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University of Witwatersrand
The Graduate School for the Humanities and Social Sciences
Forced Migration Studies Programme

THE IMPACT OF REFUGEE-HOST COMMUNITY INTERACTIONS ON REFUGEES' NATIONAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITIES: THE CASE OF BURUNDIAN HUTU REFUGEES IN JOHANNESBURG

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, Department of Forced Migration Studies, Graduate School for the Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Witwatersrand

Johannesburg, March 2005

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my brother Jean and to all victims of the ethnic conflict in the Great Lakes Region.

ACKNOWLEGEMENT

I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr Loren B. Landau for his tremendous and invaluable support both on and off academic matters.

I am most grateful to the Wits Forced Migration Studies Programme for the financial support that enabled the successful completion of this study.

I also owe special thanks to all refugees, asylum seekers and South Africans who participated in this study for dedicating their time to share their experiences with me.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Masters in Forced Migration Studies, in the Graduate School for the Humanities and Social Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted for any other degree or examination in any other university.

Jean Pierre MISAGO March 2005

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to establish the impact of socio-economic interactions between Hutu Burundian refugees (living in Johannesburg) and South African populations on Burundian refugees' national and ethnic identities.

Although this is a case study on Burundian Hutu Refugees in Johannesburg, Rwandan refugees and South Africans were also included for comparative purposes. The snowballing technique was used to identify respondents and in-depth face-to-face interviews were used to collect data. Questions probed respondents' pre-relocation national and ethnic identity loyalties; the nature and frequency of interactions between them and local populations and other foreign nationals; and the respondents' current national and ethnic identity loyalties.

The study finds that despite regular contact with the host populations, refugee respondents maintained their ethnic and national identities, thus challenging the assumption that to become uprooted and removed from a national territory automatically causes people to lose their identity, traditions, and culture. Further, apart from the adoption of some new situational practices particularly by refugee respondents, the study finds no significant 'renegotiation' or 'contestation' of group identities in the cosmopolitan Johannesburg as both South Africans and refugees/migrants in the city seem to be firmly holding on to their distinctive identitive ideals. Although not conclusive, the study suggests that the negative nature of interactions between refugees and the host society, which compromises the possibility of assimilation and integration, as well as other internal and external factors such as the refugees' belief in the temporariness of their situation, may be among important factors that accounted for this maintenance of group identity.

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CHAPTER ONE

I. INTRODUCTION

Context

Inspired by the work and research findings by Malkki (1995) on Burundian Hutu refugees[1] in Western Tanzania, this study seeks to establish the impact of socio-economic interactions between Hutu Burundian refugees (living in Johannesburg) and local populations on Burundian refugees' national and ethnic identity.

As Landau (2003) notes, forced migration - of refugees, the internally displaced, and those escaping endemic poverty - has become an increasingly prominent feature of the developing world's social landscape. As a result, he further points out, there is a growing recognition that refugees' interests, perceptions and capacities do not operate in a vacuum, but interact, shape and are in turn shaped by the interests, perceptions and capacities of host populations and governments. In the same vein, Kroner (2003) agrees that migration of persons and flows of refugees always entails, especially in urban settings, the contact of at least two collective identities and local cultures – those of migrants and refugees and those of host communities. He further asserts that refugees can no longer be seen as humans without history and culture; rather they carry along their local culture, investing it into their host society.

[1] For the purpose of the present study, the term 'refugees' refers to the whole group of forced migrants including refugees (those with status) and asylum seekers.

Despite the considerable number of studies done in this domain, results are still inconclusive as to what extent, or how, these different cultures and identities, whose contact may come in form of social, economic and cultural interactions, impact on each other. Do these interactions between hosts and migrants lead to migrants giving less importance to national and ethnic identities in favour of assimilation or adoption of a hybrid or cosmopolitan identity as suggested by Malkki (1995)? Do they lead to trust and improved intergroup relations as held by the 'Contact hypothesis' (Allport, 1954; Forbes, 1997)? Or do they lead to reification of group boundaries (Barth, 1996), to local populations strengthening their identitive ties to their national ideals (Landau, 2003) or high levels of xenophobia, antagonism and conflict among ethnic and national groups (Crush, 2000; Landau and Jacobsen, 2004)? The present study contributes to this line of enquiry by examining the direction of the impact of these interactions on forced migrants' national and ethnic identities in terms of group identity loyalties.

The present study focuses on national and ethnic identities because, although it has been argued that individuals simultaneously belong to many different social group identities that become salient at different times and different situations (Pittinsky, 1999; Smith, 1991), they may be considered the steadiest of social group identities. Smith (1991: 176), for example, argues that:

> National identity does in fact today exert a more potent and durable influence than other collective cultural identities, and this type of collective identity is likely to continue to command humanity's allegiances for a long time to come, even when other larger-scale but looser forms of collective identity emerge alongside national ones.

Similarly, Barth (1969) argues that ethnic identity and categorical ethnic distinctions and boundaries persist despite regular or perpetual social relations and contact with other social groups.

Although ethnic and national identities have been described as closely related in a variety of ways, with some authors arguing that national identity encompasses all other identities be they ethnic or cultural (see Kaunismaa, 1995), the present study considers these notions separately because in some cases, ethnic identity forms a distinct category, which competes with or even may be hostile to national identity (for example in Chechnya, see Kaunismaa, 1995). This may also be the case for forced migrants like Burundian Hutu refugees whose main reason for flight is ethnic conflict. Malkki (1995) documents that, for example, refugees in Mishamo camp thought of the Hutu identity as the only 'true' Burundian national identity.

The parameter of loyalty to national and ethnic identity is chosen for a twofold reason. Firstly, it implies both awareness and consciousness of the group's specific cultural ideology and traditional mythology (Jezima, 1999) and individual, conscious efforts to develop or protect such distinct identification; and second it is likely to provide more concrete measures of ethnic and/or national identity than other parameters such as consciousness and awareness that are more abstract and more internally experienced, hence more difficult to measure.

Aim

Following the widespread assertion – as outlined in the previous section - that interactions between hosts and migrants impact somehow on each group's perceptions, cultures and identities, the purpose of this study is to establish how these interactions influence -or what kind of impact they have on- refugees' national, ethnic identities. More specifically the study seeks to answer the following question:

> *How do socio-economic interactions between Hutu Burundian refugees (living in Johannesburg) and local populations impact on Burundian refugees' national and ethnic identity loyalties?*

Rationale

The current study is part of a wider research project that seeks to document and explore the experiences of self-settled urban refugees and South Africans in central Johannesburg. It will help in finding the answers to one of the wider project questions of "*how the frequency and nature of contact between urban refugees and the local population affect group loyalties and affiliations?"*[2]

Further, the divergences found in the current literature on the impact of inter-group interactions on group identity, and on research findings on refugees' identity in exile call for further investigation in this field. Thus this study hopes to shed more light and contribute to the understanding of the impact of social interactions on group identity by

[2] Question from the Johannesburg Project: Survey Research on Urban Refugees

establishing how socio-economic interactions, between migrants and host populations, impact on migrants' national and/or ethnic identity loyalties.

This study is also potentially important in the South African context, as it helps to shed light on how group identities are being renegotiated and contested, as Johannesburg becomes increasingly a global and a cosmopolitan city.

Hypothesis

The present study's working assumption or main argument is that high *levels of cooperative social and economic interactions between refugees and host populations will be positively correlated with increasing trust among groups (i.e. refugees and hosts), but not necessarily with the decline of refugees' loyalties to their national or ethnic identity.* A discussion on these variables is provided in the methodology section.

As an overview of findings, the study finds that, apart from the adoption of some new situational practices, the vast majority of refugee respondents in the sample remained loyal to their ethnic and national identities despite regular contact and interactions with local South Africans and other immigrants. Thus there were no fundamental changes in refugees' national and ethnic identities as a result of interactions with the host populations. The recorded uncooperative and unfriendly nature of interactions between refugees and host populations as well as other factors such as the refugees' belief in the 'temporariness' of their situation seem to be the most important reasons why refugees in the sample maintain their respective national and ethnic identities.

Structure of the report

This report is divided into four chapters. This introductory chapter outlines the context of the study, the aim, the rationale and the hypothesis, as well as the relevant literature that places the study in a broader context; Chapter two discusses the methodology, which highlights key tasks, operational definition of variables, research design, population and sampling; techniques of data collection and analysis; ethical considerations; challenges and the limitations of the study. Chapter three deals with data presentation and analysis while Chapter four provides a discussion of the findings.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This literature review highlights the major theoretical conceptions on social interactions and group identity and relations; and research findings on the impact of migration on local national/group identity, and on refugees' national and ethnic identities in exile. The nature and effect of interactions between migrants and locals in South Africa (as the site of the study) is also briefly discussed. By pinpointing divergent tendencies in current theoretical conceptions and research findings, this literature review helps in justifying the *raison d'être* of this study and positioning it in a broader context.

Social interactions, group identity and inter-group relations

There is an ongoing debate about the impact of social contact on group identity and intergroup relations. As Yehuda (1998) argues, intergroup contact is commonly believed to reduce prejudice and intergroup tension. Yet there is also evidence that intergroup contact may have no positive effect on prejudice, or may even exacerbate tensions.

According to Forbes (1997), two major correlations are commonly found in situations of ethnic and intergroup contact. On the one hand, there is the easily observed negative correlation that supports the familiar contact hypothesis: the more personal contact, the less conflict (prejudice, discrimination, hostility, etc). On the other hand, there is a positive correlation suggested by many historical and sociological studies of contact

situations: more contact and more conflict. Pettigrew (1998b, in Forbes, 1997) argues that the world is experiencing two major intergroup trends –massive migrations and increased group conflict. The question is then how can social interactions be associated with both increases and decreases in group antagonism?

THE CONTACT HYPOTHESIS

Developed by G. W. Allport in 1954, the contact hypothesis is a broad generalization about the effect of personal contact between members of different ethnic or racial groups on their prejudices, opinions and discriminatory behaviour. The basic idea is that more contact between individuals belonging to different groups defined by culture, language, beliefs, skin colour, nationality, etc (i.e. contact across boundaries) leads to improved intergroup relations (Forbes, 1997). This view has been dominant in social science and has been treated as an empirical hypothesis supported by a number of studies such as Robin Williams' (1964) survey on social contacts and ethnic attitudes in United States. The study concluded that more contact resulted in improved social relations between different racial and ethnic groups (Forbes, 1997). Thus, according to this view, socio-economic interactions between migrants and local populations would result in integration and harmonious cohabitation, and eventually lead to the declining importance of 'old' ethnic, national and group identities.

A number of authors (such as Pettigrew, 1998b; Pettigrew and Tropp, 2000; Miller, 2002 see Forbes 1997) do not agree with the core assumption of the contact hypothesis. Their main argument is that if more contact reduced levels of intergroup antipathy, one would not expect high levels of conflict in those parts of the world where different

racial and ethnic groups are in the most frequent contact. Yet this seems to be what is currently happening. One illustrative example is the Hutu-Tutsi case in Rwanda and Burundi. These two groups have lived side by side for time immemorial; they speak the same language, worship the same Gods (Lemarchand, 1998). In brief, they have almost everything in common, from the religious and cultural beliefs to social organisation (Prunier, 1995). Despite these regular interactions, these two groups have been and are still engaged in the most atrocious of conflictual relations.

Thus, like a number of authors (Abner, 1996; Barth, 1996; Eriksen, 2002) argue, ethnic and group boundaries are formed and reinforced as a result of intensive interaction between different groups and not as a result of complete isolation. The contact with the other would make you realize what you are and what you are not and this would probably lead to the reinforcement or reification of subjective affiliation to one's own group. It still has to be proved whether this can help in understanding antagonistic relations (discussed in the following section) between migrants and local populations.

