

Human Development as flows of mobility: Perspectives from the Bulawayo-Johannesburg trends

Whitehead Zikhali

Senior Lecturer, National University of Science and Technology,
Institute of Development Studies (IDS-NUST), Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

ABSTRACT

Studies of migration experience tend to be trapped *in situ* where focus is on either the place of origin or the destination. Using the mobilities paradigm, this paper reveals that migrants does not merely move from origin to destination through a void devoid of meaning but engage in various negotiations and exchanges of meaning both with other people and with spaces and objects. In the process, various notions of development are derived. The mobilities paradigm is field of enquiry which comprises of 'studies of corporeal movement, transportation and communication infrastructures, capitalist spatial restructuring, migration and immigration, citizenship and transnationalism, and tourism and travel' (Hannam *et al.*, 2006, p.9-10). The study shows that development is much broader than economic and infrastructural progress, encompassing social and security needs as well. This has real implications for migration because it suggests that migrants are no merely drawn from backward places to advanced zones. Instead, they move between places to attain their ideal notion of development, a notion which may be situated in both sending and receiving places. In the study, Johannesburg is an economic attraction while Bulawayo poses social and security comfort. The result is that migrants relate with both places as sites of development, with development assuming various meanings in all contexts.

Keywords: Development, migration, mobilities, South Africa, Zimbabwe.

INTRODUCTION

The paper discusses the mobility of persons along the Bulawayo-Johannesburg corridor. It aims to reveal the intertwined nature of development with mobility. While there have been studies which reveal the migration-development nexus relating to Zimbabwe, the study provides useful insights into the relationship by shifting focus from the developmental dimension as epitomised by remittances to places of origin. Instead, following Sen (1999), the paper reveals that the process of movement itself is a negotiation, contest and sometimes an accomplishment of development. The nuance here is that, in given contexts, mobility **is** development and not just a conduit. In a sense, the paper employs sociological dialectics despite being fashioned as one in the field of development studies. The main concern is human development and not merely understanding the social interactions of participants. It is these participants who reveal the many facets of development which range beyond merely remittance of money and goods but demonstrate that it to encompass aspirations and attainment of political freedoms, peace of mind and even the ability to dream of positive, better futures.

The study was developed in March 2017, at a time when the Zimbabwean state was faced with internal challenges ranging from succession crises in the ruling ZANU PF party, constrained liquidity in the economy, declining industry due to company closures, increased unemployment in the formal economy, increased informalisation of the economy and increasing social agitation over worsening quality of life. Amidst the challenges, the

government -once again- resolved to extend an olive branchⁱ to the diaspora to harness remittances income. Such an effort has historical antecedentsⁱⁱ particularly in the post-2000 Zimbabwe. The results of previous overtures had often been lukewarm due to tense relations between the state and migrants. Suspicions over political inclinations of migrants and motives of the government had contributed to the sustained the standoffⁱⁱⁱ. These attitudes were not unfounded. Some Zimbabwean migrants particularly in the United Kingdom (UK) had over the years engaged in political mobilisation and action against the ZANU PF-led government. This was often interpreted to mean open hostility to the government as well as complicity in a 'regime-change agenda'. Consequently, when it came to political rights, migrants appeared to be reduced to what Agamben (1998) identifies as *zoe* –people who only have bare life devoid of any political rights.

Beyond the political engagements and confrontations, migrants have however demonstrated immense clout as a lifeline (von Burgsdorff, 2012) for Zimbabweans remaining in Zimbabwe due to their financial support. Through remittances, the country's citizens survived an unprecedented economic calamity between 2000 and 2008. During this time, remittances were sent from far flung places such as the United Kingdom and South Africa. It is in this vein that the migration-development nexus has been extensively covered. Many of the studies (Bracking and Sachikonye 2006; Maphosa 2007; Ncube and Gomez, 2011) have revealed the flow and uses of remittances. For instance, Maphosa (2007) studies the contribution of remittances to livelihoods in rural Zimbabwe. His study reveals that remittances are predominantly used for consumptive purposes. Similar observations are made in urban environments by Bracking and Sachikonye (2006). Ncube and Gomez (2011)'s study is concerned with the contribution of remittances to the local economy. Their study reveals the use of remittances for investment in the local economy. To complement the literature on economic remittances, some scholars have begun to explore the role, functions and impacts of social remittances to Zimbabwe's development experience. Social remittances are ideas, behaviours, identities and social capital flowing from receiving to sending communities (De Haas 2010). Studies employing such a perspective often incorporate the social identity theory or aspects of identity formations to analyse the interactions of migrants (Hungwe, 2005; Muzondidya, 2013; Siziba, 2014). The discussion made here adds to this burgeoning literature by revealing that mobilities also contribute to notions, experiences and attainment of development. As such, people, capital, ideas and even places -both animate and inanimate- craft aspirations for and attainment of freedoms (Sen, Development as Freedom, 1999). The paper's structure allows for a discussion of the mobilities turn in the section after this introduction. Thereafter, the study methodology is presented, and this is succeeded by findings and the discussion. The final section lays out conclusions and presents recommendations thereof.

