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'I would have sat on that particular fence' - Whiteness, Liberals and Radicals in Southern Rhodesia, 1953-1965

University of **BRISTOL**

'I would have sat on that particular fence'[1]– Whiteness, Liberals and Radicals in Southern Rhodesia, 1953-1965

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[1] Terence Ranger, *Writing Revolt: An Engagement with African Nationalism, 1957-67* (Woodbridge: James Currey, 2013), p.165.

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

CACBA – Citizens Against the Colour Bar Association

CAS – Capricorn Africa Society

RF – Rhodesian Front

IASR – Interracial Association of Southern Rhodesia

NDP – National Democratic Party

SRANC – Southern Rhodesia African National Congress

UDI – United Declaration of Independence

ZANU – Zimbabwe African National Union

ZAPU – Zimbabwe African People's Union

TERMINOLOGY

Rhodesia/Zimbabwe

Four contested terms exist: Southern Rhodesia (self-governing British colony, 1923-1965), Rhodesia (independent settler-ruled state, 1965-1979), Rhodesia-Zimbabwe (British protectorate, 1979-1980) and Zimbabwe (independent, majority-ruled nation from 1980).

Here, 'Rhodesia' refers collectively to its settler colony and independent settler state inceptions under White domination and 'Rhodesian' for those identifying with its sovereignty. 'Zimbabwe' and 'Zimbabwean' refers to its imagination pre-1980, and those identifying with this, as well as its national identity post-1980. This emphasises one formation did not simply replace the other but coexisted along racial fault lines.

Liberal/Radical

'Liberal' and 'radical' refer here to two White groups opposing Rhodesian White supremacism. Liberals are those pursuing multiracial partnership during the 1950s; radicals those who joined Zimbabwean nationalist organisations. Collectively, I use the term 'non-conformists'. [2]

Black/White

 'Black' and 'White' are used rather than 'African' and 'European', as phenotypical labels are subject to racial construction with significance beyond geographical origin. Source excerpts use lowercase 'black' and 'white'. Otherwise, I capitalise both to reflect shared experiences and reinforce 'White' as a racialised identity.[3]

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[2] Joshua Pritchard, 'Race, Identity, and Belonging in Early Zimbabwean Nationalism(s), 1957-1965' (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of Cambridge, 2018), p.14.
[3] Nell Irvin Painter, 'Why "White" should be capitalised, too', *The Washington Post,* (22 July 2020) https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/07/22/why-white-should-be-capitalized/, [Accessed: 21 March /2022].

INTRODUCTION

In 1962, British historian and activist Terence Ranger responded to a friend's concerns regarding Ranger's involvement with the Zimbabwe African People's Union ('ZAPU'), whose liberation struggle was beginning to turn violent:

> I am much afraid that I will do what you want me to do – retire to the fence […] [But] while I can be on a side, I intend to be on it. If you were here, you might understand the most wretched sweeps of all are our fence sitters.[4]

Ranger was part of a small group of White non-conformists opposing White supremacist politics in Rhodesia during the 1950s and 1960s. As decolonisation swept across Africa, Rhodesia's White settlers defiantly 'dug in', amplifying institutional and ideological racism into an autonomous supremacist state with the Unilateral Declaration of Independence ('UDI') in 1965.[5] First as liberal proponents of multiracial partnership under the Central African Federation ('the Federation'), and latterly as radical supporters of Zimbabwean nationalism, Ranger and his fellow non-conformists seemed to contradict the essence of Rhodesian whiteness. However, Ranger's statement conveyed a more uneasy relationship with his activism, one circumscribed by identities and anxieties, which placed him and his fellow non-conformists in a liminal space between their whiteness and political sympathies.

This dissertation examines this liminal position by inverting academic inclinations to understand non-conformists around their differences from White settlers. Instead, it uses 'whiteness' as a tool to question how they were shaped by the power structures and identities which underpinned White supremacy in Rhodesia and argues that these produced ambivalences within White activism which circumscribed their solidarities.

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[4] 'Terence Ranger to Peter Dyson, 5 October 1962', Oxford, Bodleian Libraries. Ranger Papers, JSTOR ['Ranger Papers'] < https://jstor.org/stable/al.sff.document.ranger00130> [Accessed: 23 March 2023].
[5] Luise White, *Unpopular Sovereignty: Rhodesian Independence and African Decolonisation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), p.4.

It makes three interventions. First, it examines non-conformists as racialised White subjects, demonstrating how their activism and identities were shaped by mentalities of race in Rhodesia and the British Empire. This, secondly, addresses the illusion that post-war Rhodesian whiteness was anomalous by demonstrating how settler racism, and challenges to it, operated from within shared imperial conceptions of race. Finally, it uses non-conformists to demonstrate how whiteness became contested as World War II and decolonisation exposed it as a racialised subjectivity. This provoked attempts to re-imagine whiteness and separate it from its Rhodesian manifestation. John Darwin argues British imperial identity was not static, but a 'battleground' where 'different versions of Britishness competed for space'.[6] So too was its decline, where non-conformist activists produced alternative visions of whiteness, hesitantly lying between a White imperial past and imagined multicultural future.

This hesitancy is critical to understanding racial constructions today. George Floyd's murder and the 2020 Black Lives Matter ('BLM') movement provoked acknowledgement both that the violent racist past persists in 'post-racial' society and that systems of White privilege complicated the White solidarity BLM induced. Public discourse responded by re-centring continued Black experiences of racism. However, there remains reluctance to investigate modern racism beyond violent expressions and understand how and why White anti-racism tacitly reproduces systems it vocally opposes. By engaging with the experiences of White activists in Rhodesia, this study unpacks the origins of this process through decolonisation and how post-colonial whiteness remains complicated by racial logics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study exists at the intersection of current research into decolonisation, whiteness and Western anti-colonialism in Zimbabwe and wider contexts.

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[6] John Darwin, *Unfinished Empire: The Global Expansion of Britain* (London: Penguin, 2013), p.293.

Whiteness, Rhodesia and Decolonisation

Luise White argues histories of Zimbabwe's decolonisation have been flattened into a 'historiographic binary', offering a teleology of White Rhodesia becoming Black Zimbabwe, with corollary identities of 'White Rhodesian' and 'Black Zimbabwean'. [7] This results from a tendency to read Rhodesian history through the lens of UDI. As Britain wound down its empire and agitation for majority rule intensified, White Rhodesian settler militancy escalated, resisting Britain's 'No Independence Before Majority Rule' policy. With UDI, the Rhodesian Front ('RF') government compounded Rhodesia as 'the White man's country', entrenching racial discrimination, whilst purportedly upholding the faltering legacy of British imperial prestige and Anglo-Saxon vitality. [8] Rhodesian whiteness thus elided with defence of minority supremacy, with blackness synonymous with the struggle for majority rule, a fault line underpinning Rhodesia's post-1965 status as a global pariah.

Historians on either side of this binary share a chronology, narrating Rhodesia's colonial foundation through Cecil Rhodes's pioneer-column in 1889 and the establishment of segregationist policies through the electoral franchise, land distribution and a colour bar, entrenched with responsible self-government in 1923.[9] This laid the foundations, after the Federation interlude, for the RF's election in 1962 and the Liberation War from 1966. Whilst one approach narrates the rise and fall of the White state, since 1966 revisionists, led by Ranger, challenged this White grip on historical agency to chart the growth of Zimbabwean nationalism from the First Chimurenga/Umvukela uprisings (1896-7).[10] This compressed whiteness into a singular identity of supremacist oppression, consistent from 1896 until 1980. This remains important as the prism through which Black Zimbabweans experienced whiteness. Nationalist leader Ndabaningi Sithole explained whiteness presupposed the 'sub-human inferiority of other human beings compared with the super-humanity of the white man'.[11]

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[7] White, 'Unpopular Sovereignty', p.18.
[8] Donal Lowry, 'Rhodesia 1890–1980: 'The Lost Dominion' *Settlers and Expatriates over the Seas,* ed. Robert Bickers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p.113, 126, 145.
[9] David Martin and Phyllis Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe* (Harare: Faber and Faber, 1981), pp.35-65.
[10] See J.R.T Wood, *So Far and No Further!: Rhodesia's Bid for Independence During the Retreat from Empire, 1959-1965* (Victoria: Trafford Publishing, 2005); Ranger, *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia, 1896-7: A Study in African Resistance* (London: Heinemann 1967).
[11] Ndabaningi Sithole, *African Nationalism*, 2nd edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp.121-2.