MIGRATION AND LOCAL NATIONAL/GROUP IDENTITY

The current generalized tendency of local populations to reify or reinforce their subjective affiliation to national ideals as a result of migration, which implies "proximity and social interaction with non-citizens" (Crush, 2000), is further evidence against the core assumption of the contact hypothesis. This tendency has been noted in a number of studies.

Using a case study of Kasulu – a refugee-affected area in Tanzania, Landau (2003) documented that contact with migrants resulted in local populations strengthening their socially constructed boundaries and in fortification of their affiliation to national normative disciplines and ideals. Other authors have noted, for example high levels of xenophobia and antagonism among various ethno-national and religious groups in many urban areas with high densities of migrants (Crush, 2000); and an increased salience of ethnic or religious divisions in migration-affected areas (Barth, 1996), which demonstrates further that migration or intergroup interactions may lead to the formation and strengthening of exclusive national identities and social boundaries.

Likewise, the declining of national citizenship in Europe (due to migration, globalization and other transnational factors), instead of leading to 'convergence' of values, is perceived to be leading to reinventions and reassertions of national identities and violent vocalization of anti-foreigner groups (Brubaker, ed. 1989).

The discussion above shows clearly that there is a sharp disagreement among scholars about the impact of interactions on group relations and identity. This disagreement is also reflected in research findings on refugee identities in exile discussed below.

Research findings on refugee identities in exile

The debate about the refugees' identities in their host countries is also far from being settled. Some authors argue that, in exile, due to contact with a new environment, refugees lose or are most likely to lose their ethnic, national and cultural identities, while others contend that displacement does not necessarily lead to loss of identity as in

most cases refugees manage to keep their ethnic, national and cultural identities even when conditions are not conducive to do so. The discussion below confronts these two arguments.

Talking about the initial stage of exile for refugees in general, Stein (quoted in Malkki, 1995) predicts, “They will confront the loss of their culture, their identity, their habits. Every action that used to be habitual or routine will require careful examination and consideration”. Likewise, Taylor and Nathan (in Malkki, 1995) argue that refugees lose their patterns of conduct because of the uncertainty of what kind of behaviour is acceptable or unacceptable in their new environment. The patterns of behaviour that sustained life at home are no longer sufficient. These views illustrate the implicit assumption found in the current literature of refugee studies that to become uprooted and removed from a national community is automatically to lose one’s identity, tradition, and culture. The bare fact of movement or displacement across nation-state borders is often assumed a priori to entail not even a transformation but a loss of culture and/or identity (Malkki, 1995).

Further, in a comparative study of camp-based and self-settled Burundian Hutu refuges in western Tanzania, Malkki (1995: 2) found “radical differences in the meanings that people ascribed to national identity and history, to notions of home and homeland, and to exile as a collectively experienced condition”. In attempting to develop and maintain a distinct ‘collective Hutu identity’, refugees in camp (Mishamo) engaged in continuous construction and reconstruction of their history as a people (the ‘mythico-history’ narratives), while self-settled refugees in Kigoma did not engage in those spontaneous, oratorical didactic monologues about the history of the Hutu as a means of preserving a

distinct collective identity. Rather they sought ways by which to assimilate themselves into the larger society and consequently "produced more cosmopolitan forms of identity" (Malkki 1995: 4). "The very ability to lose one's identity and to move through categories was for many a form of freedom and even security" (Malkki, 1995: 16).

If it is implied that it was the special isolation that helped in maintaining a distinct collective Hutu identity in Mishamo, it goes without saying that the differences observed among town refugees would be attributed to contact or interactions with others, which goes in favour of the idea that interactions between refugees and host populations led to refugees' loss or declining importance of their national and ethnic identity.

Analysing these findings, Kibreab (1999) argues that the 'strategy of invisibility' adopted by town refugees in response to 'inauspicious policy environment' was a *façade* and not a reflection of a loss of identity. Using Malkki's own data, he shows that town refugees valued and were determined to keep their Burundian national identity as indicated by their refusal to become Tanzanian citizens or party members. For him, hiding identity is not a measure of loss of identity. Kibreab further illustrates his argument with another example of Eritrean refugees in Sudan and Saudi Arabia who assumed fictive Muslim identity not because they had lost their collective identity or attachment to their home country, or wanted to assimilate into Sudanese or Saudi society but because it was a strategy that enabled them to carry out their political, economic and social activities by evading detection.

Similarly, Kroner (2003), studying the identity of Somali refugees in Egypt, documents that, although within the Somali community identities were further differentiated, they maintained and even strengthened their collective identity of being Somali. Further, Jolluck (2002) reveals not only the harsh treatment Polish women in the Soviet Union during World War II experienced, but also how they maintained their identities as respectable women and patriotic Poles. She finds that for those exiled, the ways in which they strove to recreate home in a foreign and hostile environment became a key means of their survival.

The findings above corroborate Bakewell's (in Jacobsen, 2001) argument that, although some may wish to establish new lives as 'normal' people among those where they settle, in many cases, refugees want to maintain their national identity and attachment to their country of origin by remaining marked out with special status and treatment.

The present study drew its main assumption from Kibreab's line of thinking by arguing that interactions between refugees and hosts do not necessarily lead to refugees losing - or giving less importance to- the attachment to their national or ethnic identities. Adherence to new identities does not necessarily override the attachment to old ones, especially in situations where refugees believe in the temporariness of their situation (Kibreab, 1989).

South African context

In South Africa, there are no official restrictive policies that would compel refugees and migrants in general to hide their national or ethnic identities. However, high levels of

stereotype and xenophobia make contact and social interaction between immigrants and hosts very difficult and rare. Crush (2000) documents that South Africans as a whole are not tolerant of outsiders living in the country. A number of surveys revealed strong support for policies that would place strict limits on or prohibit immigration altogether. He also notes that the majority of migrants and immigrants are much aware of the negativity that surrounds their presence in the country. What follows is that many South Africans have no direct interaction and experience of foreigners, even from neighboring states. In the 1998 survey, only 4% of respondents said they had "a great deal of contact" with people from countries in Southern Africa; with 80% having little or none.

One of the immigrants' responses or coping mechanisms is to regroup themselves and live in their respective communities where they are likely to maintain the distinctive characteristics of their national or ethnic identities. This view is supported by the Johannesburg Project data that reveal that more than 2/3 of migrants interviewed stayed either with family/kin or friends from country of origin. The same data reveals that, despite increases in the frequency of interactions with hosts, most (76%) migrants find it important to maintain their distinctive culture and customs; more than 83% are proud to identify with their national and ethnic identity, and more than 51% would put their lives at risk to defend their country of origin and their ethnic groups/tribes. The current study was meant to test the reliability of these findings by establishing whether they could be generalized to other groups of migrants, and to give a more qualitative explanation to those preliminary quantitative data.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

Key tasks

To determine the impact of socio-economic interactions between Burundian Hutu refugees and local populations on the former group's national and ethnic identity loyalties, the following key tasks were performed:

1. To determine the respondents' pre-relocation national and ethnic identity loyalties;
2. To assess the nature and frequency of interactions between respondents and local populations;
3. To assess the respondents' current national and ethnic identity loyalties;
4. To evaluate hypotheses and develop, based on data analysis and literature review, possible explanations of findings.

Operational definition of variables

This discussion aims at giving the variables a precise meaning for the purpose of the study and in doing so provides indicators for their measurement.

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

The dependent variable of this study is the refugees' national and ethnic identity loyalties.

Ethnic identity

A brief overview of different theoretical approaches to ethnicity would help understand where different and often divergent definitions of ethnicity stem from and will help shape up a working definition for the purpose of the current study. Taras and Ganguly (2002) identified three major schools of thought that attempt to account for the formation and persistence of ethnic identity: *the primordialist, the instrumentalist,* and *the constructivist.*

For the *Primordialists* (such as Geertz, Isaacs and others), ethnic identity is a given and natural phenomenon, and ethnic groups are seen as the network into which human individuals are born and where every human infant or young child finds itself a member of a kinship group or of a neighborhood, and therefore comes to share with other group members certain common objective cultural attributes such as language, religion, customs, tradition, food, dress and music. They also stress the subjective and psychological aspects of a self- and group-related feeling of identity distinctiveness and its recognition by others as a crucial determinant of ethnic identity formation and persistence. Thus, according to this approach, ethnic identity is "a subjectively held sense of shared identity based on objective cultural identities". In this sense, ethnic affiliations would be historical and unchangeable, and institutions can accomplish little beyond reflecting differences. This approach has been criticized for its relative failure to account for ethnic change and dissolution, as well as the effects of immigration and intermarriage in the modern world (Brass in Smith, 1996).

Instrumentalists (such as Barth and Glazer in Taras and Ganguly 2002: 5)) reject the primordialist view and argue that:

> ethnicity is a creation of elites who draw upon, distort and sometimes fabricate materials from the cultures of the groups they wish to represent in order to protect their well-being or existence or to gain political and economic advantages for their groups as well as for themselves.

The quintessential instrumentalist view is contained in the "rational choice theory", which suggest that individuals select ethnicity to organize collective action if the individual benefits they expect to derive from doing so outweigh costs. It assumes that social actors will choose ethnicity as a criterion of social differentiation and political organization on the basis of predetermined preference (Hechter, Friedman, and Appelbaum, 1982). The instrumentalist approach implies then that the intensity and character of ethnic ties are transformable and malleable. This model can be criticized for taking the ethnic nature of organizations as granted and generally for failing to account for the mass passions evoked by ethnic ties and cultural symbols. If the primordialists fail to account for ethnic change, instrumentalists seem unable to cope with ethnic durability.

In their turn, *Constructivists* reject the notion ethnic identity is a natural/given phenomenon or that it is a tool manipulated by ethnic entrepreneurs for individual and collective political ends. For them, ethnic identities are enduring social constructions; they are products of human actions and choices rather than biologically given ideas whose meaning in dictated by nature. "The cultural construction of social descents leads to the formation of ethnic identity because it determines the characteristics that indicate who does or does not belong to the same people as one self" (Taras and Ganguly, 2002: 6). The model goes further to suggest that cultural markers can be manipulated to rationalize the identity and existence of an ethnic group.

A deeper analytical evaluation of these different approaches (which is beyond the scope of this paper) would certainly show that they all present strengths and weaknesses,

which calls for a more integrating approach to account for all aspects of ethnic identity formation and maintenance.

Following the above theoretical perspectives, ethnic identity is recognized on a wide variety of different bases. Some authors view ethnicity (in a sense of ethnic identity) as:

> …a biological, ideological, and socially constructed concept. It is biological in the sense that ethnic characteristics are generally passed down through biological family members who are part of a larger biological family group. In terms of ideology, ethnic groups also pass down values, ideas, and principles that shape the norms and behaviour of their group. And, as a component of the larger human society, a distinct ethnic group is a social unit that is defined as part of the larger social unit[3].

In different cases, groups identify themselves as an ethnically united community by means of some combination of markers or symbolic elements such as kinship, physical contiguity (as in localism and sectionalism), language, religion affiliations, phenotypical features or history (Hunt and Walker, 1974). However, what is decisive in constituting a particular ethnic identity is not shared historical experiences, myths and religious beliefs or other features *per se*; these only become decisive when there is a shared perception that they distinguish members of that group from those of other groups in some significant way (Smith, 2000). Thus ethnicity refers to a subjective perception of common origins, historical memories, ties and aspirations and "a necessary accompaniment is some consciousness of kind among members of group" (Schermerhon, 1970: 12).

The study considers four factors as important components of ethnic identity[4]:

i. Self-identification, which refers to self-labeling;
ii. Ethnic behaviors and practices, which focuses on the activities and behaviors that are considered distinct for a particular group;

[3] Gypsies in Canada; the Promised Land. News in Review December 1997. Resource Guide Online. http://www.tv.cbc.ca/newsinreview/dec97/gypsies/ethnic.html
[4] These factors were identified by Rotheram & Phinney (1989)

iii. Affirmation and belonging, which assesses how much one accepts and values one's ethnicity;
iv. Ethnic identity achievement, which measures the degree to which a person is committed to, is exploring and is identifying with a distinct group.

