
<p>Very heavy sand, the worst piece of road on the line. Stores and accommodation. No liquor; post and telegraph office; blacksmith; Customs office; outstation Bechuanaland Border Police; native town of chief Khama.</p>	<p>Palapye 7  (Total 320 miles)</p>
<p>Heavy sand all the way; about a mile beyond the town the road descends a long stony hill, which should be taken carefully.</p>	<p>to Lotsani River 7</p>
<p>Sandy ground through bush and trees. Water obtained by digging in bed of river. There is a Post Station near Baobab tree half way, with water in pit dug by coach contractors. ---</p>	<p>to Seruli River 18 to (---)</p>
<p>Rough stony. Road after leaving Mangwe starting Eastwards through thick bush country and turning abruptly towards the North, gradually ascends the Pass, finally coming out on to high ground with extensive view of the country to North and West and the endless Motopo Hills to East and North East. The road winds through the hills for some miles and during wet weather is heavy with black mud.</p>	<p>(Total 462 miles)  to  Shashi or Shashani River  25 to</p>
<p>Water during dry season can be obtained near most of the Post Stations, and at O'Brien's Store nine miles from Mangwe and near the Motola Hotel, 8 miles beyond O'Brien's. ---</p>	<p>Fig Tree 9 to Bukutwani River</p>
<p>Road runs over undulating open bush country, sloping to Westwards on the Zambesi watershed. Heavy black mud during rains; water in both rivers.</p>	<p>9 to Khama River 8 to Buluwayo 12</p>
<p>Through open bush, stretches of heavy going in rains.</p>	<p>(Total 525 miles)</p>