This binary is likewise pivotal to cultural histories of Rhodesian whiteness, as the salient social division which diminished other complexities. Dane Kennedy illustrates how settlers upheld whiteness by constructing psychological and legalised racial hierarchies and boundaries.[12] These built on nineteenth-century scientific racism: the idea of an Anglo-Saxon master race, which expanded physiognomic taxonomies into a racialised hierarchy, underpinning the attached White mission to spread their civilisation to non-White populations: 'what mattered was being white and laying claim to the history of civilisation and responsibility'.[13] Recent scholarship stresses heterogeneity within Rhodesian whiteness, particularly intersections with gender and class.[14] Resurging racial tensions and land disputes post-2000 stimulated investigation of identity in post-colonial Zimbabwe, questioning how White farmers, particularly, establish belonging through shifting discourses of whiteness.[15]

However, there remains reluctance to look beyond Rhodesian whiteness as settler specific. For Donal Lowry, Rhodesian whiteness was an appropriation of British imperial identity, connecting pioneer-settlers and post-UDI nation-building.[16] New imperial histories examining Empire's effects on Britain stress whiteness was 'remade' during decolonisation, with Rhodesia invoked as a cipher for competing ideas of Britishness, dividing between idealisation of lost imperial prestige and rejection of an outdated imperial identity.[17] This latter impulse, and how it operated in Rhodesia itself, remains overlooked.

This study re-focuses on the Federation (1953-1963), part of Britain's 'second colonial occupation'.[18] Through its flagship policy, 'partnership', the Federation trialed alternative versions of White authority as developmental colonialism.[19] This period is often marginalised

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[12]Nicola Ginsburgh, 'White Workers and the Production of Race in Southern Rhodesia, 1910-1980', (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of Leeds, 2017), p.38; Dane Kennedy, *Islands of White: Settler Society and Culture in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1939* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987), p.154

[13] White, 'Unpopular Sovereignty', p.35.

[14]See Ginsburgh; Kate Law, *Gendering the Settler State: White Women, Race, Liberalism and Empire in Rhodesia, 1950-1980* (London: Routledge, 2016.

[15] David McDermott Hughes, *Whiteness in Zimbabwe: Race, Landscape and the Problem of Belonging* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

[16] Lowry, p.144.

[17] Bill Schwarz, *The White Man's World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p.5, 397.

[18] Coined by David A. Low and John Lonsdale, 'Towards the New Order, 1945', *in History of East Africa, Vol. III*, eds. David A. Low and Alison Smith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp.10-12.

[19] Schwarz, p.244.

as a failed experiment, compromised by entrenched settler racism.[20] Through non-conformism, this study illuminates how the 'second colonial occupation' and decolonisation produced competing versions of whiteness, foregrounding the incomplete process by which White identity attempted to sever connections to the colonial past.[21]

Liberals and Radicals

Following independence, 1980s' scholarship largely defined non-conformists through their differences from RF supremacism. Ian Hancock's initial survey explored the plurality of agendas and critiqued limited commitments to African political rights, but distinguished sharply between White supremacism and White non-conformism.[22] Similarly, liberals' own memoirs focused on their vision of a multiracial alternative to the RF.[23] Renewed racial conflict under Robert Mugabe amplified efforts to rehabilitate White politics, with nostalgic explorations of liberal possibilities, primarily Garfield Todd's premiership (1953-1958).[24]

These approaches are themselves an expression of whiteness: the idea that White actors, particularly liberals, were the only potential saviours of Black Africa. Nationalist histories generally ignore White non-conformists. Blessing-Miles Tendi demonstrates this reflects ZANU-PF's stranglehold on post-independence history, maintaining there were 'no "good" white people' in Zimbabwe's struggle.[25] Also, Joshua Pritchard observes, there is a focus on liberal multi-racialists over radicals who joined nationalist parties.[26] Pritchard focuses on White non-conformists' influence in shaping nationalist racial thinking.[27] Whilst this

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[20] Sithole, p.115; Alois Mlambo and Brian Raftopoulos, *Becoming Zimbabwe – A History from the Pre-Colonial Period to 2008* (Harare: Weaver Press, 2008), pp.120-125.

[21] Priyamvada Gopal discusses this continuing phenomenon as 'Imperial Amnesia'; 'Redressing Imperial Amnesia', *Race & Class*, 57 (2016), 18-30, (p.18).

[22] Ian Hancock, *White Liberals, Moderates and Radicals in Rhodesia, 1953-1980* (London: Croom Helm, 1984), pp.1-7.

[23] Hardwicke Holderness, *Lost Chance: Southern Rhodesia, 1945-58* (Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1985).

[24] Dickson Mungazi, *The Last British Liberals in Africa: Michael Blundell and Garfield Todd* (Westport: Praeger, 1999); Ruth Weiss with Jane Parpart, *Sir Garfield Todd and the Making of Zimbabwe* (London: British Academic Press, 1999).

[25] Blessing-Miles Tendi, *Making History in Mugabe's Zimbabwe: Politics, Intellectuals, and the Media* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010), p.128.

[26] Pritchard, pp.14-15.

[27] Pritchard, p.281.

highlights the uncertain positions non-conformists occupied within nationalist spaces, he neglects the reciprocal influence Black nationalism had on White racial discourse.

There remains a reticence around exploring non-conformists' identities *as* Whites and how their political contributions, and historical role, were complicated by the structures they opposed. Clive Gabay partially addresses this, reading liberal, multiracial organisations as imbricated within wider White anxieties, relying on imperial discourses as much as challenging its more violent manifestations.[28]

This dissertation extends Gabay's work to explore how non-conformism challenged traditional visions of whiteness yet remained imbricated in them.

(Anti-)Colonial Activism

This study relies on developing historiography of Western anti-colonial activism. Leela Gandhi illuminates how the liminality of British dissidents in India 'blur[s] the rigid cultural boundaries between West and non-West, coloniser and colonised', seeing dissidents as tools to break the binaries of colonial and early postcolonial histories.[29] However, Edward Said suggests, the 'whole question of imperialism', debated in the nineteenth century 'by pro-imperialists and anti-imperialists alike, carried forward the binary typology of advanced and backward[…] races, cultures and societies'.[30] This distinguishes between actions transgressing racialised boundaries, and knowledge and language, which could remain embedded in racial discourses even as they strove to undermine them. Priyamvada Gopal indicates this tension holds for the twentieth century: Fenner Brockway's anti-imperial activism did not render him 'less immune' to the 'temptations of empire'.[31] Whilst transnational scholarship since the 1990s has emphasised connections within and between Western and non-Western anti-colonialism, the

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[28] Clive Gabay, *Imagining Africa: Whiteness and the Western Gaze* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), p.145.
[29] Leela Gandhi, Julia Adams and George Steinmetz, *Affective Communities: Anticolonial Thought, Fin-De-Siècle Radicalism, and the Politics of Friendship* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), p.2.
[30] Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 2nd edn (London: Penguin, 2003), p.206.
[31] Priyamvada Gopal, *Insurgent Empire: Anticolonial Resistance and British Dissent* (London: Verso, 2019), p.24.

extent to which Western activism remained imbricated in imperial ideologies is now under scrutiny.[32]

This dissertation extends this by discussing how non-conformist identities emerged from tensions between political activism and whiteness, limiting White solidarities.