Although the study assesses all the components mentioned above, it mainly relies on self-identification as an indicator of ethnic membership; hence for the purpose of this study, ethnic loyalty is used to connote self-designation in and commitment to a specific ethnic group.

National identity

Territory and a legal-political community are the most distinguishing markers between national and ethnic identity. Smith (1991) defines national identity as a collective phenomenon whose special features include, among others, a historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a legal-political community and a common mass, civic public culture and ideology. He further argues that national identity fulfills more intimate and internal functions for individuals and communities by providing repertoires of shared values, symbols, and traditions. By the use of symbols, flags, anthems, coinage, ceremonies, etc, members are reminded of their common heritage and cultural kinship and feel strengthened and exalted by their sense of common identity and belonging. A sense of national identity provides a powerful means of defining individual selves in the world through the prism of the collective personality and its distinctive culture

As culture is perhaps the most essential referent of national identity (Kaunismaa, 1995); for the purpose of the present study, an individual is identified as being loyal to his/her national identity if he/she is proud to identify with the nation, feels a strong bond with

national identity; is ready to make sacrifices to defend the interests of his/her national group; observes and is committed to preserving the purity of his/her national public common culture, i.e. shared cultural characteristics including social norms, certain cultural ideals such as religious beliefs, national language, arts, folk culture, dressing codes, etc. and is aware of and respects important national symbols and ceremonies.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE: SOCIAL-ECONOMIC INTERACTIONS

The nature of interactions this study is interested in is cooperative rather than competitive for the obvious reason that competition would result in antagonism among groups involved. Further, the socio-economic interactions of interest here are those that are crystallized, i.e., not simply occasional or capricious but those that have a pattern of some repetition and can, to some extent, be predicted, and are based on a set of shared expectations (Hunt and Walker, 1974). These can be observed when there is, for instance, a common participation and involvement in institutional activities of the society such as economic and occupational life (for example, in this case, when refugees share business with nationals, are employed by -or are employers of- nationals, or when they are co-workers); religious activities; marriage (between migrants and locals); education (going to same schools); recreation (sports and other plays); intimate friendships and all sorts of cultural activities and ceremonies.

Research methods

The present study used both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The qualitative approach was used in data collection. Such an approach is well suited for studies (such as the current one) that require deep exploration of parameters such as knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors of the target population. Quantitative methods were solely used in data analysis where the SPSS programme helped summarize data, highlight predominant views and explore the hypothesis.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This project is a case study. A case study involves the detailed examination of a relatively few persons or items (Casley and Cury, 1981) and as such "is an intensive, detailed description and analysis of a single project in the context of its environment"[5]. This design suits the current study because the subjects or participants were drawn from particular chosen areas.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of this study is Burundian Hutu refugees living in Johannesburg. Although Burundians do not form the largest refugee community in Johannesburg, they constitute the primary focus of this study because they have a unique historical background in terms of ethnic relations, and the results of this study will be a test of reliability of previous research findings on this particular ethnic group's identity in exile. For comparative reasons, another group of immigrants namely Rwandans, known to have strong ethnic background (considering numerous ethnic conflicts in that country) was also included. A small number of South Africans were also considered to

[5] http://www.ehr.nsf.gov/EHR/REC/pubs/NSF97-153/CHAP_9.HTM

get more insight into the dynamics of the interactions between them and foreigners/migrants.

SAMPLING

"The drawing of conclusions from data generally requires researchers to rest their case on partial information" (Nachmias, et al, 1976: 251). Sampling is the selection of a part to represent a whole (Peil, 1982). A sample is a subset of the population. In this case, I sampled a small group or number of Burundian Hutu refugees living Johannesburg to represent the whole Burundian refugee community in Johannesburg.

Sampling strategy

The current study applied the snowballing technique, which is a method for recruiting new cases through a process of onward referral from known cases. Sampling starts with one or more individuals who are known to meet the given criteria. They are interviewed and asked to nominate and facilitate introductions to other people whom they know and who also fulfil the criteria. The nominees are contacted and interviewed, and the process repeated. The sample thus expands by tapping the social contacts and networks.[6] The snowball technique is best used in identifying social networks and in constructing frames to sample rare population (Peil, 1982; Kalsbeek, 2000). This double advantage made it the most suitable sampling technique for the present study because Burundian

[6] Handbook on snowball sampling. Pompidou Group: Group of Epidemiology Experts in Drug Problems Council of Europe 1997

Hutu refugees do not form a big community in Johannesburg and live dispersed in different areas of Johannesburg. The sample for this study consisted mainly of subjects drawn from the Burundian Hutu refugee community in Johannesburg, a smaller group of Rwandan Hutu refugees and another group of South Africans living in the same areas and relatively under the same living conditions.

Sample size and characteristics

Due to time and logistical constraints, the sample size was limited to 40 people: 20 Hutu Burundians refugees as the main group; 10 Hutu Rwandan refugees and 10 South Africans. The study focused only on adult subjects (18 years and above) who would have lived in the area for at least one year. Migrant participants must have been at least 18 years old at the time they left their country of origin. It is believed that at 18 they should have had enough exposure to, and should have understood and internalised all the different components and aspects of their national and ethnic identities. Of 40 participants, 12 were women. This is due to the relatively small number of Burundian refugee women in the areas reached. Such gender imbalance is not believed to have had overly critical implications as far as the findings of this study are concerned. The number of South African women is also smaller than their male counterparts mainly because most of those encountered during the course of the study had lived in the area for a short period of time: less than a year. The table below summarises the number and gender of respondents by country of origin.

Table I. Number of participants by country and gender

		Sex		
		Male	Female	Total
Country	Burundi	15	5	20
	Rwanda	6	4	10
	South Africa	7	3	10
Total		28	12	40

Site selection and localization of respondents

The study used Yeoville and Berea as the two initial points of contact. These two areas were chosen as initial points of contact because they apparently host the highest number of Burundian Refugees in Johannesburg. Two focal persons were initially chosen from each neighbourhood and to minimize the bias of the snowballing technique, after the interview, each respondent was asked to nominate two other potential respondents from which I randomly selected the one to go for, and from there, the process continued until the desired number of respondents was achieved. The majority of participants were from Yeoville followed by Berea but the snowballing technique took me to other areas of Johannesburg such as Hillbrow, Bertrams, Linden, Braamfontein and Aukland Park. See Table II below for details.

Table II. Area of residence by country of origin

		Area							
		Yeoville	Berea	Bertrams	Braamfontein	Hillbrow	Linden	Aukland Park	Total
Country	Burundi	5	6	2	1	3	2	1	20
	Rwanda	6	4						10
	South Africa	5	4	1					10
Total		16	14	3	1	3	2	1	40

Most of refugee respondents (72%) indicated to have chosen the areas they currently stay in because of cheaper accommodation and because they felt much safer to stay in areas where there is a significant presence of members of their respective national communities. They further indicated that during their first days, they stayed with relatives and friends from country of origin who ultimately helped them find accommodation in their neighbourhood. Asked why he chose to stay in his area, respondent 18, a refugee from Rwanda indicates: "Because there are many other Rwandese staying in the same area whom I contacted before coming to stay there." This confirms an earlier finding by CASE (2003: 77) that "upon arrival, applicants generally sought refuge with people with whom they had some affinity or familiarity, be they friends, people from their same country or relatives".

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES, TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS

The data was collected through in-depth face-to-face interviews with the respondents. Interviews with Burundians were conducted in Kirundi, in Kinyarwanda with Rwandans and in English with South Africans. No interpreter was needed, as I am familiar with the three languages, the first two being very similar. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. The respondents were contacted at their habitual residences and/or work places and interviews took place at the respondents' place of choice. Given the high levels of suspicion among migrants, I needed to take some time to familiarize with the target group before the proper investigation could begin. This was in form of visiting community leaders or attending community social gatherings.

The data collection process involved the use of interview schedules with open-ended questions and a loosely structured interview guide (see Appendix). With the consent of the respondents, some interviews were tape-recorded; otherwise I recorded the information on a pre-prepared data sheet. In-depth interviews were preferred because they "maximize opportunities for the expression of a respondent's feelings and ideas through the use of open-ended questions and a loosely structured interview guide"[7]. I developed most of the questions for interviews in addition to questions drawn from studies previously done in the same field especially the Johannesburg Project[8] and the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM)[9].

DATA ANALYSIS

The content analysis technique was used to analyse the raw data from respondents. Content analysis is a method of analysis used in qualitative research in which text (notes) are systematically examined by identifying and grouping themes and coding, classifying and developing categories.[10] Thus the data obtained was grouped into themes and classified into categories, which were in turn coded and computerized. The SPSS programme (although most appropriate for quantitative data) was used to generate summary outputs (frequencies, crosstabulations, ..), graphs and diagrams, as well as to explore hypotheses (in this case, the correlation between variables). Thus a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods was used in data analysis. Data analysis

[7] http://www.geocities.com/seaskj/glossary.html
[8] FMSP Johannesburg Survey; 2003: Human Displacement, Survival, and the Politics of Space
[9] Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) developed by Phinney, J. in 1992. It was first published in Journal of Adolescent Research, 7, 156-176
[10] www.cirem.org.uk/definitions.html

was done concurrently with data collection to avoid the piling up of unanalysed transcripts, which would have made the final analysis difficult.

Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted prior to the actual project to test the validity of the instrument. The instrument was administered to 5 foreign students at Wits and the exercise was very helpful. It resulted in identifying and removing a number of irrelevant items from the instrument. A significant number of items were reformulated for more clarity and some previously forgotten or overlooked items or aspects thereof were further included. It also helped in approximating the time actual interviews would take.

Challenges

A number of technical challenges were encountered during the course of this study. As noted by earlier researchers such as Landau (2004); Jacobsen and Landau (2003) and Kibreab (2003); researching urban self-settled refugees has always been problematic especially in terms of developing an adequate sampling strategy 'that allows one to make claims of representativeness'. This is made particularly difficult by the 'less accurate estimates of the size of one's intended study populations and their spatial distribution' (Landau, 2004).

Another bitterly felt challenge encountered during the course of the study was the (in)availability of participants. Despite their genuine interest, respondents, especially migrants seemed to be particularly busy to the extent that two to three attempts were to

be made before securing an interview with one respondent and sometimes during late hours after work or business. Further, some subjects (insignificant number) contacted refused to participate if no incentives were given as, they say, it is the case with other researchers from some non-governmental organisations who, for instance give food parcels to participants after interviews. They felt that I may have been given money for the research and I did not want to share with them.

Nevertheless, by adopting, as suggested, 'an innovative strategy demanding creativity [and] a willingness to compromise' (Kibreab in AUC 2003 in Landau, 2004), the study was successfully completed; and I believe the fact that I share with most respondents the language, national and ethnic identity, as well as the legal status made the investigation relatively much easier. The financial support from the department also helped a great deal in facilitating access to participants through telephonic communication and transport.

Ethical considerations

The study adheres to general ethical standards and to this end the following measures were taken into consideration.

- Informed consent: prior to interviews, respondents were made aware of the purposes of the research, the nature of questions and the approximate duration of interviews. They were made aware that the decision to participate was their free choice, and that, if they decided to participate they could always decide to stop anytime along the way. A verbal consent was sought and obtained before each interview.

- Anonymity/confidentiality: respondents were informed that their identities and information they give would be kept in strict confidentiality; and as for evidence, instead of actual names, code numbers were given to respondents and areas (places) of investigation.

- Careful approach on sensitive issues: Efforts were made to avoid unnecessary invasion of privacy. Where questions on sensitive issues were asked, group categories were used where possible. Further respondents were made aware that they could choose to respond to those questions or not; and the promise of confidentiality and the time taken to familiarise with the target group bred some trust between researcher and respondents.

- Feed back: respondents were asked if they wished to be informed about the results of the study. Those who did were asked to provide their postal address and will be sent a summary of the research report.