THE MOBILITIES TURN

Mobilities, is not a theory *per se* but a useful conceptual paradigm and possible analytical framework which allows researchers to demonstrate realities through investigations of movement, blocked movement, potential movement and immobility, dwelling and place-making (Büscher, et al., 2011, p.2). As a field of enquiry, it comprises of 'studies of corporeal movement, transportation and communications infrastructures, capitalist spatial restructuring, migration and immigration, citizenship and transnationalism, and tourism and travel' (Hannam *et al.*, 2006, p.9–10). Mobilities connects geographies, cultures and societies through fields such as politics, economics and society (Blunt, 2007; Cresswell, 2010; Merriman, 2015). In the process, it challenges both the 'sedenterist' and 'nomadic' production of knowledge (Cresswell, 2006; Hannam *et al.*, 2006). Such a focus is conceptually distinct from transnationalism and migration studies in the sense that it embraces the field together with people and ideas in reading the process and meaning of movement between, through and to/from places. In this

sense, it recognizes the fluidity of fields in a Bourdieusian sense. Fields are not rigid, but they allow one form of capital to be converted into another (Bourdieu, Language and Symbolic Power, 1991). Mimi Sheller adds that unlike the rich tradition of sociological study of social mobility, the new transdisciplinary field of mobilities research encompasses research on the *spatial mobility* of humans, non-humans, and objects; the circulation of information, images, and capital; as well as the study of the physical means for movement such as infrastructures, vehicles, and software systems that enable travel and communication to take place (Sheller, 2014).

The mobilities paradigm is useful in the sense that it reveals the roles, meanings and purposes played by various elements in the process of movement. As a result, ports of entry or exit, modes of travel, places of transit and so forth become useful in a reading of the movement. Migration as it were, ceases to be a concept of departure and arrival without meaning between these two points. In this study, mobilities captures the movement of persons together with their attitudes and perceptions as they move from one spatial zone to another. Loosely laid out, the spaces are broadly from Zimbabwe to South Africa and vice versa. This is further fragmented to mean from Bulawayo to the border town of Beitbridge, within Beitbridge on both the Zimbabwean and South African sides as well as from the border town to Johannesburg. In between these spaces are stop-over points which are replete with encounters and experiences for travellers. It is these experiences, encounters and engagements which reveal the various notions of development.

METHODOLOGY

The mobilities turn informs the methodological grounding of this paper. Given the fluidity of movement and the nature of mobilities in the study, it is difficult to make mention of a single site in the sense of a single physical location. Instead, the study "site" referred to here is reflective of the entire channel between Bulawayo and Johannesburg – 861 kilometres by road. One may argue that there are multiple sites along the channel. This would be acceptable in some sense considering that multi-sited ethnography has emerged as a plausible and acceptable methodological frame in the postmodern turn (Marcus, 1995). However, such an assertion is contestable given the focus on various aspects of the flows ranging from engaging transport operators and immigration officials, moving between transnational space, interacting with law enforcement officials, confronting locals, businesspeople and other foreigners as well as experiencing urban spaces. Resultantly, the study deployed an ethnographic approach on four migrants. Two of the migrants are cross-border traders while the other two are transnational migrants who work in South Africa but hail from Bulawayo. Observations and interviews were the chosen instrumentation methods. Observations spanned over various spaces including but not limited to the departure area, at border posts, in transition stop-over points, at the places of disembarking as well as within urban spaces on arrival. Although criticism of ethnography may dismiss the approach as a pretentious science which relies 'on the facticity of first-hand experience' (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1992), it nonetheless offers useful tools for understanding qualitative aspects of human experience and related phenomena. To reiterate, the aim of the study was to reveal the intertwined nature of development with mobility. As such, an ethnographic approach reveals the context-specific experiences of mobile persons and how such experiences create and derive meaning in given settings. Purposively selected participants were identified. The process of selection entailed communicating with officials working for transport operators in Bulawayo and detailing the aim and objective of the study. These persons were solicited for assistance in identifying known travellers. At this stage, a total of seven officials working for five different transport operators had been identified and they in turn contacted seven potential participants. The