METHODOLOGY

Whiteness

Coined by W.E.B. Du Bois, whiteness reflects the idea that 'White', alongside other racial categorisations, is socially constructed rather than biological fact, tying White skin to mythologies of superiority.[33] This helps to dissolve the naturalisation of White identities and understand how they re-produce racist systems.[34] Whilst critics point to risks of essentialism and re-capitulation of White agency and racial divisions, Whiteness offers an interdisciplinary tool to step beyond acknowledging racism to exposing how it functions and reproduces.[35] Whilst most scholarship explores whiteness as explicitly racist, I consider how whiteness can be, and has been, projected as anti-racist. Danelle Van-Zyl Hermann and Jacob Boersema note whiteness adapts in context, yet consistently reproduces racial inequalities.[36]

This study uses whiteness first to illuminate racial systems operating in Rhodesia and understand how these structured non-conformists' activism. It follows Ruth Frankenberg's definition of 'structural racial privilege', a 'standpoint' from which White actors see themselves and others and a set of 'unmarked cultural practices'.[37] Secondly, it explores how

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[32] See Jodi Burkett, *Constructing Post-Imperial Britain: Britishness. 'Race' and the Radical Left in the 1960s* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Deanne van Tol, 'The Women of Kenya Speak: Imperial Activism and Settler Society, c.1930', *Journal of British Studies,* 54 (2015), 433-456.

[33] Reiland Rabaka, 'The Souls of White Folk: W.E.B. Du Bois's Critique of White Supremacy', *Journal of African American Studies,* 11 (2007), 1-15, (p.3).

[34] Danelle Van Zyl-Hermann and Jacob Boersema, 'Introduction: The Politics of Whiteness in Africa', *Africa: The Journal of the International African Institute*, 87 (2017), 651–661, (p.653).

[35] Eric Arnesen, 'Whiteness and the Historians' Imagination', *International Labour and Working-Class History*, 60 (2001), 3-32, (p.9).

[36] Van Zyl-Hermann and Boersema, pp.651-652.

[37] Ruth Frankenberg, *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), p.5.

whiteness, as an identity and discourse, is subject to conscious contestation and reconfiguration to deny racial logics inherent within it. It considers intersections between whiteness as an unconscious force and a consciously shifting idea, and how this shapes what it means to be White in supposedly anti-racist spaces.

Sources

Liberals are considered through Hardwicke Holderness and the Interracial Association of Southern Rhodesia ('IASR'), a multiracial pressure group he established in 1952. Radicals are considered through Ranger and his associates John Reed and Peter Mackay.[38] These were chosen for their historical prominence and extensive personal archives.[39] Whilst studied previously, the lens of whiteness approaches this material with different questions and foregrounds overlooked dynamics.

Holderness's and Ranger's papers in the Bodleian Library, Oxford supply the primary database, including letters, material for political organisations and press cuttings, to analyse how race operated on individual and collective identities. Whilst not covering the full breadth of non-conformist activism, these groups, particularly radicals, were small and often tight-knit and the collections help evidence these networks. Currently, only a fraction of Ranger's collection is available. Once catalogued, the full extent will be invaluable to future research.

This study also uses memoirs to probe relationships between whiteness, activism and history. With Ranger, we are dealing, White argues, with 'a history that is deeply embrocated with its historiography'.[40] This complexity has been overlooked. Not all non-conformists produced archives. However, many published memoirs, which, though mined for information, are rarely treated as also laying claims on the memory and history of Zimbabwe's decolonisation.[41] Ruramisai Charumbira highlights that ownership of the liberation struggle narrative is integral

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[38] I use Pritchard's and Ranger's quotations for John Reed's dairies.
[39] This list is not exhaustive. Particularly Guy Clutton-Brock, Molly Clutton-Brock, Eileen Haddon and Shelagh Ranger were prominent figures.
[40] White, 'Terence Ranger in Fact and Fiction,' *The International Journal of African Historical Stu*dies, 44 (2011), 325-331, (p.329).
[41] Only a few examples are used to provide insight into a wider phenomenon.

to both Black and White bids for power in Zimbabwe.[42] Whilst RF Prime Minister Ian Smith's memoir is considered primarily as expressing psychological imperatives of whiteness, non-conformists' memoirs are approached with less scepticism.[43] Yet memoirs are not, Antoinette Burton argues, 'mere after images of history' but interactive sites where identity is configured.[44] Reading memoirs alongside contemporary sources illuminates how non-conformists use history and memory to remake whiteness as an identity.

These memoirs and archives are self-selective presentations, limited to elite, White and male perspectives. To counter this, sources from other perspectives, primarily Zimbabwean nationalists, are employed to contextualise non-conformists' self-presentations. However, it is also in elite configurations that whiteness is often obscure. The departure point for Whiteness studies has, Jodi Burkett indicates, generally been working class racism.[45] However, sociologists are now examining how progressive beliefs underpin elite whiteness and reinvent White superiority into 'White saviourism,' validating retained privilege through performative allyship.[46] Non-conformists' self-presentations help to understand how progressive whiteness simultaneously derives from and denies logics underpinning explicit racism.

This does not mean that non-conformists were *only* elite, White and male or that their identities were solely derived from race. This study provides a foothold for comprehending relationships between whiteness and activism and does not address intersections with gender or ethnic groups beyond phenotypical White and Black constructions, contemporaneously categorised as 'Asians, Indians, Chinese, and Eurafricans'.[47] These offer scope for further research for which this study provides a departure point.

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[42] Rurmisai Charumbira, *Imagining a Nation: History and Memory in Making Zimbabwe* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2005), pp.1-2.
[43] Schwarz, pp.414-6.
[44] Antoinette Burton *Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House, Home and History in Late Colonial India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p.26.
[45] Burkett, p.9.
[46] Robin Diangelo, *White Fragility: Why It's so Hard for White People to Talk about Racism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2018), pp.71-3; Teju Cole, 'The White Saviour Industrial Complex', *The Atlantic* (21 March 2012) <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/03/the-white-savior-industrial-complex/254843/> [Accessed:14 April 2023].
[47] Pritchard, p.8.

STRUCTURE

Two chapters track White activism's evolution. The first examines the liberal movement for multiracial co-operation to explore contemporary structures of whiteness in Rhodesia and how, paradoxically, liberal politics was produced from within these structures, even as they challenged its overtly racist expressions. The second explores how radicals, allying with Black nationalism to overcome this paradox, were confronted by the implications of their White identities, placing limits on their solidarities and invoking further reinventions of whiteness. Together, they argue that whiteness, through decolonisation, was re-imagined to divorce itself from the imperial past yet remained structured by its logics and boundaries.

1. RETHINKING WHITENESS – LIBERALS, 1953-1958

> Some [comments], as you expected, surprised me, such as the power for evil which you attribute to poor old "liberals".[48]

In 1989, Holderness circulated his memoir to many who had joined him in proposing a multiracial future for Rhodesia in the 1950s. These words responded to comments from Zimbabwean nationalist and one-time multiracial advocate, Mike Hove. Hove clearly stung Holderness, whose memoir sought to prove that White liberals had offered a thwarted alternative to RF White supremacism.[49] This chapter explores the emergence of reconfigured imaginations of whiteness in Rhodesia and the British Empire under the Federation through Holderness and his multiracial pressure group, the IASR. It addresses incongruities between Holderness's progressive conception of liberal whiteness and what Hove later deemed its inseparability from White power.

Scholarship largely repeats liberal self-assertions of their differences from Rhodesian settler norms. However, recently, Gabay dismantled these claims, arguing the IASR and Capricorn Africa Society ('CAS') remained imbricated in colonial logic and attempts to revive 'White vitality'.[50] This chapter argues the interplay and contradictions between conscious efforts to reformulate White identity and subconscious racial boundaries constructed an equivocal activism, which reproduced racial hierarchies it aimed to oppose.