Limitations of the study

The study acknowledges a number of methodological limitations. First, the sample size and the sampling technique used make difficult the generalization of the results to the wider population of the study. Consisting of only 40 respondents (20 Burundians as the main group, 10 Rwandans and 10 South Africans as comparative groups) this sample makes no claim to be representative of the respective communities involved. Further the snowball technique used to identify respondents has its own weaknesses. I fear that it

may have led to the sampling of respondents with more similarities than differences, which means that individuals with different opinions may not have been reached. Second, the descriptive and 'correlational' nature of the study makes the establishment of causal relationships difficult to arrive at. Despite these limitations, I believe that the study is no less valuable: it constitutes a preliminary research that, I believe, may serve as a basis for additional and more conclusive enquiries.

CHAPTER THREE

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

The present study seeks to determine the impact of socio-economic interactions between Hutu Burundian refugees (living in Johannesburg) and local populations on Burundian refugees' national and ethnic identity loyalties. To achieve this goal, this section presents and analyses information provided by different groups in the sample. The information relates to Burundian Hutu refugees' pre-relocation national and ethnic identity loyalties; to the nature and frequency of interactions between them and host communities and other foreign national groups; and finally to the current refugees' national and ethnic identity loyalties with the aim to determine if any significant changes may have occurred as a result of the interactions with the host environment. The study hypothesises that, although high levels of cooperative socio-economic interactions may lead to attitude change and increased trust among groups involved, interactions *per se* did not necessarily lead to the declining of Burundian Hutu refugees national and ethnic identity loyalties.

Situation in country of origin

SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION (OF PARTICIPANTS)

The discussion below outlines the refugee respondents' socio-economic profile before they left their countries of origin in terms of their age groups, education levels, occupation and overall living conditions. The idea is to assess whether individual past socio-economic situation may have an impact on one's choice of life style and coping strategies in host country, and on one's loyalty to national and ethnic identity.

Of 30 refugees interviewed (Rwandans and Burundians combined), 22 (73%) lived in urban areas before leaving their home countries, 6 lived in rural areas and 2 in IDP camps; so urban life was not alien to the majority of refugee participants. The majority were aged between 21 and 30 and were still single, which, as they say, made their decision to leave the county relatively easier to make and their movements across counties relatively easier in terms of logistics: transport fare, accommodation, disguise and clandestine border crossing. In terms of education, the majority (87%) of refugee respondents had reached at least the secondary level, with 47% having been at tertiary level. Table III below gives the breakdown of refugee participants' education levels by country of origin.

Table III. Levels of education by country of origin

		Highest level of education			
		Primary	Secondary	University	Total
Country	Burundi	4	8	8	20
	Rwanda		4	6	10
Total		4	12	14	30

This also confirms a past research finding (CASE, 2003: 45) that generally "… a large proportion of African asylum seekers and refugees who come to South Africa are fairly well educated". This is further confirmed by the Johannesburg Project data, which reveal that 75% of refugees interviewed had at least completed their secondary education with 18% having finished the first level of tertiary education. In the sample of the current study, no significant gender differences were recorded as far as education levels are concerned although male participants tended to be slightly more educated than their female counterparts.

In terms of occupation and employment, 18 (60%) were still students at different levels; 7 (23%) held skilled or professional employment, 3 (10%) were subsistence farmers and 2 (7%) were in business. That the majority of refugee participants were students by the time they left their home countries is no surprise for, as documented by earlier studies (CASE, 2003), it is not unusual for students to request asylum because they are probably more prone to be involved in politics and readily willing to challenge oppressive regimes and practices thereof.

Asked to describe their overall living conditions back home, all but one Rwandan refugees indicated that they enjoyed good living conditions. Three out of ten Rwandan participants reported to have had excellent living conditions; four enjoyed very good living conditions and the remaining two had a relatively good life. Most of them attest to have had either an excellent and stable family socio-economic situation or a nice, well paying employment. Respondent 23, who describes his living conditions as excellent, states:

I had a very rewarding and well-paid job. Besides, I possessed all my freedom as far as my rights: socio-political and economic were concerned. Lastly, I could change my job as I willed since the job market was still open.

The only Rwandan respondent, who reported to have had very bad living conditions, left the country in 2001 after experiencing a series of human rights abuses.

Things were somehow different for Burundian respondents. Although the majority (14 out of 20) reported to have had good living conditions back home mostly because they could well support themselves and/or their families through employment, business or subsistence farming; or because they enjoyed a good family support; a significant number of Burundian respondents reported that they lived in rather bad or very bad living conditions back home as a result of war and insecurity that caused acute economic crisis. People had no time to work, as they would be always running up and down fleeing fightings between the government army and the rebels. Respondent 13 observes:

… given that our country [Burundi] is not rich in natural resources such as petrol and minerals, the only economic force it counts on is its population. Imagine then what happens if the population cannot work because of war and insecurity. What follows is economic crisis and poverty among ordinary people. This is the situation I was living in by the time I left Burundi.

In a similar vein, Respondent 19 reveals:

I had a very tough time in Burundi: after my parents were killed in those ethnic conflicts, surviving was a big problem. I had to stop my schooling and I could not go home otherwise I could also have been killed. I lived in hiding until I left.

Table IV below summarizes views of refugee participants on their living conditions.

Table IV. Living conditions back home

Living conditions			Reasons					Total
			I could support myself without begging	War & socioeconomic crisis, you can't work without stability	Excelent family socio-economic situation	Human rights abuse	Good job, enjoyed full citizen's rights	
Excellent	Country	Rwanda			1		2	3
	Total				1		2	3
Very gooc	Country	Burundi			1			1
		Rwanda			2		1	3
	Total				3		1	4
Good	Country	Burundi	7		6			13
		Rwanda			3			3
	Total		7		9			16
Bad	Country	Burundi		2				2
	Total			2				2
Very bad	Country	Burundi		4				4
		Rwanda				1		1
	Total			4		1		5

INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS

Almost all refugee respondents described the relations between ethnic groups (specifically between Hutu and Tutsi) in their respective countries as very bad, if not mediocre. They reveal that the Hutu-Tutsi relations have always been characterised by permanent conflicts resulting in mass killings such as the 1972 Hutu massacres in Burundi and the 1994 Tutsi genocide in Rwanda; deep-rooted hatred, negative perceptions and attitudes towards one another; and socio-economic and political marginalisation and discrimination of the Hutu ethnic group (in the Burundi case). Respondent 12 from Rwanda had this to say:

> The ethnic group relations were very bad because our country has always been characterised by ethnic conflicts. Although you could observe some intermarriages between different ethnic groups, the general ethnic relationship was overtly antagonistic because ethnic discrimination was frequent in people's daily lives.

Echoing the same sentiment, Respondent 18 agrees:

> … there is acute hatred and resentment between Hutus and Tutsis in the country [Rwanda]. Ethnic favouritism, revengeful killings and disappearances are commonplace and are daily reported by human rights organisations.

In Burundi, the situation is reported to be more or less the same. Respondent 19 reports that:

> Ethnic group relationships in Burundi are mediocre. The two groups are engaged in endless violent conflicts, which result in deaths of members of both parties. This fuels strong feelings of revenge and the ethnic polemic is thus exacerbated. We [Hutu and Tutsi] are deeply torn by feelings of hatred, suspicion and negative attitudes towards one another.

Talking about discrimination and marginalisation, Respondent 36 states:

> In Burundi, conflictual relations between Hutu and Tutsi have always been a result of discrimination and marginalisation of the majority Hutu by the minority Tutsi. Tutsi believe that they are superior and were born to rule; they have and still see or treat Hutu as servants and second-class citizens.

The above statements confirm a well document history of numerous and most atrocious ethnic conflicts that characterised the post-colonial period in Burundi and Rwanda (Lemarchand, 1998; Kuper, 1981).

When asked about ethnic relations, most of Burundian respondents automatically engaged in lengthy monologues, echoing Malkki's 'mythico-history' narratives, invoking injustice and discrimination they suffered in the hands of the evil, malicious minority Tutsi. Given that some of these respondents never stayed in refugee camps, this brings into question the assertion by Malkki (1995: 3) that the 'mythico-history

narratives' were 'constructed and reconstructed' in refugee camps "in attempting to develop and maintain a distinct collective Hutu identity". Although beyond the scope of this study, such finding suggests that maybe such a discourse stems from and is also entertained across Hutu communities back home in Burundi.

PRE-RELOCATION NATIONAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITY LOYALTIES

To determine the levels of refugee participants' national and ethnic identity loyalties before relocation, I asked them a number of questions relating to the attachment to their respective national and ethnic identity; and questions about the meaning they ascribed to their national symbols and memories before they left home. Although some respondents who left their countries many years ago expressed some difficulty in distinguishing their thoughts and feelings back home from the current ones, this section discusses their views on these issues.

Ethnic identity loyalties before relocation

Asked how they would have described their attachment to their ethnic group when they were still in their countries, the majority of respondents testified to have been strongly attached to their Hutu ethnic group. Of twenty Burundian respondent, twelve expressed strong attachment, six weak attachment and two no attachment altogether. Rwandans seemed to have been more attached to their ethnic group as eight out of ten expressed strong attachment, one reported weak attachment and while another expressed no attachment at all.

Most of the Burundians who expressed a strong attachment to their ethnic group explained that chronic inter-ethnic conflicts and their ethnic group discrimination by the ruling minority strengthened their ethnic solidarity, which was needed to fight the common Tutsi enemy. Respondent 18 expressed a very strong attachment to his ethnic group. He says:

> Because of discrimination, injustice and ill-treatment by Tutsis, we had to put our efforts together to survive and fight victimization; fighting was the only way to survive.

In addition, Respondent 17 reveals that:

> Your attachment and commitment to your ethnic group ought to be strong to be accepted in your community, suspicious and fearful of a Tutsi dominated army and government. Social interactions depended on ethnic definition.

There would be no greater loyalty to one's ethnic group than to put your life at risk to defend the group's interests.

There were two groups that expressed weak or no attachment to their ethnic group: 'Born-again' Christians and Hutus of mixed origin. The self-proclaimed 'born-again' Christians explained that following their Christian culture, ethnicity did not mean much, and all ethnic groups are no different. Female respondents were most likely to express this view. Respondent 33 whose statement also applies to the current situation states:

> We are living in a society of tolerance. I do accept my ethnic belongingness because it is something I was born with and forming part of my personality, but in order to live in harmony with opposite ethnic group I am socially bound to cultivate the spirit of tolerance by mitigating strong attachment to my ethnic group.

This view echoes the feeling (to be discussed in sections to follow) shared by some respondents that strong attachment to one ethnic group would mean being extremist and

hateful towards members of other ethnic groups. This sentiment probably stems from conflicts and hatred that characterised ethnic relations in their home countries.

Hutu respondents from mixed origin; born of parents from different ethnic groups namely Tutsi and Hutu, was another group expressing weak attachment to their ethnic. Although legally they took their fathers' ethnic identities, these respondents confess not to have known where they belonged practically. Respondent 14 says:

> Discussions around ethnic issues were avoided and discouraged in our family and I guess it was because my father was a Hutu and my mother a Tutsi. We [children] did not know what group to identify with.

Rwandan respondents expressed different reasons for their strong attachment to their ethnic group. Most of them were proud to belong to the Hutu ethnic group as a majority ruling group that liberated the country from white colonialism and Tutsi monarchy. Respondent 12 testifies:

> I would have described the attachment to my ethnic group as strong because I was proud to belong to it. After liberating the country from colonialism and monarchy, they got access to opportunities they never had before and permitted us, their descendants, to enjoy full freedom and full citizens' rights, which was not the case before independence.

In sum, the discussion above shows that respondents were generally loyal to their ethnic group's identity as they were proud to identify with, and expressed strong attachment to their Hutu ethnic group, and some joined (or were willing to) the struggle to defend their ethnic group's interests.