researcher then interviewed and purposively selected four of the participants on the basis on the following criteria:

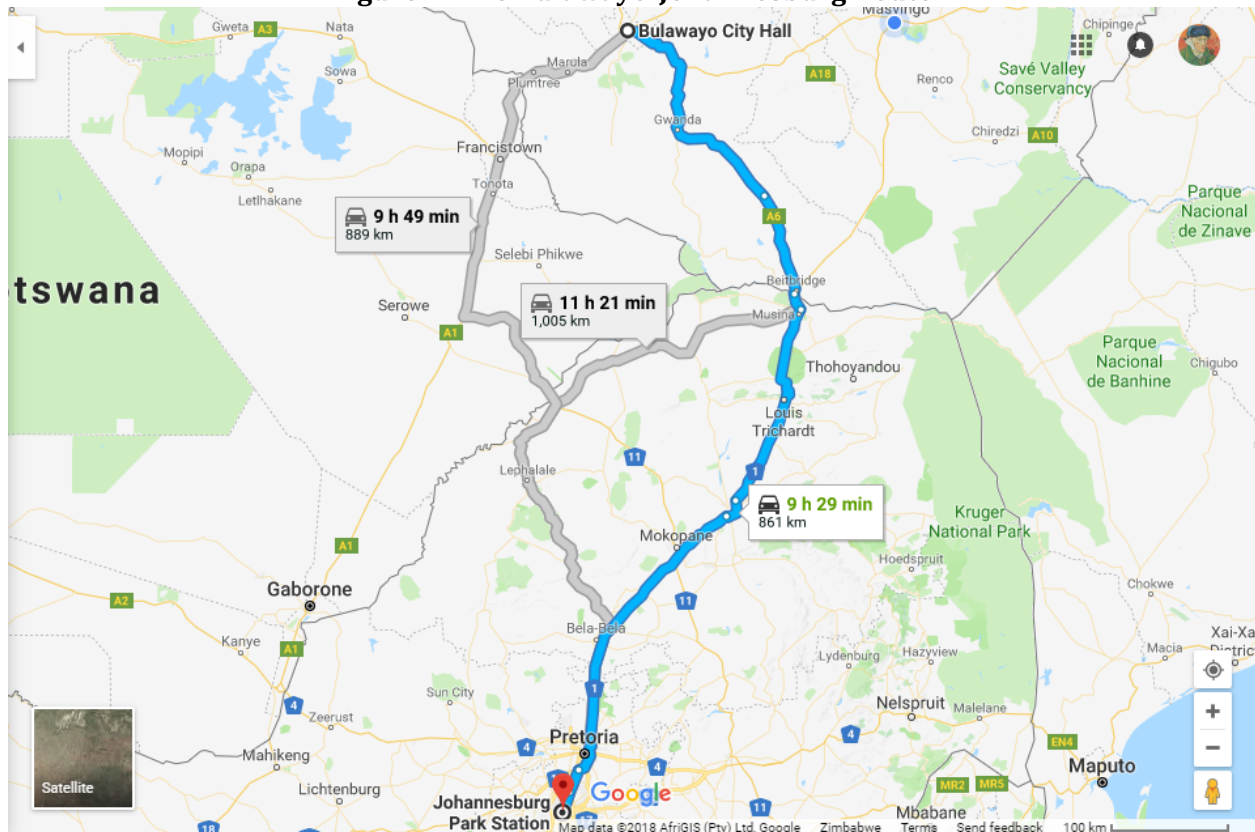
- Is above 18 years of age.
- Either reside in or come from Bulawayo.
- Travel to or stay in Johannesburg.
- Have travelled the Bulawayo-Johannesburg route at least once in the past year prior to the study.
- Use road transport as the primary means of travel on the route.