Holderness's liberalism was born in the post-1945 world of reform. The Federation was a prime example: an ambitious experiment by Whitehall, imagining a reformed imperial future.[51] Its core, partnership, referred to both territorial alliance with Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Nyasaland (Malawi) and notions of racial inclusiveness and eventual equity. This 'second colonial occupation' was subtler than the violent counterinsurgency in Kenya but shared the objective of consolidating White imperial authority. Although the Federation's economic

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[48] 'Hardwicke Holderness to Mike Hove, 27 February 1989', Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of Hardwicke Holderness, MS.5474/19/2, 2.
[49] Holderness. p.5.
[50] Gabay, p.144.
[51] Schwarz, p.344.

potential and consolidation of White privilege remained paramount, many shared London's desire to halt the spread of South Africa's apartheid as a doomed form of White sovereignty.[52]

Established in 1952 by Rhodesians who had fought during the war and liberal-minded immigrants from Britain post-1945, the IASR advocated a reformed, non-discriminatory version of 'partnership' and White sovereignty, reflected in its own multiracial membership. Their 1953 draft declaration propagated a utopian vision, bringing together people of 'all races' so 'that civilisation shall be available to all its inhabitants […] irrespective of race, creed or colour.' [53] From 1953-1958, the IASR and Todd's liberal government attacked the discriminatory colour bar, seeking to extend Black African access to education and the electoral franchise. This pitted itself against traditionalist settler colonialism and its segregationist 'Native Policy', which subordinated Black African rights and remained central to White political discourse. The First Federal Prime Minister, Godfrey Huggins, referred to partnership between 'Europeans and Africans' as 'the rider and the horse.'[54]

This suggests what it meant to be White in colonial Africa was increasingly contested. Gabay highlights this stemmed from an anxiety-ridden recognition that old-style settler domination had a limited future.[55] The IASR's draft declaration positioned itself against the dual risks that 'Europeans may become "Herrenvolk" and the Africans "Black Nationalists"'.[56] The latter reflected rising risks to White security posed by African anti-colonialism, viscerally embodied by Kenyan Mau Mau insurgency. This, in turn, underpinned protectionist attitudes, both in White supremacy in Rhodesia and the colonial government's violent response to Mau Mau. However, the 'Herrenvolk' reference suggests greater reflexivity. Holderness's politics were shaped by World War II and the implications of Hitler's master race ideologies.[57] Such ideologies were uncomfortably close in apartheid South Africa: 'There are those who look for a solution to the problem in complete separation […] of the races […This] would lead to hatred

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[52] The Afrikaner National Party won the 1948 election establishing a regime based on total White domination through segregation of relations, rights and privileges; Andrew Cohen, *The Politics and Economics of Decolonisation in Africa: The Failed Experiment of the Central African Federation* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2017), p.2.
[53] 'Proposed Interracial Association of Southern Rhodesia – Draft Declaration on African Affairs, 1953', Archive of Hardwicke Holderness, MS.5474/2/2, 1; 'Native Policy' referred to Rhodesia's notoriously discriminatory approach to race relations. See Mlambo and Raftopoulos, pp.97-108.
[54] Quoted in Joshua Nkomo, *The Story of My Life* (London: Methuen, 1984), p.59.
[55] Gabay, pp.164, 169-70.
[56] 'Draft Declaration'.
[57] Holderness, p.23.

and strife […] it is based on a wrong conception of civilisation.'[58] This seemingly had wider resonance. Numerous responses to a questionnaire circulated by the IASR in 1953 to five-hundred individuals deemed sympathetic addressed the 'urgency' of multiracial co-operation and fears of 'fascism' and 'anti-Christian' apartheid.[59] Whilst equally referencing 'Black nationalist' threats, this suggests whiteness was consciously problematised.

Whilst over half of the three-hundred questionnaire responses were positive, many White respondents, even when supportive, challenged the IASR's reformism.[60] Most disputed was the IASR's reference to pre-colonial African 'civilisation', suggesting this should be replaced with 'culture'. Others questioned whether 'inhabitants could effectively control their own people' through local government.[61] Erica Macqueen, later the IASR's acting secretary, stated her support with the 'emphatic exception of abolition of separate counters in post offices […] if it meant queueing with low class Africans smelling to Glory-be'.[62] This underscores the depth of settler racism, which the IASR positioned itself against. This derived from nineteenth-century scientific racism, dividing 'primitive' Black Africans from 'advanced' White Anglo-Saxons, forming the ideological rationale for the imperial civilising mission and White governance, which, as Macqueen's response indicates, was steeped in ideas of physical difference.[63]

For Dickson Mungazi, the contradiction between this racist discourse and liberals' 'positive view of Africans' made liberals part of the anti-colonial struggle.[64] However, the questionnaire responses also suggest reformist multiracial agendas co-existed with embedded racial logics. This ambiguity was facilitated by the IASR's White civilisational standpoint. The declaration stated:

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[58] 'Draft Declaration'.

[59] 'J.A.E. Ralston questionnaire response, 14 May1953', Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of Hardwicke Holderness, MS.5474/5/1, 4; 'John Parry to Hardwicke Holderness', 12 May1953', Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of Hardwicke Holderness, MS.5474/5/1, 4.

[60] Hancock, p.26.

[61] 'Summary of Responses', Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of Hardwick Holderness, MS.5474/5/2, 2.

[62] 'Erica Macqueen questionnaire response, 9 June 1953, Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of Hardwick Holderness, MS.5474/5/1, 3 – Emphasis original.

[63] Cyril Rogers and C. Frantz, *Racial Themes in Southern Rhodesia: The Attitudes and Behaviour of the White Population* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), p.xvii; Andrew Rotter, *Empire of the Senses: Bodily Encounters in Imperial India and the Philippines,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), esp. ch.5.

[64] Mungazi, p.xiii, 8.

African civilisation had a well-developed family and tribal system but…was still primitive in other spheres […] The Europeans brought with them the skills and knowledge of European civilisation. [65]

For the IASR, the 'danger' was that 'Europeans' would abuse this power and 'Africans' oppose them, instead of working 'to acquire the gifts of their civilisation'.[66] Whilst acknowledging pre-colonial African civilisation, this rehearsed ideas of White civilisational superiority and paternalistic stewardship. This reflects Said's analysis of nineteenth-century liberal, anti-imperial critiques, maintaining a vocabulary of White civilisational maturity and non-White immaturity. The veracity of these ideas was seldom questioned, despite clashes over their actioning between imperial proponents and opponents.[67] Furthermore, Bizek Jube Phiri notes, multiracial organisations, particularly the CAS, operated with the blessing of London's colonial government, as vehicles for consolidating colonial control.[68]

This paradox between retained beliefs in White civilisational superiority and opposition to its repressive expressions subtly reconfigured racial discourse. The idea that 'Africans must welcome the opportunities […of] European civilisation […] to take their place in the modern world' made White status accessible to Black participation. For Gabay, this was a shift from the one-way paternalism of pre-war whiteness, despite continuing to operate a 'discriminatory meritocracy'.[69] This distinction was critical in shifting conceptions of White colonisers as monopolistic guardians of African development to the midwives of its autonomous accession to Western modernity. This mythology, Gopal shows, was employed by Harold Macmillan in portraying decolonisation as Western civilisation successfully bringing responsible self-government to Africa.[70] Whilst still conflating whiteness and civilisational maturity, by decoupling civilisational capacity from biological race, it constructed whiteness as the 'wellspring of freedom', detached from past colonial abuses.[71]

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[65] 'Draft Declaration'.
[66] *Ibid.*
[67] Said, p.206.
[68] Bizeck Jube Phiri, 'The Capricorn African Society Revisited: The Impact of Liberalism in Zambia's Colonial History, 1949-1963', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies,* 24 (1991), 65-84, (pp.71-2).
[69] Gabay, p.148.
[70] Gopal, 'Insurgent Empire', p.308.
[71] *Ibid.*, p.311.

This did provide an initial platform for Black participation in mainstream politics during the 1950s. Enoch Dumbutshena recalled that is seemed to most African leaders 'that multiracialism was a thaw in the […] frozen political life in Zimbabwe'.[72] Yet, ZAPU leader, Joshua Nkomo reflected in 1984, this was naïve: the liberal alternative 'lacked the imagination to understand the anger that comes from not being allowed to govern your own lives'.[73] As David Barber notes of White participants in the Civil Rights Movement, their ideas of deracialising society were based on Black integration with White society as the norm.[74]

Furthermore, Nkomo suggests, liberals remained unwilling to relinquish their privileges in directing Black lives. Politics in Rhodesia were White, systematically marginalising Black participation. For elites like Holderness, there were no barriers to involvement with politics in the IASR or becoming an MP in 1954. He fondly remembers 'sundowner parties', where chance meetings with Rhodesian politicians were commonplace.[75] This offered agency to Holderness, in stark contrast to Black activists. Black trade unionist and IASR member Charles Mzingeli highlighted to Holderness in 1954 that autonomous Black industrial organisations were restricted and legislation like the Subversive Activities Bill, although notionally non-discriminatory, was aimed at Black workers by restricting meetings.[76] Activists like Mzingeli could only obtain a political platform through collaboration with White-dominated organisations. Indeed, despite providing a platform for Black political mobilisation, the IASR was not considered antithetical to White authority. An intelligence report to the later Federal Prime Minister, Roy Welensky, in 1953 stated: '[the IASR] is not subversive so far as is known but is being watched'.[77] The IASR's legitimacy, though tenuous, derived from its acceptability within White political discourse.