National identity loyalties before relocation

Most respondents in the sample were also found to be loyal to their national identity. This confirms the argument that allegiance to national and ethnic/tribal identities ought not to be necessarily mutually exclusive. In his paper "*Can National, Ethnic, and Tribal Loyalties Co-Exist?",* Paden (1997) argues that "one cannot assume that ethnic and tribal loyalties cannot co-exist with nationalism." Therefore, in normal circumstances, ethnic loyalties need not and usually do not detract from wider loyalties to community and country.

Asked what choice they would have made if (by the time they were still at home) they were asked to identify themselves either with a national identity (as Burundians or Rwandans) or an ethnic identity (as Hutu); 80% of the respondents reported that they would have chosen to identify with the national identity. Reasons vary, but most of respondents felt that although both identities are acceptable, and although in times of ethnic conflicts it was always much safer to identify with ethnic identity, national identity meant more to them than their ethnic identity. For many, ethnic distinction comes in the context of national identity. You are a Rwandan or a Burundian first and then Hutu or Tutsi. Respondent 12 reports he would have chosen his national identity because as he says:

> Because my country or my national identity meant more to me than my ethnic identity. But this depended on the situation. For instance in late days of 1994, many people including myself would choose to be identified as Hutu because the national identity meant less at that time of apocalyptic killings.

Another smaller group of respondents would not have chosen to identify with ethnic identity because they felt that something pertaining to extremism and hatred towards members of other ethnic groups would be hidden behind such identification. As an example Respondent 6 says:

> Because if they call me by my ethnic group, it means that I am an extremist and I do not like other ethnic groups. I do not want to be thought of as hating other people from a different ethnic group.

Similarly Respondent 18 argues:

> To be identified as a Hutu or a Tutsi would amplify and feed the polemic between the two ethnic groups, unless such ethnic identification is accompanied by a mutual acceptance, which is quite hard in a society torn by ethnic strives.

A small number of Burundian respondents would have preferred to identify with their ethnic identity because, they say, in a country characterised by profound ethnic divisions like Burundi, ethnic identification is the easiest way to know where one belongs given that in your country, the national identity or at least the name thereof is an obvious or automatic acquisition.

Least educated respondents and who, in addition, were staying in rural areas were more prone to identify with their ethnic identity. This confirms Kibreab's (1999) argument that, in contrast to people in rural areas who tend to identify themselves in terms of clan, tribe or ethnic affinity, in urban areas where the level of education and 'civilisation' may be higher, people are more inclined to define themselves on the basis of their national identity rather than their ethnicity.

In conclusion, the study finds that before leaving their countries of origin, participants generally enjoyed relatively good living conditions as they had either excellent family social and financial support or adequate employment. The study also finds that the majority entertained satisfactory, if not high, levels of loyalty to their national and ethnic identity because of their self-designation in and strong attachment thereto.

Situation in South Africa

CURRENT LIVING CONDITIONS

This section assesses refugee respondents' current living conditions in South Africa and compares them to those back home in order to establish whether changes in living conditions as a result of displacement have any impact on their national and ethnic loyalties. As discussed later (see section: National identity loyalty), the study finds a positive correlation between improved living conditions with lower levels of national loyalty. These conditions are assessed in terms of respondent's current legal status, their current occupation and their current overall socio-economic status.

More than 76% of refugee respondents arrived in South Africa in or before 2000 but more than 63% (19 cases) are still asylum seekers; 30% (9 cases) were granted refugee status and only 7% (2 cases) have become permanent residents. Most respondents deplore the inconsistency of the local asylum process; and feel that the lack of proper and accepted documentation is having a negative impact on their living conditions: it is preventing them from getting jobs/employment they might be qualified for and places a limit on their freedom of movement as they do not and cannot have travel documents. Table V below summarises the respondents' legal status by country of origin and gender.

Table V. Legal status by country of origin and gender

Legal status			Sex		
			Male	Female	Total
Refugee	Country	Burundi	4	1	5
		Rwanda	4		4
	Total		8	1	9
Asylum seeker	Country	Burundi	10	3	13
		Rwanda	2	4	6
	Total		12	7	19
Permanent resident	Country	Burundi	1	1	2
	Total		1	1	2

Apart from those staying with their South African spouses or partners, all other refugee respondents reported to be staying with people form their home country, be they family or friends. This supports an earlier finding by the FMSP Johannesburg Project that most (70.3%) migrants interviewed stayed either with family/kin or friends from country of origin. Compared to the situation back home, a bigger number (43%) of refugee respondents are currently married and have children. With exception of those married to South Africans, all married respondents reported that their spouses come from the same ethnic group and the same country of origin.

In terms of education, no major changes seemed to have taken place for refugee respondents since they left their home countries. Their levels of education remain relatively the same apart from some short English language courses and security service training. Only two respondents were able to take their education to a higher lever: they are currently doing university studies while they only had secondary school certificates by the time they left their country of origin. Most of refugee respondents aspire to improve their education, but because of their difficult living conditions, cannot afford the high tuition fees and scholarships are not forthcoming.

If no changes were recorded in terms of education, refugee respondents reported significant if not dramatic changes in terms of their employment and occupational lives. While back home 60% were still students at different levels and 23% were holding skilled or professional employment, currently the majority (over 43%) of them are engaged into informal trading (street vending/small shops) and 27% have no occupation whatsoever. Although 33% of these respondents reported to be currently employed, the majority have unskilled or semiskilled employment: they are security guards and shop assistants as shown by Table VI below.

Table VI. Current employment and occupation

		If employed or business, what kind of job/business							
		street ending/small shops	Office, admin. work	Mechanic	Security guard	IT	Teacher	N/A	Total
What is yo current occupation	None							6	6
	Business	11							11
	Employe	2	2		4	1	1		10
	Student							2	2
	Other			1					1
Total		13	2	1	4	1	1	8	30

Asked to compare their current living conditions to those back home, most respondents (73%) reported that their current situation is far much worse. This should be no surprise, as the majority are fairly well educated and would have expected to have jobs where they would use their professional skills and qualifications. The reasons they give vary but all hover around the fact that because of unemployment and lack of assistance mechanisms or family support, they are finding it rather difficult to survive. They feel that the Government is not doing enough to protect and grant them their rights and

because of xenophobia and discrimination, they cannot get jobs for which they are qualified. They also complain that the kind of documentation they get from the Home Affairs Department makes their future uncertain. Respondent 12 observes:

> The reasons here are many. Not only the social environment has changed (family comfort lacking) but also and more importantly no ownership of property (houses, land) to survive on. In addition, here I face severe discrimination of all kinds which makes it difficult to get employment or to be successful in any business you try.

Respondent 14 also feels that his living conditions are worse:

> … I live in an almost uncertain future. I have to renew my asylum paper every three months, hence renewing also my work contract every three months. This is very stressing for me as well as for my family.

There are two reasons advanced by those who find their living conditions better. Some feel that life is better here because they got better paying employment and are enjoying a good socio-economic environment. Others feel better just because they are far away from their war-torn countries. According to Respondent 19, "Life is difficult here and it is tough to make ends meet, but at least it is better in terms of peace and security. I am not persecuted here, I can eat whatever I get and sleep in peace". A couple of respondents who reported their living conditions to be relatively similar to those back indicate that, as Respondent 1 says "You work hard to survive everywhere. Like at home, I am just surviving, no bigger or long-term projects." Table VII illustrates refugee respondents' different views on compared living conditions.

Table VII. Compared living conditions

		Reasons						
		Can't get a job because of discrimination no rights	Lower income/struggle to survive	You work hard to survive everywhere	Peace and freedom	Uncertain future	Better life economically	Total
living conditions in SA compare to those bac home?	Better				4		3	7
	The same			2				2
	Worse	14	6			1		21
Total		14	6	2	4	1	3	30

CURRENT NATIONAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITY LOYALTIES

Having discussed refugee respondents' pre-relocation status in terms of ethnic and national identity loyalties, this section focuses on their current national and ethnic identity loyalties with the aim of assessing changes that might have taken place as a result of their interactions with local South Africans and other foreign nationals. The study measures loyalty in terms of self-designation in, attachment and commitment to one's national and ethnic identity and group.

Ethnic loyalties

Self-identification and membership

To assess the refugee respondents' current levels of loyalty to their ethnic identity, they were firstly asked which ethnic group or tribe they belonged to. All refugee respondents did not seem to have difficulty revealing that they belonged to the Hutu ethnic group. Even those from a mixed origin explained that they were legally Hutu because they took their father's ethnic identity. Self-identification, considered one of the most important

components of ethnic identity (see 'operational definition of variables') is hereby established.

Asked what are the requirements for membership to their ethnic group or tribe, all respondents, including South Africans report that the only requirement is to be born of parents of that ethnic group or tribe. Respondent 12 summarises their views:

> There is no membership application. You belong to a given ethnic group since your birth. This means that we don't choose to belong to this or that ethnic group, we inherit it from our parents.

This finding challenges the widely held *instrumentalist* and *constructivist* approaches and goes in favour of the *primordialist* model to ethnicity (see the discussion on these different approaches in the introduction). According to the views expressed by respondents in the present study, migration, intermarriages and other forms of institutional organisations can accomplish little in terms of ethnic identity change.

Respondents were further asked what the specific characteristics of their ethnic group are. Most respondents emphasised the Hutu's specific physical traits (such as average height, strong body, flat and short nose) as well as their moral qualities. Most respondents perceive their Hutu ethnic group to be generally good people, honest, hardworking (as opposed to their "lazy" Tutsi counterparts), patient and generally not violent. As discussed later, it is these good moral qualities that make some refugee respondents proud to identity with their ethnic identity. This respondents' view goes against Sommers' assertion that the myth of Tutsi superiority and the belief in the Hutu's own inherent inferiority "led many Hutu themselves towards self-hatred" (Sommers, 2001: 184).

To the question of what their ethnic membership means to them, most refugee respondents agree that, although it is part of their personal history, membership to their ethnic group does not mean much here in exile. Respondent 15 confirms:

> My ethnic group membership is very important because it is all about my personal history; it determines who I interact with especially when it comes to people from my country or region. However here in South Africa I have to concentrate day and night to make a living; this importance has reduced. It doesn't help me anywhere in the South African context.

Most South Africans in the sample tend to view their ethnic membership as just group identification, see Table VIII below.

Table VIII. Meaning of ethnic group memebrship

		What does your ethnic group membership mean to you?				
		Not so much	Nothing	Personal history, meaning reduced here in exile	Group identification	Total
Country	Burundi	11	3	6		20
	Rwanda		1	7	2	10
	South Africa	1	3		6	10
Total		12	7	13	8	40

Ethnic identity search

In effort to assess ethnic identity search, respondents were firstly asked whether they ever spend time trying to find out more about their ethnic group such as its history, traditions and customs. 55% of respondents reported that they do, but for different reasons. Most refugee respondents reveal that they spent more time trying to remember their history as a group in an effort to make sense of the on-going ethnic struggle in their countries. Respondent 14 says:

> Yes, because the ethnic conflict back home is so confusing because people share everything (culture, language …). In addition, most of our history was written by 'westerners', which I believe makes it less accurate. I just wish to find out the genuine truth in all this.

Also these respondents often remind themselves of their culture, traditions and customs especially when they compare these to those observed around their neighborhoods among South Africans and other foreign nationals. Most refugee respondents also reported to talk often about their ethnic identity or issues thereof especially when interacting with South Africans in an effort to explain to them their ethnic distribution, the history of their struggle and that all Hutu are not 'genocidaires'. Respondent 13 reports:

> …we normally talk about the perspective of ethnic conflict in our country when with people from home. When with others like South Africans, it is more about answering their questions as to why we have such conflicts whereas we are the same people.

Those who reported to never spend time on this say they do not see the need and have no time to waste on issues that are not relevant to the current situation.