Questions ranging from reasons for travel/migration, justification for choice of mode of travel, experiences of various spaces and attitudes or perceptions of systems were posed. The age criteria served to exclude minors who although potentially wielding useful information, were not considered due to the possibility of involuntary movement which they may be engaged in. road transport was the chosen mode of analysis due to the resources available, its popularity among travellers as well as the various spaces it encounters along the way. In addition, there was a practical consideration in selecting road since other alternatives for the entire route are either non-existent (rail) when one considers end-to-end travel, or prohibitively expensive and therefore class specific (air). Analysis of data followed thematic content analysis. Major themes were considered largely in the form of attitudes of participants and responses to various situations.

STUDY "SITE"

As already noted, the "site" is not unitary or singular. Instead, multiple spaces were considered throughout the course of the study and these are situated along the blue line in figure 1 below.

Figure 2: The Bulawayo-Johannesburg Route



Source: Google Maps^{iv}

FINDINGS

The four participants (n=4) comprised of two cross-border traders and two transnational migrants. Although cross-border traders may loosely be defined as transnational migrants, the duration of their stay for relatively short periods and are largely domiciled in Bulawayo. This short-termism denies migrants the opportunity to develop sustained social connections beyond the economic ties they form. Moreover, given that transnationalism is the process by which immigrants build social fields that link together their country of origin and their country of settlement (Schiller, Bach & Blanc-Szanton, 1992), it is rare for such migrants to establish ties which link those in places they meet with the migrant's area of origin. Instead, with cross-border traders, ties are established in commercial exchange/engagement and seldom breach those spaces. The transnational migrants in the study were different from the cross-border traders in this sense. They identified with home both in South Africa and in Zimbabwe. Johannesburg resonated with home just as Bulawayo did. A key feature in explaining this connectedness was the length of stay in Johannesburg. John^v has been residing in Johannesburg since 2008 while Ncamisile has been resident since 2002. In their case, Bulawayo was home because it is a place they grew up in and have affective attachment for, a place to which they return twice or thrice a year but maintain constant links with. Contrast this with Mandlovu and Nontobeko who although visiting Johannesburg since 1998 and 2006 respectively, only go there at least once every two months to buy and sell goods. To them, Johannesburg is more of a warehouse than a home. Over the course of 2017, the researchers travelled either to or from Johannesburg with the participants, discussing their trips as well as noting their attitudes and perceptions as well as observing their deportment across various spaces. We present the findings as observed and noted within these spaces.

Departure

Departure either from Bulawayo or from Johannesburg has various meanings for the participants. In late April 2017, the researcher managed to travel with both cross-border traders to and from Johannesburg. To give context to departure from Bulawayo, a sketch of the departure site suffices. Apart from the more reputable coaches which are of South African origin, locally-owned coaches also ply the Bulawayo-Johannesburg route. In addition, there are smaller transport operators commonly identified as 'Sprinters' due to the vehicle models commonly used. One also has the option of hiking on private cars headed to South Africa. We departed from the 'offices' of one coach operator which essentially meant boarding the coach parked on one of the city's roads. Their office could hardly accommodate ten people at once due to space constraints. Both Mandlovu and Nontobeko indicated that the coach was useful for their purposes because one could liaise with the drivers so that they 'purchase' days of stay in South Africa. This will be elaborated in the section on entry and exit ports. At this point, it is important to state that the bus appeared to operate on flexible terms. There was no rigid system where seat numbers and departure times were adhered to. During both trips, the researcher observed that the departure areas were also spaces for final trades in currency as well as hawking spots by vendors from which travellers bought some food items to consume along the journey. An interesting observation was that once on the coach and as it began the trip to Johannesburg, the participants routinely checked their wares and ensured that they secured their valuables. The concern with crime quickly brought up prospects, perceptions and attitudes of crime in the destination. Imageries of rampant crime and criminality in Johannesburg were bolstered by personal anecdotes of encounters at one point or another with a criminal. The chosen attire by both female cross-borders was also explained in terms of security. Both in tight-fitting jeans and jackets, the ladies indicated that their chosen attire enabled them to quickly feel if a would-be thief was attempting to steal from them. In addition, it also allowed them to conceal some of their valuables such as cellular phones. The departure was slightly like John's which was in August after a trip to Bulawayo to attend a bereavement.