This created ambiguity for liberals between the visible problems of White racism and invisible ties which drew them back into its hierarchical systems. The IASR's and Holderness's dealing with miscegenation (previously overlooked) demonstrates this. Several questionnaire responses balked at the IASR's draft constitution's vision of 'an integrated society' without

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[72] Quoted in Pritchard, p.58.
[73] Nkomo, p.67.
[74] David Barber, *A Hard Rain Fell: SDS and Why it Failed* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2008), p.16.
[75] Holderness, p.36.
[76] Holderness, pp.72-5.
[77] 'W.S. Parker to Roy Welensky, 29 December 1953', Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Papers of Sir Roy Welensky, MSS. Welensky 284, 4.

'differentiation between people on grounds of race or colour'.[78] For C.R.L. English, this imperilled White racial purity and civilisational progress. Whilst agreeing that the 'appalling problem of race relations' needed addressing, he argued solutions faced an 'insoluble obstacle':

> when liberality has led to equality, and equality to inter racial marriage, <u>what is to [be]come [of] the coloured children?</u> [...Can it...] be a good or decent thing to hand over en bloc the results of centuries of white pioneering and civilisation in Africa to a half-caste population?[79]

This deterministic link between miscegenation and civilisation rehearsed ideas at the heart of Rhodesian whiteness. Munyaradzi Mushonga argues policing sex, particularly between Black men and White women, was key in retaining racial divisions.[80] This was again rationalised by scientific racism and eugenics, casting miscegenation as 'the ultimate dysgenic practice', sapping the virility of White civilisation.[81] This, Frantz Fanon suggested, was the product of psychological anxiety, producing a cycle of mutually reinforcing racial logics.[82] In Rhodesia, this elicited racial violence during repeated moral panics, known as Black Peril, inspired by the perceived threat of sexual assault Black men posed to White women.[83] Whilst Black Peril panics dissipated by 1935, English's rhetoric powerfully invokes such anxieties.

Whilst Holderness and the IASR positioned themselves against such ideas, they could not escape them. The public reaction to an 'integrated society' evidently concerned Holderness. In a document, *'Possible Question - do you believe in social integration?'* attached to his comments on the 1953 *'Report of the Director of Native Affairs'*, Holderness answers: 'I am not in favour of inter-marriage between European and non-European [...] and obviously I am not in favour of illicit intercourse between them'. He continued:

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[78] 'Draft Constitution for proposed Interracial Association of Southern Rhodesia', Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of Hardwicke Holderness, MS.5374/5/1, 1.

[79] 'C.R.L English, questionnaire response, 28 June 1953', Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of Hardwicke Holderness, MS.5474/5/1, 1. – Emphasis original.

[80] Munyaradzi Mushonga, 'White Power, White Desire: Miscegenation in Southern Rhodesia, Zimbabwe', *African Journal of History and Culture,* 51 (2013), pp.1-12, (p.1).

[81] Saul Dubow, *Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.17.

[82] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks,* trans. by Charles Lam Markmann, (London: Pluto Press, 2008), p.122.

[83] See Jock McCullough, *Black Peril, White Virtue: Sexual Crime in Southern Rhodesia,1902-1935* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), pp.4-5.

I believe in the white people remaining white but I do not believe that whiteness of the skin makes all white men superior to black men [...] the cultural background of white people is such that […] they have a mission to share […] this gift, not by inter-marriage and miscegenation, but by teaching and co-operation. [84]

This was likely politically expedient, as Holderness was pursuing nomination as a candidate for Todd's United Federal Party, and seemingly remained an uncirculated draft. Nonetheless, Holderness seemed willing to capitulate to the views English represented to support his political legitimacy. Another letter in August 1953, however, toned down racial language. Here, Holderness argued marriage was 'more a private than a national affair' and warned against following Hitler into obsession with 'racial purity'.[85] Holderness appeared personally uneasy about segregated sexual politics and this reflected his attempts to reconstitute whiteness as a more open idea of civilisation.

Tensions between personal reticence and racial privilege are displayed in a similar episode in 1954. In the build-up to Holderness's election as an MP, a civil servant, Major Mundy, tackled his championing of integration. Whilst acknowledging Holderness was an 'idealist', he advised that, for Holderness to win a seat, he must declare himself for the 'purity of the white Race' and 'opposed to inter-marriage'.[86] Recalling the episode, Holderness relates his 'heart sank':

Could it really be the old story […] 'Would you allow your daughter to marry a k*****?' [...] the logical answer (Whoever my daughter chooses to marry will be for her to decide herself) would not be acceptable, and the pill had to be swallowed.[87]

Holderness thus issued a statement that rumours he supported inter-marriage were untrue. Consequently, whilst Holderness imagined an alternative whiteness, the White privilege on which his political career depended circumscribed his activism.

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[84] 'Possible Question – Do you believe in social integration? (likely) June 1953', Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of Hardwicke Holderness, MS.5474/2/2.
[85] 'Hardwick Holderness to Unknown, 6 August 1953', Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of Hardwicke Holderness, MS.5474/5/2, 3.
[86] Holderness, pp.129-30.
[87] Holderness, p.130.

This is critical in analysing differences between Nkomo's and Hove's impressions of White liberals and their own self-constructions. With Todd's demise in 1958, liberal multiracialism, and with it the IASR, retreated to the political side-lines. Yet, in Holderness's memoir, the liberal vision was mythologised as a 'lost chance' for 'the peaceful evolution of politics in Africa' in contrast to 'wasteful and brutal war'.[88] This blamed racial violence in Rhodesia post-1958 on settler racism, rather than whiteness as a wider construct of racial subordination. He continually highlights distinctions between his and Todd's progressiveness and oppressive approaches like Mundy's or politicians' like Ben Fletcher, Rubidge Stumbles and, later, Ian Smith.[89] Holderness likewise invoked class, pointing to 'the arrogant attitude (part self-defence, part contempt) of a brick layer towards his black labourers', creating insurmountable racial hatred.[90] Black consciousness pioneer Steve Biko conceptualised this as the liberal proclivity for 'mudslinging' demonstrating that 'A is more of a liberal than B' and trying 'to prove to as many blacks as they can find that they are liberal'.[91] Psychologist Derek Hook argues this allows liberals to demonstrate 'non-complicity' and 're-centre' whiteness as benevolent and anti-racist.[92] Holderness retrospectively constructed an identity which compounded his non-complicity with the implications of White colonialism, but of which, for Nkomo and Hove, liberals remained indicative.

Holderness reflected with relief that he had never faced conscription during the Liberation War: 'I could not have stomached fighting against blacks whom I like at the instance of white supremacist politicians who I abhor'.[93] For Holderness, the fault line was between White supremacy and Black oppression. Yet there was no question as to which side Holderness would have fought on, despite his political sympathies. Rhodesian Whiteness was thus broader than settler racism. Liberals demonstrate it operated as a wider standpoint of identity and privilege, which structured both White supremacy and challenges to it. Within liberal activism, its self-identified progressiveness enabled it to divorce itself from settler racism yet was paradoxically derived from subconscious logics which formed the basis of colonial oppression.

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[88] Holderness, pp.5-6.
[89] Holderness, p. 142,165, 232.
[90] Holderness, p.153.
[91] Steve Biko, *I Write What I Like,* (London: Bowerdean, 1978), pp.23.
[92] Derek Hook, 'Retrieving Biko: A Black Consciousness Critique of Whiteness', *African Identities,* 9 (2011), 19–32, (p.22).
[93] Holderness, p.7.