Secondly, respondents were asked if they participate in any cultural organizations and activities of their ethnic/national groups. All Burundians reported they do not because currently there are no such organizations. Less than 1/3 of Rwandan respondents reported to participate in traditional dance, while only 40% of South Africans reported to participate in traditional weddings and/or initiations. There is thus no point scored on this item in terms of ethnic identity search as participation in such ethnic and national cultural activities and organizations would be an indication of respondents' efforts to remember and preserve a distinctive common culture and identity.

The discussion above shows that, although the majority are not active in cultural activities and organizations, they at least make a conscious effort to remember their ethnic group's history, culture, traditions and practices and to portray their ethnic group a good image. 'Cultural fear' documented by Malkki (1995) and Sommers (2001) with Burundian refugees in Kigoma and Dar es Salaam respectively was not found with Burundian and Rwandan refugees in Johannesburg. This suggests that this 'fear' might not be as inherent as those previous studies seem to describe it, but rather might have been borne out of unfavorable prevailing socio-political atmosphere.

Affirmation and commitment

This section explores different levels of attachment and actual practices that confirm one's commitment or loyalty to one's ethnic group and identity. To this end, the first task was to find out whether respondents were proud to identify with their ethnic groups or tribes. All South Africans, 65% of Burundians, and 40% of Rwandans in the sample reported to be proud mainly because their ethnic group/tribe is where they belong and therefore they should be proud of who they are; and because their ethnic groups possess superior moral qualities such as honesty and tolerance. In addition, Burundian refugees reported to be proud of their ethnic group because, for decades, it resisted and survived oppression and socio-political and economic discrimination by the minority Tutsi.

The statistics above however show that refugees were less proud to identify with their ethnic group. The main reason expressed is that they feel that it implies being extremist and hating other ethnic groups, given the history of ethnic relations in their home countries especially in Rwanda with the recent genocide. Respondent 12's answer to the question was 'yes' and 'no'. He says:

> Yes and no. Yes because as I said, it is where I belong and it is all about my history. However, I prefer not to in some circumstances because of the ubiquitous genocide, which nowadays affects all Hutu negatively.

The same sentiment was echoed when respondents were asked about their attachment to their ethnic group. Once again, in contrast to South African respondents, the majority (73%) of refugee respondents described their attachment to their ethnic group weak, very weak or not attachment at all. They feel that strong attachment to one's ethnic group fuels interethnic hatred and conflicts, something they do not want to be associated with. Further they report that such strong attachment is even less relevant in their current exile situation as it does not help in any way. Compared to the situation back home, there is a significant change in terms of refugee respondents' attachment to their ethnic identity. They no longer express the strong attachment they reported to have had while still at home. If it is through contact and interactions with South Africans and other foreign nationals that they became aware of the 'negative' implications such a strong attachment could have, then maybe contact could lessen ethnic loyalties. This however needs to be proved in other contexts where there are no interethnic conflicts and in which ethnic belonging does not have a negative connotation as it seems to be the case with the current respondents.

These low levels of attachment were also manifested when respondents were asked if they could put their lives at risk to defend their ethnic group or tribe: 70% of respondents reported that they would not. South African respondents were the least likely to defend their ethnic groups or tribes. A few Burundian respondents who reported strong attachment to their ethnic group reveal that discrimination they suffered in the hands of Tutsi brought them closer.

To the question whether there are times and circumstances where they hide or feel like hiding their ethnic and national identity, 40% of refugee respondents agree that they hide their ethnic and national identity from time to time fearing discrimination and for security reasons. Some Rwandan respondents reported to hide more their ethnic identity than their national identity because of the genocide their ethnic group is associated with. Respondent 2 says: "I never hide my national identity when asked but in some circumstances I hide my ethnic identity. In either case I only mention my identity when there is a necessity."

In terms of ethnic cultural heritage, Burundian and Rwandan refugee respondents alike reported that their ethnic group did not have a distinctive common culture. They share almost everything from language to traditions and customs with other ethnic groups namely Tutsi and Twa with whom they live side by side in the country. Therefore, the refugees' cultural identity is better talked about as national rather than ethnic. The same applies to language and religion. These will be discussed under national identity loyalties.

When asked if they would like their children to remember their ethnic identity and to consider themselves as members of their ethnic groups, most respondents strongly believe that it is very important because, for them, ethnic identity is an immutable socio-biological value. It is important that children know where they come from and remember their history as this may help, especially for refugee children, understand better what is happening in their lives. Respondent 18 argues:

> Ethnic identity is a non-negotiable sociological value. It is quasi-impossible for my children to biologically deny their parents' ethnic group. My children should also be proud of their ethnic identity and membership.

This is further evidence that most refugee respondents in the sample adopt a 'primordialist' perspective or approach to ethnicity.

Those on the negative side argue that in these modern times, ethnicity does not really matter and their children should rather learn and remember more about their country. For them, encouraging children to remember ethnic identification would be teaching or preaching discrimination and hatred towards other ethnic groups.

In terms of marriage preferences, 82% of married refugee respondents are married to spouses from their own ethnic group. Two cases in the sample suggest that ethnic identity and commitment can even go beyond national borders. A Rwandan Hutu man reported to be married to a Burundian Hutu woman while a 'mixed' Burundian man is married to a 'mixed' Rwandan woman. There might be a chance, however minimal, that this is not pure coincidence. This search for marital partners of same ethnic group is definitely evidence of strong loyalty to one's ethnic group despite respondents (self-) reporting otherwise. Further, most refugee respondents believe that it is preferable to marry among your own ethnic group and would strongly encourage their children to do so because of shared cultural identity, values and trust. Respondent 12 reports: "I would like them [children] to marry people from my ethnic group to avoid complications and cultural or ethnic conflicts, which easily destroy marriages." And Respondent 18 confirms: "marital relationships are culture sensitive. It is risky and hazardous to marry from a different culture." Respondent 19 feels that people should marry among their own ethnic group because they are the only ones you can really trust especially in a

country like Burundi where ethnic suspicion is rife, and for the sake of the children. He argues:

> Tutsi woman can be married to you for economic advantages but are suspected to have children with Tutsi men to perpetuate their race. It is difficult to trust them. In addition, 'mixed' children get confused about their ethnic identity and experience problems in times of ethnic conflicts.

A few other respondents reported to have heard the rumour about Tutsi women but no evidence was there to confirm it. South African respondents were the most likely to report that you could marry any one as long as you love them.

Although no distinctive ethnic behaviours and practices were documented, especially among refugee respondents, this study shows that, in general, respondents remain loyal to their respective ethnic identities in terms of self-identification and membership (all respondents identified with their ethnic groups/tribes without difficulty); identity search (most respondents reported to make a conscious effort to remember and learn more about their ethnic heritage and history); and in terms of commitment in that most respondents, particularly refugees, were found keen to preserve their cultural identity and value system through marriage and desire for their children to remember their ethnic heritage and identify themselves with their ethnic group.

National identity loyalties

To assess the respondents' loyalties to their national identity, they were asked how proud they were to identify with their nation or country of origin; how strong was their bond or attachment to their national identity; how far they would go to defend the interests of their national group; how they observed and were committed to preserving

their national public common culture; and if they were aware and respected important national symbols and ceremonies. Where possible, the study checks loyalty to national identity against loyalty to ethnic identity to assess their relative salience.

Almost (90%) all respondents in the sample reported to be proud to identify as citizens of their countries of origin. All South Africans reported to be very proud because they see South Africa as a great nation and a growing and leading force on the continent. Similarly, most of refugee respondents, regardless of how long they have been staying in South Africa, reported to be proud to identify as citizens of their countries of origin despite the fact that they are currently in exile. They feel that despite 'bad' politics, their countries are still their countries and it is where they belong. They are entitled to a citizenship like everybody else. Respondent 18 reveals: "I cannot afford to loose my national citizenship. I am proud to be a Rwandan, to belong to a country like other people around the world." Close to 10% of respondents are not proud of their home countries because governments cannot effectively protect their citizens and because of endless 'stupid' ethnic conflicts.

As Table IX shows, refugee respondents who feel as if they were part of South African society and who reported good levels of integration and participation in local community activities and organisations were the least likely to be proud to identify as citizens of country of origin. This finding suggests that high levels of integration might be positively correlated with low levels of national identity loyalties. This of course remains to be tested on a more representative sample.

Table IX. Integration vs identification with country of origin

		Do you feel as if you are part of the SA		
		Yes	No	Total
Are you proud to identify as a citizen of country of origin?	Yes	3	23	36
	No	3	1	4
Total		6	24	30

Asked to describe their attachment to their countries of origin, all South Africans and most refugee respondents reported very strong attachment for the very same reasons as expressed above. Further, except for a few who sometimes feel genuine discomfort in being refugees, 90% of refugee respondents reported to never feel inferior to other ethnic groups or nationalities. Not only do they feel proud of who they are and of their origins, but they also think that the current situation makes all foreign national groups equal. Success enjoyed by some foreign nationals is taken to be associated with individual personal attributes rather than considered as group achievement. In comparison to ethnic group and identity, it is apparent that respondents in the sample were more likely to be proud to identify with -and reported stronger attachment to- their national group and identity than their ethnic identity. It was also discussed earlier that refugee respondents were more likely to hide their ethnic identity than their national identity probably because 'wrongdoings' of a an ethnic group might be felt to carry a more personal *cachet* than those of a country or a nation, which is a much larger community. Therefore the study finds a relative salience of national identity loyalty over ethnic identity loyalty as far as self-designation and attachment are concerned.

In terms of distinctive cultural ideals such as national language and religious beliefs, no major changes were recorded. All refugee respondents reported to use their national language at home and when interacting with people from country of origin. Their children also use their native language although they often mix with English due to the influence of schools and crèches where most children spend their days. More that 90% of respondents would like their children to speak the language of country of origin mostly because they believe that language conveys culture and history. Another reason expressed exclusively by refugee respondents is that their children must learn their national language because they will need it when they go back home. They do not wish their children to be 'strangers' in their own countries. Further when interacting with South Africans, all refugee respondents reported to use mostly English. Very few respondents, if any, seemed to have made a genuine effort to learn and speak correctly a local indigenous language, as it would be of no use when they go back home. This constitutes evidence that most refugee respondents believe in the 'temporariness' of their refugee situation, which might be one of the reasons they do not consider assimilation and/or integration into local communities their first priority. Religious beliefs were also relatively maintained. Although a few movements across Christian denominations were recorded, and some reported to have grown in faith as a result of more participation and more involvement in religious activities, all refugee respondents remained Christians, as they were when they left their countries of origin.

The study was not able to assess the extent to which or whether refugee respondents might have maintained their social norms and their value systems, although respondents' self-reports would make you believe it is actually the case. The majority (85%) of respondents, refugees and South Africans combined believe that it is important

and better for migrants to keep their culture and customs. The same trend was recorded by the Johannesburg Project whose data reveal that over 60% of respondents believe it is better for society if immigrants maintain their custom. Most refugee respondents believe that although they need to adapt to some local practices as a matter of survival, their culture still remains their identity and they need to keep it because time will come to go back home. Besides, they reported not willing to pick up some of the local practices they consider not compatible with their culture. One of these is the South Africans' 'too liberal' child rearing, which according to respondents leads to juvenile delinquency, prostitution and moral degeneration. Other respondents feel that keeping their culture and customs is the only way they can show their local hosts that they also possess valuable human qualities they may learn from. They are also of the view that keeping one's identity does not prevent peaceful cohabitation and adaptation to the new environment.

While the majority of South African respondents also think that migrants should keep their culture, so that South Africans learn from them; a significant number (30%) remain indifferent and feel that it is their (migrants') choice to maintain their customs or not. This indifference would be seen by many as another aspect of xenophobia and exclusion as it is evidence that locals make no effort to encourage migrants to identify with local practices and customs. I personally believe that in social interactions, indifference is much worse that a negative sentiment. A few South Africans think that migrants should not remain conservative; they should rather adapt to the local culture and abandon their undesirable behaviours and habits. Some refugee respondents also share this view that it is not a good idea for migrants to maintain their culture but for a different reason as expressed by Respondent 14:

> Migrants to maintain their culture? I do not think so. As it makes indigenous people feel like their culture is not worth knowing. Hence a sort of resentment engenders. And that causes a lot of distrust. Migrants have to adapt to avoid confrontations.