However, the sentiments over crimes were less magnified and the chosen coach was more upmarket. In fact, John boarded one South African coach and emphasised that one could never compromise on quality, a statement which was thinly veiled as a slight on Zimbabwean-origin buses. This was in stark contrast to departure from Johannesburg which we now turn to.

In early May, the researcher travelled from Johannesburg to Bulawayo with the cross-border traders (MaNdlovu and Nontobeko) while in August and November, the researcher travelled with John and Ncamisile. Three of the travellers (John, MaNdlovu and Ncamisile) departed from the main transnational station in Johannesburg, Park Station. Park Station is markedly different from departure points in Bulawayo. For a start, it is a designated commercial transport terminal which caters for travellers within South Africa as well as those travelling beyond South Africa's borders. It is replete with shops and outlets from which travellers can purchase goods and use services with ease of access. Only designated coaches are allowed into the station and most of the Zimbabwean-domiciled coaches are not privy to this space. Following a strict schedule much akin to an airport, the coaches move in and out such that travellers must be at the boarding sites on time. Here, carefully-packed luggage is loaded onto coaches and security officers patrol the site with regularity. Departure on MaNdlovu's part was a relief on at least two counts. First, the exit marked an accomplishment and an end to the business trip she had set out to complete, selling goods from Zimbabwe and procuring some items for resale back in Bulawayo. Secondly, departure meant a welcome exit from a city of paradoxes. On the one hand it was a lifeline as a source of income for her. On the other hand, Johannesburg represented various forms of evil due to violent crimes committed in the city. For John and Ncamisile, exit was merely shifting places whose emotional meanings varied. In Ncamisile's words, they were 'leaving home to go home'. In exchanges along the way, it was however evident that the meanings of home were entwined with the politics in both lands. South Africa was referred to as then-president Jacob Zuma's land while Zimbabwe assumed the moniker of being Robert Mugabe's fiefdom. Departure evoked mixed emotions on the part of the participants. On the one hand it meant leaving immediate family and a place of livelihood. On the other it meant going to extended family and a more affectively attached place imbued with meaning much like Ndlovu (2010) discusses.

Nontobeko's departure was different from the other three participants. Not only did she depart from a different site, but she did so using a different coach. Her coach departed from Newtown which although catering for transnational coaches mainly from Zimbabwe, does not have facilities and amenities of a similar standard to Park Station. Instead, Newtown is more informal, spoilt by idle litter strewn across and follows a more flexible time scheduling. It is not uncommon for a coach scheduled to depart at 5PM to depart either earlier or much later. This flexibility resultantly serves to benefit some passengers while disadvantaging others. importantly, it persists throughout all processes including at the border posts.

Transit areas

Transit areas are mostly the spaces where travellers stop over for refreshments and temporary breaks. These spaces are mostly pre-selected service stations and fast food outlets. In Zimbabwe, the transit stop is in Gwanda at a small grocery shop while in South Africa, depending on the bus, stops are in Musina and near Hammanskraal. When on the way to South Africa, MaNdlovu intimated that most travellers prefer to purchase items in Musina and so Gwanda is not very popular. However, the researcher observed that many travellers procured food items popular with Zimbabweans as gifts for the people they were visiting in South Africa. Gwanda is also not too far from Bulawayo -some 127 km away- hence the inclination to purchase is likely to be low considering that travellers will have departed Bulawayo only an hour earlier. In Musina, travellers purchase meals from a range of outlets which include the