2. CONFRONTING WHITENESS – RADICALS, 1957-1965

> Whatever you do, and whatever theories about race you may hold, a white liberal can never become an African.[94]

White academic John Reed penned this in *Dissent,* a journal he established with Ranger and Whitfield Foy in 1959 to support Zimbabwean nationalist struggles and expose the abuses of settler government. This chapter examines how a small minority of White liberals migrated from multiracialism to active participation in Black nationalism through their actions and memories and tracks the reciprocal, but overlooked, influence Black nationalism had on White activism. As Gopal indicates, White dissent throughout British imperial history was never the sole product of home-grown campaigning, but encounters with indigenous resistance.[95] Radicals' encounters with Black nationalism not only shaped their political stance but, Reed suggests, provoked a confrontation with whiteness as a racial identity, which challenged and shaped their self-imagination and activism.

From 1957, multiracial partnership evaporated, and politics became increasingly racially polarised. Panicked that the British government was turning against its Rhodesian 'kith and kin' in the face of advancing Black nationalism, the settler government pursued a more aggressive approach.[96] Concurrently, the continent-wide turn to African nationalism and failures of White-dominated organisations to manifest advances towards partnership encouraged Black leaders to pursue independence under majority rule. The establishment, and repeated banning, of Black political parties between 1957 and 1963 marked the foundations of bitter struggles between Black and White nationalisms.

As multiracialism disintegrated, a minority of liberals came to share Black opinion that only independence under majority rule would resolve Rhodesia's racial polarisation. Their activism was diverse: providing legal and financial support for detainees, establishing publications like *Dissent* and protesting the colour bar. The key shift, however, was their identification with

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[94] John Reed, 'Orwell in Africa', *Dissent,* 13 (1959), p.15.
[95] Gopal, 'Insurgent Empire', p.12, 15.
[96] Schwarz, p.349.

Black aspirations by joining nationalist parties and forming close friendships with leaders, which overrode tentative contacts made by liberals within the IASR membership.

Guy Clutton-Brock's, perhaps the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress's ('SRANC') first White advocate, arrest, alongside many Black activists during the Nyasaland Emergency (1959), inspired the first instalment of *Dissent* and radicals' self-identification with Black nationalism:

> When the day at last arrives when the White will be at mercy of the non-White, we shall all have reason to be thankful that men like Clutton-Brock have managed to bridge the colour line.[97]

Radicals saw themselves as agents of Black nationalism and the last remaining means to suture deepening racial divisions, after multiracial 'liberal bridge builders' had failed.[98]

Although the separation between liberals and radicals is, Pritchard notes, artificial, many radicals, despite being members of multiracial organisations, vocally severed ties with liberal ideas.[99] This placed them in a risky position. Suggesting 'White' would inevitably be at 'the mercy of non-White' undermined the state's and liberals' shared agenda to maintain colonial sovereignty. From 1959, the Federal government became increasingly anxious about radicals' influence, with 'Professor Ranger' and '*Dissent'* prime culprits.[100] The government further portrayed radicals as agents of foreign communism – largely erroneously.[101] This whipped up settler opinion against radicals, undermined Black nationalism and increasingly placed radicals at risk of imprisonment or deportation. As premier, Welensky kept a watchful eye on Clutton-Brock, Ranger and Reed, which converted into his desire to '[give] them their passports and [wave] a fond farewell'.[102] Clutton-Brock was arrested in 1959 and Ranger restricted in 1961 and eventually deported in 1963.

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[97] 'The Truth about Guy Clutton-Brock', *Dissent,* 1 (1959), p.2.
[98] 'The Need for Politics', *Dissent,* 3 (1959), p.2.
[99] Pritchard, p.87
[100] 'B.M de Quehen, Report on anti-federation movements, 19 August 1959', Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Papers of Roy Welensky, MSS. Welensky 690/1.
[101] Pritchard, p.97.
[102] 'Roy Welensky to Malcolm Barrow, 22 September 1962', Papers of Roy Welensky, MSS. Welensky 407/3.

This induced a mercurial mix of anxiety and confidence for radicals. Reed and Ranger feared government retribution, but conversely relished the publicity. [103] Writing to his parents, Ranger described the 'fun' of becoming 'Public Enemy Number One' on joining the NDP.[104] Radicals also believed that, as Eileen Haddon commented, their ability to 'think black' uniquely enabled them to bridge racial divisions and do what was morally right.[105] When Shelagh Ranger joined the SRANC's replacement, the National Democratic Party ('NDP'), a fellow sympathiser wrote to Ranger: 'she will be remembered as […] the sole white woman who took the right decision.'[106] This identity reflected a post-war White standpoint, which defined itself against the colonial past. Ranger recalled he arrived in Rhodesia stirred by global waves of anti-colonialism and anti-racism.[107] Schwarz argues that, in Britain, Rhodesia similarly came to represent a racist imperial past from which Britain, through decolonisation, claimed to have broken free.[108] Peter Mackay likewise viewed his activism as serving the cause of 'freedom' and 'justice', perverted by the Rhodesian settler state.[109]

However, unlike multi-racialists, radicals constructed their conception of whiteness vicariously through the identities and political futures of Black Africans. In the late 1950s, Reed recorded that Ranger 'began a debate on what it means to be African by saying how much he wishes he was black, because for the black man everything is still open'.[110] However, like Haddon's phrase 'thinking black', this retained both notions of civilisational immaturity and the loaded idea that Whites could fully identify with Black struggles. After 1957, by contrast, Pritchard explains, Zimbabwean nationalism increasingly maintained that, although Whites 'could sympathise with African suffering, they could never truly understand it'.[111] The SRANC's and NDP's constitutions took a non-racial stance in seeking 'national unity'. [112] However, leaders'

[103] Ranger, 'Writing Revolt', p.104.
[104] 'Terence Ranger to his parents, 12 August 1960', Ranger Papers,
<https://jstor.org/stable/al.sff.document.ranger00242> [Accessed: 2 April 2023].
[105] Cited in Law, p.82.
[106] 'Unknown to Terence Ranger, 7 June 1960', Ranger Papers,
<https://jstor.org/stable/al.sff.document.ranger00186> [Accessed: 25 March 2023].
[107] Ranger, 'Writing Revolt', p.12.
[108] Schwarz, p.406.
[109] Peter Mackay, *We Have Tomorrow,* (Norwich: Michael Russel, 2008), p.88.
[110] Reed's Diary quoted in Ranger, 'Writing Revolt', p.73.
[111] Pritchard, p.120.
[112] 'Principles of the S.R.A.N.C', *Dissent,* 1 (1959), pp.13-14.

rhetoric increasingly embodied what Pritchard terms an anti-White 'Black identity nationalism'.[113] Sithole explained in 1959:

> [W]hite people were conscious that they ruled as a white group, and the African people also became conscious that they were ruled as an African group. They suffered as a racial group.[114]

Particularly after the ZANU/ZAPU split in 1963, nationalism totally rejected White authority, 'cracking the myth' of the White man as master of civilisation and modernity.[115]

Radicals were thus confronted with accepting an inversion of the foundations of imperial White identities, 'laying claim to the history of civilisation and responsibility'.[116] Membership of nationalist parties conversely meant accepting the suffering this had wrought. Few radicals were second generation Rhodesians and thus consciously able to separate themselves from its settler history. However, they remained what Adele Perry terms 'in-between' imperial subjects, outside settler structures but inside the imperial web.[117] Moreover, Sithole's rhetoric was directed against the 'white man' not settlers. This brought into play the wider paradigm of the British Empire, in which radicals remained embedded, particularly Ranger and Reed as lecturers at the University of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, itself part of the second colonial occupation's drive to spread British education and values.[118]

Radicals' imagination of whiteness thus, paradoxically, hinged on entering a political space which their whiteness complicated. The discomfort this induced is implied by radicals' reluctance to admit Black nationalism's influence on their thinking. Radicals' memoirs presented their activism as the dual product of a pre-existing reformist spirit and abhorrence at White settlers' brutality. Mackay explained '[nationalists] were people who I believed

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[113] Pritchard, p.189.
[114] Sithole, p.122.
[115] Sithole, p.157.
[116] White, 'Unpopular Sovereignty', p.35.
[117] Adele Perry, 'Interlocuting Empire: Colonial Womanhood, Settler Identity and Francis Herring', in *Rediscovering the British World*, eds. Philip Buckner and Douglas Francis (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005), p.160.
[118] Tamson Pietsch, *Empire of Scholars: Universities, Networks and the British Academic World, 1850-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), p.189.

objectively were being treated unjustly […] I could think of them only as ill-treated friends'.[119] Mackay thus fitted Black nationalism into his own, pre-existing moral preoccupation for 'justice', masking that White radicalism was derived from Black struggles and the uncertain position radicals held within Black nationalist spaces.