To assess the respondents' interest in their countries' worlds, they were asked how often they follow the socio-political affairs in country of origin. With exception of two cases, all refugee respondents reported to follow them regularly or at least from time to time. The reason is twofold: firstly most respondents report to be anxiously awaiting the improvement of the socio-political situation so that they could go back and secondly they are worried about families, relatives and property they left behind. Respondent 14 reports:

> I follow the situation in Burundi regularly because I want to know how the situation is changing so that I can make long-tem plans. Also a large family of mine is there and I need to know how they are coping.

Their main sources of information are, in their order of importance, South African radio, newspapers and TV; other migrants in South Africa, Internet and communication with people from home. Refugee respondents also reported to follow regularly political affairs in South Africa just to keep informed especially about political decisions that affect their refugee situation. Respondent 18 follows regularly local political affairs because as he says:

> I need to keep informed about the political situation here to avoid being surprised like in DRC and Tanzania when refugees were repatriated by force. You need to be always prepared.

Asked whether they would put themselves at risk to defend their country of origin, 60% of refugee respondents responded positively. Although this may sound awkward for people who fled their counties and are currently seeking asylum in South Africa, respondents affirm that they always have their countries at heart and would do anything

in their power to defend it. Female respondents were the least likely to do so. Compared to 30% who reported to be ready to put themselves at risk to defend their ethnic group, this finding is further evidence that respondents in the sample expressed more loyalty to their nation or country than their ethnic group. A few refugee respondents reported they were proud to be inhabitants of South Africa and they would readily defend it as gesture of gratitude to a country that gave them refuge and protection when they were running away from their own governments.

In terms of the meaning respondents ascribed to their respective national symbols and ceremonies such as the national anthem, flag and Independence Day; all South African reported that these symbols meant a lot to them as they symbolised political freedom, self-determination and democracy. While the majority (85%) of Burundian respondents felt the same, there are a few who find these symbols meaningless as they do not feel represented because of discrimination and exclusion their ethnic group has suffered for a long time. The story was different for Rwandan respondents. None of them reported to know their current national anthem or national colours and the majority (70%) did not even feel it was important to know. The reason they give is that these symbols were changed after the Tutsi army took over the country in 1994 and that they find them to be 'ethnic centred'. Respondent 18 expresses his feelings:

> Personally I do not see any need. The national anthem of our country has been changed and I do not see why they changed it. That is why I am not interested. But the main reason is that the current anthem is ethnic-centred and therefore deprived of the general national socio-political significance and value.

Respondent 12 shares the same feeling: "…I can only sing my former national anthem. I cannot sing the new one and I don't want to hear it because I consider the government to be illegitimate."

This -in addition to respondents' reluctance to identify with their ethnic groups in fear to be associated with the groups' 'wrongdoings'- clearly suggests that factors such as the socio-political situation in country of origin and individual or group history may have greater impact on migrants' loyalty to their group identity than contact or interaction with their host environment.

Asked if they would like to acquire a South African citizenship, 70% of refugee participants responded positively. This does not mean that not they have given up on their own countries but rather because they would like to enjoy full citizens' rights before they can have a chance to go back home. Respondent 18 testifies:

> Yes. Only for the sake of getting socio-economic advantages flowing from such a status. Otherwise I am afraid that, after becoming a South African citizen, I may decline that citizenship to repossess my former citizenship in case there is peace in my home country."

Similarly, because they do not feel welcome and wanted in South Africa, refugee respondents reported that they would like to resettle to another country in Europe, North America or Australia for better living conditions. However the majority of respondents would like this resettlement to be only temporary, as they would like to go back home circumstances allowing. Looking at it from a different angle, it may be plausible that it is this desire to leave that determines and explains the refugee respondents' negative attitudes towards integration and interactions with South Africans: because they want to leave, they look for excuses not to feel attached.

Although refugee respondents in the sample would readily take up South African citizenship for pragmatic reasons, this finding is no different from Malkki's (1995) who reported that Hutu Burundian refugees in Tanzania refused to take up the offer by the government to become Tanzanian citizens. It is possible that, unlike in Tanzania,

refugees in South Africa did not feel that adopting South African Citizenship would jeopardise their chance of reclaiming their former one if time came. As table X below shows, only a few Burundian respondents would like to become South African citizens because they find South Africa to be a great country with better socio-economic opportunities and good human rights records. They report that they would not bother reclaiming their former citizenship even if peace were restored in country of origin.

Table X. Aspirations to South African citizenship

Would you like to become a SA citizen?			Reasons				
			To enjoy rights S. Africans have	Have to go back home	Great country with better opportunities	Xenophobia, don't feel welcome	Total
Yes	Country	Burundi	13		2		15
		Rwanda	6				6
	Total		19		2		21
No	Country	Burundi		4		1	5
		Rwanda				4	4
	Total			4		5	9

In an explicitly overt loyalty test, refugee respondents were asked which team they would support if a sports team from home came to play with a South African team. Over 63% of respondents reported they would support the team from country of origin because they still like their country and it is where their hearts are. The majority (60%) of Rwandan respondents reported they would support the South African team because they seem to be angry with the current country's leadership. Respondent 12 reports:

> I would support the South African team. Like I said, I have no connection at all with the current government of my country of origin. They do not protect me; consequently I do not owe them any loyalty. I will always support South Africa that gave me refuge.

That the narratives above (Respondents 18 and 12) contain a great deal of emotions and feelings of dislike towards the current political situation in their country, is evidence of the respondents' nostalgia for the past and sign of a strong attachment to their nation, which they miss and for which they implicitly wish a 'better' leadership.

In effort to find out what category of respondents were most likely to support the home team or the South African team, it was once again apparent that, as the 'crosstabulation' below shows (Table XI), respondents who reported to enjoy better living conditions here in South Africa were most likely to support the South African team. As it appears, there seems to be a positive correlation between better living conditions (compared to those back home) and lower levels of loyalty to national identity. Once again, the size of the sample and limited number of respondents who reported to have better living conditions in South Africa do not permit to make a generalisation of this finding over the entire population of the study.

able XI. Compared living conditions vs support to sports team from home

		Sports teams SA and coutnry of origin. which one to support?			
		Country of origin	SA	Neither	Total
Compared living conditions	Better	3	4		7
	The same	1		1	2
	Worse	15	6		21
Total		19	10	1	30

The discussion in this section reveals that most respondents in the sample, refugees and South Africans alike remain loyal to and make a conscious effort to maintain their national identity. As no doubt was cast on South African respondents, the focus was

mainly on refugee respondents. In the light of the discussion above, the study finds that refugee respondents in the sample are still loyal to their national identity, as most of them were found proud to identify with their respective home countries to which they expressed a strong attachment. That most refugee respondents use their national languages at home and make sure their children do so; maintained their religious beliefs; and still prefer to marry among their ethno-nationals is evidence that they make a conscious effort to safeguard their national cultural identity. Loyalty to national identity was also manifested by the refugee respondents' interest in following regularly socio-political affairs in country of origin, their respect to national symbols, as well as their strong desire to go back home at some point. Further the majority (especially Burundians) reported they would put themselves at risk to defend their nations and would defend their home team in sporting activities. Differences recorded among Rwandan respondents suggest that loyalty to national identity may also be influenced by the prevailing political situation in country of origin.

Judging from observed and reported satisfactory levels of loyalty, it is only fair to say that the study finds a relative maintenance of ethnic and national identity by most refugee respondents in the sample despite close proximity and interactions with local populations and other foreign nationals. National identity was found relatively more salient over ethnic identity and this declining popularity of ethnic identity is probably evidence that contact may actually have an effect.

Changes are however inevitable. Discussing ethnic identity and its cultural contents (I believe this could also apply to other group identities such as national), Barth (1969: 14) argues:

> The cultural contents of ethnic dichotomies would seem analytically to be of 2 orders: i) overt signals or signs: the diacritical features that people look for and exhibit to show identity, often such features as dress, language, house-form, or general style of life; ii) basic value orientations: the standards of morality and excellence by which performance is judged, and to judge oneself, by those standards that are relevant to that identity.

Applying this argument to the current study's context, it appears that, as most respondents would agree, subtle changes recorded were of the first order: most refugee respondents reported, and it is readily observable, that their general life style has changed in terms of dressing codes, hair styles, eating habits and the learning of new languages. I am inclined to think that this must be what most authors refer to as 'hybridization' (Landau, 2004) or pragmatic/cosmopolitan identities (Malkki, 1995). As Barth (1969: 29) puts it: "…it is perfectly feasible to distinguish between people's model of social system and their aggregate pattern of pragmatic behaviour." The long-term impact of these pragmatic practices on actual group and individual identities needs also to be assessed. The second order seems however to be more important in terms of maintaining group identity. By keeping a distinctive basic value system, which most refugee respondents seem and report to have managed to do, cultural differences and identity can persist despite inter-group contact and interdependence. It is also important to recognize that, as Barth further argues in terms of ethnic identities, even a reduction of cultural differences between groups does not necessarily correlate with a reduction in the organisational relevance of group identities, or a breakdown in boundary-maintaining process.

Therefore, the study does not confirm predictions that "At the very least, the close proximity of migrant and 'local' populations will lead to considerable debate over cultural values" (Hirschon 2000, quoted in Landau, 2004) nor does it find significant

renegotiations of group identity in the increasingly cosmopolitan Johannesburg. On the contrary it supports the prediction that some cities might be becoming increasingly "transnationalized: filled with people from elsewhere with little commitment to the territory they inhabit or the solely domestic processes surrounding them" (Landau, 2004).

That no fundamental changes in refugees' national and ethnic identities were recorded is no surprise judging from the nature of interactions they have with the host society. Details on these interactions are provided in the following section.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTERACTIONS

As the present study seeks to establish the impact of socio-economic interactions on group identity loyalties, it is only imperative that the frequency and nature of interactions between the groups of interest be carefully assessed. This section discusses the frequency and nature of socio-economic interactions between Burundian and Rwandan Hutu refugees living in Johannesburg and host populations (South Africans) as well as other foreign nationals living in the same areas.

Interactions with local South Africans

In line with earlier findings (CASE, 2003; Mang'ana, 2004; FMPS Johannesburg Project, 2003), the current study finds that refugees in the sample have regular interactions or contact with local South Africans; be it in their neighbourhoods, in

business or institutional organisations such as churches, work places and schools. Over 60% of the respondents reported to have regular interactions with South Africans; 20% interact with South Africans often; 16% have occasional interactions and less than 5% (1 respondent) reported to rarely have contact with South Africans. Like in the aforesaid studies, women participants were less likely to have interactions with South Africans than their male counterparts probably because, as this study shows, males are more likely to be involved in occupational activities where contact with South Africans is unavoidable. While most of the studies focussed on the frequency of interactions between refugees and host populations, the present study takes it a step further and focuses on the nature of these interactions.

To start with, respondents were asked with which socio-economic category of South Africans they mainly interact. This was asked to test one of the assumptions of the 'contact hypothesis' that contact between people of equal socio-economic status in cooperative circumstances reduces prejudice. Although respondents were found to interact with different categories depending on circumstances, they were most likely to have more contact with people of equal category especially at work places. The study was not able to confirm this assumption as interactions, for example among co-workers, did not seem to reduce negative attitudes they have on each other.

Further, participants were asked to describe the contexts and circumstances under which they mostly (but obviously but not exclusively) interact with South Africans. Of 30 refugee respondents, the majority (12) reported interacting with South Africans mainly in religious activities; 4 at work places as co-workers; 3 in shared business; 3 as

neighbours; 2 as employers; 2 as employees; 2 as spouses and in-laws and 2 as customers.