American franchise KFC as well as other small retail outlets. Another stop is made much later while in South Africa, again close to some fast food outlets and ablution facilities. The trip to Bulawayo mirrors that of the trip to Johannesburg with the major difference being the hours of travel as well as purchasing behaviours. Pretty much all of the food that most travellers consume is procured in South Africa such that on arrival in Gwanda, the stop is largely routine. The major reason given for this is that food is cheaper in South Africa while also being of superior quality. Even comparable items such as soft drinks tended to be purchased in Rand on the trip back to Bulawayo. An interesting feature on the transit zones is the deferment to code-switching by travellers. Code-switching is the switching between two or more language varieties. For example, a speaker may use Zulu to communicate with one person and then switch to English in his communication with another person. Those travellers such as MaNdlovu, John and Ncamisile who have an intimate knowledge of some indigenous South African of languages resort to the use of these languages. In making orders for food items, making enquiries and general conversation, these individuals switched from isiZulu to SePedi then Xhosa and Tshivenda as the situation demanded. Apart from being an admirable feat, it demonstrated their willingness to explore and freely converse in languages of their choosing to enable ease of communication and perhaps to use language as capital for entry in various fields akin to Siziba (2014)'s subjects. Similar strategies were deployed in ports of entry/exit as will be laid out in the following section.

Ports of entry/exit

For most travellers departing Bulawayo and heading for South Africa or vice versa, the most popular port of entry/exit is Beitbridge. Beitbridge is both a border post and on the Zimbabwean side, a border town. The infrastructure, architecture, technology and professionalism are markedly different depending on which side one is considering. The result are different attitudes and perceptions by those in transit. In short, the Zimbabwean side of the border post is marked by mostly grey buildings, worn out tarmac and open dust spaces in parts. The South African side on the other hand is more well-manicured, has smoothly tarred surfaces and fits well with the design of a modern entry/exit port. The general feel is that South Africa presents more as a modern, technologically-inclined space compared to the Zimbabwean side. However, the paradox is that it participants indicated that the Zimbabwean officials had -barring instances of corruption from revenue officers- more competence and professionalism. The south African side was noted to be often characterised by idling workers who appeared to deliberately work sluggishly especially at very specific times of the month. Participants noted that the Zimbabwean side was characterised by general efficiency save for during public holidays when an influx of travellers overwhelmed the staff. MaNdlovu indicated that one had to smile and give a positive outlook when dealing with officials from South Africa despite their hostile attitude. This, she stated, was necessary to be given many days to spend in the country. It was not uncommon for some travellers to be afforded 24hrs which for a cross-border trader would be too little time to sell off wares. The more time one was afforded, the less pressed they were to rush through the city. It is to this urban jungle that we now turn.

In the destination

Getting to either Johannesburg is more than arriving at a given site for the participants. Instead, it is entering it. One does not just arrive at Johannesburg's station but gets into it. The vitality of the city is evident as one arrives, often early in the morning, with people rushing through Park Station or Newtown. Here there appears to be no time to pause and this appears to be a cue for one of the cross-border traders who immediately declares '*asilandanga ukuzolala lapha/ we did not come here to relax*' (Nontobeko, April 2017). It is as though the entry to some spaces gives life to the actors. Depending on the activities of a migrant, Johannesburg has many experiences to offer. The cross-border trader immediately visits

clients and contacts strewn across the metropolitan city. Sales are made at market stalls, in formal businesses, within the city centre and in its periphery. To the transnational migrant, arrival is akin to meeting a wave which immediately carries them together with the already busy residents of the city. Without missing a step, they become one with the city, playing their part in the hustle and bustle of urban life.

Nontobeko not only sells wares from Zimbabwe in South Africa but upon completion of her sales, purchases household goods for further resale in Zimbabwe. Resultantly, she traverses various commercial spaces in search of bargains and opportunities to commercially exploit. This means going through various other local ports and terminals as well as interacting with various retailers. Oddly, she is not fluent in the indigenous languages of South Africa -save for some isiZulu- possibly because of the people she interacts with for business. In the main, her clients and suppliers are foreign businesspeople who include art dealers from Europe, Asians and Nigerians. As a result, the main language used for communication is English.

The caution and trepidation that continuously grips migrants in Johannesburg is in stark contrast to the calm demeanour which they possess when they get back to Bulawayo. Although acknowledging that crime also exists in Bulawayo, it is emphasised that violent crime is very rare. Instead, it is likely that one may be a victim of petty crime unless they carelessly travel at night alone in some sections of the city. In Johannesburg, even serene spaces can rapture into violence as robberies and muggings are commonplace and random. Bulawayo is also much more serene compared to Johannesburg. 'The pace of life here is slow' (MaNdlovu, April 2017). The bustle that is characteristic of Johannesburg is replaced by a calm disposition in Bulawayo.