For Gandhi, White activists' friendships and solidarities blurred boundaries between coloniser and colonised.[120] However, for radicals, this blurring paradoxically produced self-awareness of whiteness as a racial identity underpinning oppressive colonial systems, which maintained an internalised idea of essential difference. Reed's statement that White liberals could never become Africans was matched by Mackay:

> I was not part, I knew, of the wrongs being done, for I was beyond the laager's pale. But I remained, I knew, outside the Africans' gate.[121]

Whilst an 'angry witness' to White Rhodesia's brutality, and one of the few radicals who participated in the armed struggle, Mackay trod an ambiguous line between relieving himself of responsibility for Black struggles and recognising the disjuncture between his political affiliations and the symbolism of his White skin.

The symbolism of radicals' White skin within Black nationalist spaces dismantled the invisibility of whiteness, which, for Frankenberg, underpins its power and resilience.[122] Radicals' participation in the NDP forced them to carry their whiteness as an identity, highlighting their uncertain position within Zimbabwean nationalism. Ranger wrote to Reed describing a meeting in 1961. Ranger arrived to find 'everybody shoeless', a symbolic act, requested by Nkomo, to demonstrate willingness to destroy industry:

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[119] Mackay, p.72.
[120] Gandhi, p.2.
[121] Laager refers to the White state's isolationism; Mackay, p.33.
[122] Frankenberg, p.5.

[I] whispered to Herbert Chitepo that I felt conspicuous wearing shoes and perhaps I had better take them off. "Oh, no, you don't need to," he replied. But the moral pressure of all those bare feet got to me and I took my shoes off. [123]

This underlined that even multiracial advocates, like Chitepo, viewed radicals' whiteness as separating them from the Black struggles to which radicals' own version of whiteness was hitched. Reed similarly commented that 'at the meetings' the White attendee 'is often a kind of awkward exception.'[124]

Beyond the NDP leadership, this awkward separation was amplified, as the symbolism of radicals' whiteness complicated their participation. In July 1960, government forces sparked unrest in Harare township by closing schools, tear-gassing children and arresting multiple NDP members. Mackay urged White sympathisers to join the NDP in Harare, but Ranger demurred, arguing there was 'a danger' they would 'get mauled by the Africans', serving no purpose.[125] This was not just an awareness that radicals could not identify with Black struggles, but that their White skin symbolically evoked the oppression against which liberation struggles were directed.

Hook describes this as the 'wounding of whiteness' where opening up White identity to multicultural ideals inevitably punctured its former wholeness.[126] Most sensitive to this was Mackay. Reed wrote that, for Mackay:

the European must accept everything - he must substitute for the sins of the whites - embrace the racialism of African nationalism. I[Reed] say that in joining a political party, one should expect to be treated to a member of the party. "How can you be treated as just another member of the party, a white man in an African Nationalist party?" says Peter.[127]

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[123] In Ranger, 'Writing Revolt', p.118.
[124] Reed, 'Joining the NDP', *Dissent,* 21 (1960), p.12.
[125] Ranger, 'Writing Revolt', pp.69-70.
[126] Hook, pp.30-31.
[127] Reed's Diary in Pritchard, p.167.

Mackay considered that, without accepting the oppression their White skin symbolised, radicals necessarily remained hesitant in their identification with Black aspirations. Mackay complained to Reed that Whites were 'trying to impose their own idea' instead of learning from Black nationalists.[128] Reed found this 'irritating' and recoiled from the suggestion that his political participation did not override connections to historic White 'sins'.[129]

This hesitancy was underscored by the security afforded to radicals by their whiteness. Mackay criticised Ranger for accepting deportation in 1963: 'It would be better to remain here, in prison, where he can at least be a symbol for cause.'[130] Deportation offered radicals a get-out unavailable to Black comrades, as Ranger reassured his parents in 1960:

> We are in a strong position. We have lots of good and influential friends […] and Sir
> Edgar will not kick me out until things have gone so far that one may as well not stay.[131]

Such internalised limits on activism underpinned an equally fraught discourse amongst nationalists concerning White participation. The Zimbabwe National Party, a short-lived challenge to the NDP, was, Pritchard shows, partly based on their leaders', including former multi-racialists like Nathan Shamuyarira, frustration with Nkomo's acceptance of White members: they 'do not represent the views of Africans – not even the six in his meetings'.[132] Nationalism was never a singular idea.[133] Maurice Nyagumbo and Stanlake Samkange continued to value White participation, but younger nationalists were less certain and leaders, including Sithole and Nkomo, increasingly avoided publicly associating with White allies.

This undermined Ranger's heroic self-image as 'Public Enemy Number One'. He complained to James Chikerema in 1961 that White NDP members were 'much out of things', as Sithole urged them not to go into townships 'to see the demonstrations or the shootings'. Whilst not

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[128] Reed's Diary in Pritchard, p.247.
[129] *ibid.*
[130] Reed's Diary in Pritchard, p.165.
[131] 'Terence Ranger to his parents, 26 July 1960', Ranger Papers,
<https://jstor.org/stable/al.sff.document.ranger00241> [Accessed 27 March 2023].
[132] Pritchard, p.122.
[133] See Norma Krieger, 'The Zimbabwean War of Liberation: Struggles within the Struggle', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 14 (1988), 304-322.

involved in protests, Ranger considered his absence optically important, creating 'a very unheroic role'.[134] From 1961, Ranger's primary resistance was through his organisation the Citizens Against the Colour Bar Association ('CACBA'), which protested segregation in public spaces through multiracial sit-ins. Nkomo, Ranger related to George Nyandoro, saw the CACBA's symbolic breaches of racial segregation as insignificant. Ranger accepted this but determined to go ahead: 'the colour bar and swimming may not be important to Africans, but it is important to Europeans'.[135] Ranger's activism thus orientated towards the optical heroism of undermining White supremacy, even where this diverged from Black agendas.

Ranger was seemingly conscious of this. His letters to Jane Symonds of the African Bureau in London were filled with optimism about the CACBA's cause.[136] In contrast, his letters to Black friends were wrought with insecurity. In 1962, he fretted to Nyagumbo: 'I do not know whether it will be possible for me to join a new Party.'[137] This was partly a response to Nkomo's statement that it was 'embarrassing' to have White members and escalating anti-White rhetoric in Nkomo's leadership struggle with Sithole.[138] Nevertheless, it suggests that the comparative security radicals derived from performing their activism within a White space circumscribed their solidarities.

This created a liminal position where a sense of belonging was only achieved by retreating into the security of White space or confronting the full implications of their whiteness within a Black space. Even for Mackay, whom Ranger termed the most committed, the disjuncture between his activism and whiteness proved a wound, which he attempted to heal by divorcing whiteness as an imperial legacy from its Rhodesian manifestation. Whilst transporting freedom fighters from 1964, Mackay carried a Union Jack as a 'private gesture' implying he was not party to the Rhodesian state's repressiveness.[139] Mackay's memoir further emphasised distinctions between British imperial and Rhodesian whiteness, presenting the latter as

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[134] Terence Ranger to James Chikerema, 19 July 1961', Ranger Papers, <https://jstor.org/stable/al.sff.document.ranger00017> [Accessed: 3 April 2023].
[135] 'Terence Ranger to George Nyandoro, 25 October 1961', Ranger Papers, <https://jstor.org/stable/al.sff.document.ranger00068> [Accessed: 3 April 2023].
[136] 'Terence Ranger to Jane Symonds, 11 August 1961', Ranger Papers', <https://www.jstor.org/stable/al.sff.document.ranger00117> [Accessed: 30 March 2023].
[137] 'Terence Ranger to Maurice Nyagumbo, 16 October 1962', Ranger Papers, https://www.jstor.org/stable/al.sff.document.ranger00091 [Accessed: 30 March 2023].
[138] *ibid.*
[139] Mackay, p.313.

disfiguring Rhodes's legacy. Mackay argued that settler's 'devotion to money' appeared a direct legacy of Cecil Rhodes, except that Rhodes was 'generous, not mean' and 'essentially progressive':

> it would be hard to imagine him pursuing the purblind attitudes held by so many Rhodesians fifty years after his death.[140]

Rhodes's memory was, Charumbira explains, 'sacred' to the settler state.[141] However, ZAPU and ZANU pamphleteering exposed Rhodes as the 'arch-imperialist' and symbol of exploitation.[142] Wrenching Rhodes away from both Rhodesian settler and Zimbabwean nationalist configurations, Mackay carved a space for his own White identity, with links to British civilisational ideals. As Ranger legitimated his activism within a White frame, so Mackay, in hindsight, attempted to legitimate whiteness through the progressiveness of his activism.