DISCUSSION

Given all the observations and insights, what insights can we derive from the mobilities of participants? Our analysis starts off with a reminder of Amartya Sen's definition of development which indicates that development is 'a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy'. In this sense, it can be read through the attitudes, interpretations and experiences of migrants from Zimbabwe. Through their various mobilities and the interactions they have with space, other people and objects. The inanimate objects which migrants encounter are largely situated in urban contexts. From this perspective, the development that is read here is intertwined with various urbanisms ranging from economic, social to political. In short, we argue here that the movement of people for various reasons reflects their quest and in some cases attainment of development. It is an exercise in realizing their freedoms. However, as is evident in the conflicts as one moves from Bulawayo to Johannesburg, the freedoms are neither fixed nor given. Social freedoms read through the deployment of language and concerns for security flow from one space to the next. In one moment a person may consider themselves as content or to loosely use the term, 'developed' while in another space and moment they are not. Bulawayo is in this instance representative of a place where one can be comfortable and free socially while Johannesburg poses many other challenges. This observation has been identified by De Boeck and Plissart (2004) cited in Myers (2011) in a study of Kinshasa and its 'second world' which poses different meanings from the western notion of urbanity. However, Johannesburg is not only a place of gloom. Instead, it poses numerous economic opportunities as evidenced by the movement of the four Zimbabwe migrants to the city at various intervals. This resonates well with the assertion that Johannesburg is among a small group of African cities which feature solid prosperity factors (UNHABITAT, 2012). The trips to sell wares and the choice to reside in the city are indicative of an attraction to the city's economic potentiality. Here the rational choice adherent would suggest that the migrant has calculated that their utility maximisation is more likely to be achieved in Johannesburg compared to other possible sites.

The attainment of social freedoms is not entirely absent in Johannesburg and along the way in South Africa. As has been observed by Siziba (2014), our participants engage in code switching when engaging with various persons as an entry fee. This also rekindles the question of 'who Speaks

what language to whom and when?' (Fishman, 1965, p.67), a linguistic demonstration of degrees of freedom and nature of relations. To the researcher, participants could engage in Ndebele or English, to clients in South Africa their repertoire of linguistic skills would be put to full use with various languages being deployed. Where it so happened that the researcher and clients or service personnel were in the same place as the participant, a multiplicity of languages were used to demonstrate the centrality of the participant as a mediator between foreign persons. In social terms, mobility was therefore a way of seeking out development as well as demonstrating freedoms. The migrant in various spaces ceased to be a person deprived of agency and power but one capable of producing social goods useful to strangers.

Mobilities also enabled for a reading of development not as a fixed state or outcome but as a process with negotiated terms and outcomes. For instance, through the various transit areas, it was evident that although spaces in South Africa symbolized modernity and Zimbabwe's transit spot was relatively less developed, various other elements contributed to an overall picture of development. It was not only economic outcomes that were deemed useful as a measure of development but other variables such as social and security features (personal and physical security). Transit spaces revealed how aspirations and achievements of development were fluid. On the one hand South Africa's macro-economic stability and infrastructural layout were enviable to the migrants. On the other, the concerns over physical and personal security were worrisome such that Zimbabwe was deemed more acceptable as a place to reside despite its *kiya-kiya* (Jones, 2010) and anemic economy (Coltart, 2008). The movement of persons in various spaces reveals that such terms as development or even advancement are not fixities and therefore when migrants move from one area to another, it is not an osmotic transition where persons move from a region of low development to one of advanced development. Instead, spaces moved through and the meanings of such spaces and encounters therein reveal that development is negotiated and understood through various prisms.