Paradoxically, for the less extreme Ranger, this contradiction was more apparent. For Ranger, in a White civilisational paradigm, violence and democracy were utterly opposed. He repeatedly expressed opposition to the notion that 'Violence Pays' and, within the NDP, promoted 'democratic unity' against 'careless' violence.[143] To Peter Dyson, he likewise defended his involvement with ZAPU: 'I do believe that there are some very good people asking for what they should be given and they should be helped to get it and helped not to get it in the wrong way'.[144] Yet in 1966, as the Liberation War began, he penned an article about Roger Casement, a British collaborator in the 1916 Irish insurrection and, to Ranger, extraordinary in his sympathy for Ireland's colonised population. Ranger compared Casement to the 'idealistic white' ally of African nationalism, who 'reached his sense of identity':

> by routes as romantic and as little in touch with realities, […] driven into his political position [by…] ideas of right conduct derived from the ethos of the rulers […] finding

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[140] Mackay, p.6-7.
[141] Charumbira, p.81.
[142] One example: 'Editorial', *Zimbabwe Review,* (1973), Zimbabwe Serials, JSTOR, <https://jstor.org/stable/al.sff.document.nuzr19730811> [Accessed:12 April 2023].
[143] 'Ranger Speech at NDP meeting, November 1961' in 'Writing Revolt', p.119.
[144] 'Ranger to Dyson'.

his true vocation in courageous denunciations, and then, as the situation worsened, moving into symbolic violence with a self-betraying ineffectiveness.[145]

Through Casement, Ranger vocalised a raw self-examination, which his political activism had provoked, and a recognition of the limits his whiteness enforced. His political principles derived from imperial principles of democracy and freedom, but these, paradoxically, limited his participation to symbolic action. For Ranger, this was not easily surmountable. In his 2013 memoir, he reflected on whether, without his deportation, he would have embraced armed resistance. His answer 'I would have sat on that particular fence', evoked not simply moral concerns about violence but ambivalent questions of racial belonging which dogged his nationalist activism.[146] This was, perhaps, simpler in 2013: Ranger recognised his 'liberal' nationalism, despite branding him a traitor post-1963, had, post-2000, acquired renewed legitimacy in the context of Mugabe's authoritarianism.[147]

The Casement article, written as Ranger's academic career outstripped his activism, also suggests his own scholarship derived from a desire to assimilate whiteness and activism. Dedicated to writing the history of Zimbabwe, beginning with *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia* (1967), Ranger's work became a cornerstone of Zimbabwe's nationalist struggle, evoking the 'symbolic violence' he associated with Casement. In 1966, Ranger hoped that fifty years after Casement's death, compassion was felt for his symbolic efforts.[148] Publishing his memoir in 2013, fifty years after his deportation from Rhodesia, Ranger perhaps hoped that, with this final work, his ambivalent position would, like Casement's, elicit retrospective compassion.

In 2011, White questioned where to draw the line between 'Ranger the scholar' and 'Ranger the comrade'.[149] This, for Ranger and his contemporaries, was blurred at best. Their writing evidences their complex struggle to overcome tensions between their whiteness and activism, less the invisible operations of White imperial logics than the discomfort of confronting how these structures defined them within a Black political space. Their engagement with nationalism exposed the realities of White colonialism but also, uncomfortably, the complicity

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[145] Ranger, 'Roger Casement and Africa', *Transition,* 26 (1966), 24-26, (p.25).
[146] Ranger, 'Writing Revolt', p.165.
[147] Ranger, 'Writing Revolt', p.182.
[148] Ranger, 'Casement', p.26.
[149] White, 'Terence Ranger', p.330.

their own whiteness evoked. Their retreat both contemporaneously and later to a middle ground facilitated a retained sense of belonging within a White identity; divorcing themselves from Rhodesian colonial brutality whilst papering over the frictions between their whiteness and activism.

CONCLUSION

White non-conformists were shaped, to varying degrees, by the standpoint of privilege and civilisational superiority derived from British imperial whiteness. In contrast to previous scholarship, this study demonstrates that their activism was structured as much within, as in opposition to, systems of race which produced settler racism. Whiteness, here, was not just overt racism but an entrenched standpoint, which drew a profound fault line between White and non-White. This operated less by creating stable identities than imposing boundaries on the way relationships, ideas and solidarities were actioned. Fundamentally, whiteness produced a sense of belonging and security, which, when challenged, drew even some of the most committed activists back into its sphere.

White activism in Rhodesia offers an insight into the fractious process by which recognisable multicultural identities are formed and the incompleteness of these ideals as constructed within a White standpoint. To non-conformists, the brutalities inherent in White racial constructions were exposed through World War II, decolonisation and their engagement with Black activists. Yet attempts to re-imagine whiteness outside racist systems paradoxically relied on subliminal beliefs in White civilisational capacity to guide Black political futures, which themselves underpinned the history of White supremacy and colonialism. Non-conformists' version of whiteness hinged on self-referential differences from settler Rhodesia, masking their reliance on its logics and bringing them into conflict with the non-White interests they sought to champion. This suggests White privilege persists by mutating in ways that deny its past and present inequalities by foregrounding its own progressiveness. Reluctance to relinquish the ties between whiteness and progressiveness, as radicals exemplify, underpinned White activism's fundamental ambivalence.

This complicated relationship between whiteness and activism was not limited to contemporary events but seeped into the history and memory of Zimbabwe's decolonisation and non-conformists' roles. The 'self-betraying ineffectiveness' which Ranger feared defined his activism did not, in reality, come to characterise radicals' participation. Whilst radicals were not, as Nyagumbo hoped, integral to the first independent Zimbabwean government, they maintained friendships with Zimbabwean nationalists and remained, in some circles,

celebrated.[150] Liberal multiracialism received less recognition and neither liberals nor radicals played heroic roles in Zimbabwean histories or memoirs. However, non-conformists' own memoirs provided means to lay their claim on Zimbabwe's history, reinforcing their separation from settler Rhodesia and smoothing out contemporary tensions between their whiteness and activism. Moreover, this spoke to a wider collective impulse in post-imperial Britain, where non-conformists' real recognition came. An obituary of Holderness in 2007 stated: 'it was a tragedy that the liberal programme Holderness so supported did not succeed'.[151] Non-conformists provided a tangible mechanism for White identities to buttress their own separation from the racist imperial past Rhodesia represented and a means to process Zimbabwe's chequered history through a comfortable White filter, an impulse which continues to structure conceptions of Rhodesia. The fence on which White activism sat was thus a historical as much as a contemporary construction.

As White argues, we do not need non-conformists to understand Zimbabwe's liberation struggle.[152] However, we do need them to understand the nexus of whiteness, decolonisation, history and post-colonial racial systems. This relationship was marked by ambivalence, sitting on the fence between retaining the privileges and identities of imperial whiteness and imagining a post-racial future.

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[150] Ranger, 'Writing Revolt', p.141.
[151] Tony Jaffey, 'Hardwicke Holderness', *The Guardian,* (28 June 2007).
[152] White, 'Terence Ranger', p.326.

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