So far, the discussion has portrayed mobilities considering the participants. While this is due to the methodological approach adopted, it is useful to consider meanings of the encounters considering migration officers at ports of entry and exit. The officials in these spaces comprise of police officers, immigration officials, customs officials as well as military personnel. As noted, on the Zimbabwean side, there were concerns with corruption despite efficient and reliable processing of documentation. On the south African side, the lethargic service delivery was bemoaned by participants. Numerous studies have revealed the problems faced by officials in migration management on the South African side (Crush, 1997; Crush, 2000; Danso & McDonald, 2000; Landau, 2007) with lesser research being expended on scrutiny of the Zimbabwe side (Pophiwa, 2007; Pophiwa, 2010). Although all studies reflect an incapacity to effectively deal with the migration management matter, it is evident that the tinge of anti-foreigner sentiment is manifest among officials in South Africa. However, far from being a sentiment unanimously reserved for all foreigners, it appears space and context give it life. A personal reflection is useful in this regard to contrast with proceedings on the South African side of the border post. On a different trip altogether and upon the author landing at O.R Tambo airport, he was struck by how friendly, courteous and efficient the staff were. Instead of being told how many days were to be allocated upon stay, the staff afforded the author a generous number of days spanning a full month. This contrasts starkly with the exchanges at Beitbridge where migrants are in many cases given the impression that they are unwelcome.

Instead of being viewed as a burden or problem to South Africa, migrants portray themselves as useful economic agents who add value to the economic system in contradiction to the treatment they receive at the border post. On the Zimbabwean side, the association of officials with corrupt practices is consistent with the notion that institutions in the country are weak. Yet once again, exposure at the country's airports gives a different picture. The assertion by Büscher (2012) that mobilities paradigm allows researchers to demonstrate realities through investigations of movement, blocked movement, potential movement and immobility, dwelling and place-making rings true in the Beitbridge-Johannesburg route.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study has discussed mobility of migrants who ply the Beitbridge-Johannesburg route. It has relied on the mobilities turn or the mobilities paradigm to reveal the interplay of human migration and development. It has revealed that persons in various spaces (re)imagine and realise development. Development when construed as freedom can be read in the movement of people across space. As a result, movement is part of some forms of development as well as being a conduit to some forms of development. Analysing the experience of four Zimbabwean migrants, the study reveals that migrants derive meaning of development in various places. Development is not only measured or assessed by migrants in economic terms but encompasses social concerns as well. In this sense, Johannesburg and Bulawayo are not unanimously portrayed as developed but have various elements which make for their status. Bulawayo enables the migrants to identify with security and personal freedoms while Johannesburg enables migrants to identify with economic freedoms. Physical space at places of departure, in transit, at ports of entry and exit as well as at places of arrival produce and reproduce meaning of development to the migrants. Depending on context, the migrant will identify with development either in Johannesburg or in Bulawayo. This scenario leads us to make a narrow set of recommendations.

Two recommendations are made here. The first is for researchers to become more involved in studies which embrace theories and methodologies which incorporate the experiences and realities of migrants between spaces to give a more broad and nuanced portrayal of phenomena. Although this recommendation is made with concepts such as mobilities, it resonates with embedding migration studies within a broad understanding of contemporary society (Castles, 2010). Mobilities reveals the contemporary meanings and experiences in a novel way by showing how different places, spaces and symbols have various meanings both to migrants as well as to development.

The second recommendation is that policymakers to embrace places not merely as physical space which is devoid of meaning but to begin to take more cognizance of their meanings. Assuming such a perspective enables them to better manage migration and perceptions over such matters as hostilities and xenophobic sentiments.

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ⁱ www.herald.co.zw/cabinet-approves-national-diaspora-policy/

ⁱⁱ The Chronicle Newspaper. RBZ Monetary Policy statement: 2004 Second Quarter Review. 2004/07/28, pp. B2-B5

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.newsday.co.zw/2015/04/02/diasporans-challenge-mugabe-to-prove-sincerity/>

^{iv} <https://www.google.co.zw/maps/dir/Bulawayo+City+Hall,+Fife+Street,+Bulawayo/Johannesburg,+Rissik+St,+CBD,+Johannesburg,+South+Africa/@-23.2037097,26.3813129,7z/data=!4m14!4m13!1m5!1m1!1s0x1eb55474f75e1971:0x4847c57a1613a872!2m2!1d28.5857812!2d-20.1547217!1m5!1m1!1s0x1e950c21e0fabb17:0x3af7aaba0fc6da84!2m2!1d28.04218!2d-26.1972089!3e0>

^v We use pseudonyms in this paper to protect the identity of participants and to adhere to ethical protocols.