Asked how they would characterise these contacts and interactions, close to 77% of refugee respondents share the view that these contacts and interactions are mostly superficial, distant or neutral. This is so because these interactions are said to be exclusively limited to business: no more interactions after work, school, religious activities or business; interactions at personal level are very rare. Further, respondents describe South Africans as unfriendly, jealous and xenophobic because "they call us names and seem very distant and unwilling to make friends with us, even when we make efforts to approach them", says Respondent 5. Respondent 19 echoes the same sentiment when she says that:

> South Africans do not seem to care about us; they are not friendly. Even when they happen to talk to you and ask you about the situation in your country, it is not that they care. You get a feeling that it is a mockery, that we are not civilised enough to get past ethnic problems as they did it here; they think we are not good enough.

It comes then as no surprise that none of these respondents has any close South African friends; people they can trust, in whose presence they feel comfortable and they may exchange home visits with. This is not a new finding. An earlier research by Mang'ana (2004: 38) on Congolese refugees in Johannesburg also found that:

> Employed respondents state that most of their interactions with South Africans is limited to the work place, while student respondents also admit to having very little interaction with South Africans beyond lecture halls.

Asked if they tried to make friends with South Africans, some respondents admit to have tried and given up after realising that their efforts were not successful, but others (the majority) confessed that they did not find it worth trying because they know South

Africans are xenophobic and hostile towards foreigners in general. This also goes in line with the finding by Mang'ana (2004; 40) that Congolese refugees in Johannesburg had made a "conscious effort to avoid close personal relationships with South Africans."

Only 23% of the sample reported to have close, friendly and intimate interactions with South Africans. Apart from three Burundians (two men and one woman) with South African spouses; who obviously entertain intimate relationship with their spouses; and friendly and close interactions with their in-laws; other respondents report that their friendly relationships with South Africans started in church and gradually developed at personal level. Respondent 24 report to have close and friendly interactions with South Africans. He says:

> The people I interact with are Christians who freely and friendly share with me. Our relations are very good, full of openness and mutual trust. We do exchange family visits and even have parties together.

Another category of respondents (a tiny minority in the sample) to have good interactions with South Africans are those occupying professional jobs (in this case a teacher, an IT expert and a restaurant manager) and who happen to be staying in low density areas with a minimal presence of 'obvious' migrants. Although not conclusive, it appears that the socio-economic status may determine or influence attitudes.

To the question whether in general they can trust South Africans, 63% of refugee respondents say they cannot, giving as reasons that most of their South African neighbours are criminals, crooks, hateful, xenophobic and hypocrites. According to Respondent 14,

…you can't trust them. It is true that there are bad and good people in every population, but in general you cannot trust South Africans. For example if you lend them money or

anything else you will never get it back; besides you cannot run to them for help when you have a problem.

Respondent 35 asks a question: "How can you trust people who kill for a cellphone. They are the cruellest people I have ever seen in my life." This is of course questionable considering several instances of cruel mass killings in her home country.

Those respondents with close and friendly interactions with South Africans were found to be more cautious in generalising about South Africans. They were rather inclined to say that they trust their South African friends, though admitting that you can always find bad and good people in every human society. Although from a small subgroup in the sample, this seems to partially support the hypothesis of the study that high levels of cooperative interactions would lead to increased trust among people or groups involved.

A question remains however unanswered: What makes some refugee individuals have good, close and friendly interactions with South Africans generally described as xenophobic and hostile towards foreigners? This suggests that other factors such as individual personal attributes, religion, determination and expectations for the future, and socio-economic standards may have a significant role to play.

The discussion above reveals that, in general refugee respondents in the sample have a great deal of interactions with local South Africans, but it is also apparent that the nature of these interactions should not be expected to effect any changes in their respective perceptions and attitudes towards one another let alone to have any impact on groups' national and/or ethnic identities. It would be only fair to say that the word 'proximity'

rather than ‘social interactions’ describes better the contact between refugees in the sample and local South Africans.

Interactions with other migrants

Most of the respondents reported to have regular contacts and interactions with other migrants in and beyond their neighbourhoods. However they reported to have greater contact with people from their own countries or regions. Apart from their national communities, Burundians and Rwandans reported to interact mostly with Rwandans and Burundians respectively. Both groups reported to interact with DRC nationals to a lesser extend. Shared languages and culture, and material and/or moral support seem to be the most emerging reasons for these interactions. Respondent 21 interacts rarely with other migrants including his own national community and holds a different view. He argues:

> Too much contact with refugees doesn’t help. It distracts you by thinking too much about your home country, you have no time to focus on your current situation and how to overcome the problems you are facing and plan for the future; it hinders your chances of connecting with the local community and get employment.

This view will be discussed again under ‘Integration and community involvement’ section.

That most respondents live in and interact mostly with their own national communities or communities with which they share cultural identity is an indication that respondents’ interactions with other migrants would have little impact, if any, on their national and ethnic identity loyalties.

The South Africans' view

The South African sample comprised 7 males and 3 females staying in Yeoville, Berea and Bertrams. All of them reported to have regular contacts with migrants of different nationalities. Like their migrant counterparts, most of these respondents report to have greater contact with migrants of more or less equal status as neighbours, classmates, business associates and as partners (spouses or boy/girlfriends). With the exception of a few who admitted that their interactions with migrants are very distant and neutral because although they might be sharing flats or staying in a same building, everybody minds they own business; and who were found to hold the view that, in general, migrants are not trustworthy because most of them are criminals and crooks; the majority (60%) of South Africans in the sample characterise their interactions with migrants as close and friendly. They reported to have best friends among migrant communities whom they trust and with whom they socialise and share everything with. A question then comes to mind. Why is it that two communities have different views about the nature of their interactions? A tentative explanation would the 'social desirability' factor.

Social desirability is a psychological concept that refers to "a tendency to respond to self-report items in a manner that makes the respondent look good rather than to respond in an accurate and truthful manner" (Holtgraves, 2004). In other words, it refers to a tendency to purposely tailor one's answers to create a positive social image. For example, people tend to over-report engaging in socially desirable behaviors, such as attending religious services and engaging in different kinds of altruistic behaviors (helping without expecting any kind of reward) but underreport engaging in socially

undesirable behaviors, such as substance abuse (Mensch & Kendel, 1988 in Holtgraves, 2004). Although with no evidence, it may be possible that South Africans interviewed did not want to express their real feelings and attitude towards their migrant neighbours in fear of looking xenophobic and hateful in the eyes of a migrant researcher. It is highly probable that a researcher with a different identity would have been told a different story. The same factor may also have played a role with some migrants who seemed reluctant to identify with their ethnic identity in fear of being considered 'extremist' given the history of ethnic relations in their home countries.

Integration and community involvement

In an effort establish the levels of integration of refugee respondents and their involvement in local community activities, the first step was to ask them whether they felt as if they were part of the South African society. The answer was negative for an overwhelming majority (77%) because they felt unwelcome and discriminated against. This discrimination against migrants is reported to be rife in all spheres of the South African society but is particularly bitterly felt in the sectors of security (police harassment and unequal protection); the job market and exclusion from social services such as schools and medical care. Respondent 7 reports that a few months ago he got a job (junior management position) in one of the local leading supermarkets, but his contract was cancelled two weeks later after the top management found out that he was from Rwanda. He reports to have been told clearly that "they could not employ somebody from Rwanda as they might be one of the 'genocidaires'".

In terms of security, respondents report that police harassment is part of their quotidian life; and when they are not harassed for no apparent reason, they do not get equal protection as their South African counterparts. Respondent 20 testifies that:

> Recently thieves broke into my house and stole all my property. When I reported the incident to the police, instead of carrying out an investigation as they normally do, they just told me to look around in pawnshops and report to them if I found my property. I am sure they could have handled the case differently if I were a South African. This shows that we are not accepted here.

This finding is in line with observations made by previous authors. Commenting on problem facing urban refugees, Landau (2004) notes:

> …urban migrants' typical reliance on existing markets and public services makes them particularly vulnerable to the effects of xenophobia. […]. With few local allies, police harassment or vigilante justice may be popularly tolerated if not encouraged. In the most extreme instances this can result in violence or illegal detention or deportation. More commonly such tendencies manifest themselves as petty harassment and extortion, discriminatory hiring practices, difficulty in obtaining accommodation, and exclusion from social and financial services.

In terms of community involvement, refugees in the sample reported lower (if any) levels of participation in local South African community activities. Although the rather distant or antagonistic interpersonal interactions refugees have with South Africans added to the perceived discriminatory attitudes of local authorities might be blamed for this non-participation, integration of urban refugees presents its own theoretical and practical challenges. The fact that migrants, particularly in this case, seem to be staying in areas predominantly populated by foreign nationals makes assessing indices of integration of urban refugees extremely difficult. Landau (2004) rightfully observes that due to the highly diverse nature of developing countries, "it may be difficult to determine who is integrating with whom". Perhaps integration in this case would mean equal access to rights and services and not necessarily convergence of values and common participation in local community activities and organizations.

Adding to his view that regular contacts with migrants hinder one's chances of integration within the local community, Respondent 21 is of the view that migrants have only themselves to blame if they are perceived as a threat and hence discriminated against by local communities and authorities. His argument is that by concentrating in only one area, numbers of migrants are perceived by local hosts to be extraordinary high and overwhelming to the local community socio-political organization and local socio-economic resources. He thinks that if migrants were to disperse across different areas of the city, province or the country, their presence would be less felt and consequently there would be less discrimination. He gives himself as an example "… it took me sometimes to establish myself where I stay, but now I feel like I am an accepted member of my community and I fully participate in all activities and organizations around." It should be remembered however that discrimination might be actually the main reason why migrants in Johannesburg tend to concentrate in some particular areas such as Yeoville and Hillbrow. Although, as discussed earlier, most respondents reported that they chose the area they stay in because of cheap accommodation and proximity to respective national communities, other authors (e.g. Landau, 2004) have noted that, as one of different manifestations of discrimination, migrants face "difficulty in obtaining accommodation" in those areas and buildings predominantly occupied by South Africans. In response, migrants turn to those areas that seem to have been abandoned to foreigners and poor South Africans who do not have much choice.

Whatever the reasons, it is apparent that integration has not taken place for most refugees in the sample and this is translated by their discrimination by both the local communities and authorities and their non- participation in local community activities and organizations.

Perceived changes as a result of interactions

Both refugees and South Africans were explicitly asked whether they think their interactions with the other group(s) may have changed them in any way, in terms of culture, behaviour, life style, attitudes and perceptions. Refugees and South African alike confirmed that no significant changes had taken place. More specifically, although they agree that they had to adapt to survive which includes learning new languages to be able to communicate, changing dressing codes and eating habits because they cannot find what they were used to at home most refugee respondents assert that interactions with South Africans and/or other migrants did not have any impact on their cultural identity and value system. Respondent 19 says: “Changes, no. Maybe in small things like dressing, eating different food and listening to a different kind of music. Otherwise I am still the same”.

Most of South African respondents echoed the same view. Respondent 22 does not believe that he has changed in any way although he can now eat foreign food; while Respondent 27 feels that only her attitude towards foreigners may have positively changed as a result of interactions with migrants.

In brief, refugees and South Africans alike do not think that interactions with the other groups may have had any significant impact on their ways of living, particularly not on their cultural values and identities. The previous discussion on loyalties proves that this may in deed be the case

To summarise the discussion on interactions, the study finds that refugee respondents have a great deal of contact or interactions with local South Africans as well as other foreign nationals. However these interactions were found to be of an unfriendly and uncooperative nature (especially with South Africans) to the extent that they would be better described as mere 'close proximity'. The study also documents that, for different reasons such as discrimination and other challenges associated with urban settings, integration had not taken place for most refugee respondents. This is mainly manifested by the different treatment they get from local authorities and their non-participation or involvement in local community activities and organisations.

Although this finding somehow compromises the intention of the study to investigate the impact of 'cooperative' socio-economic interactions on group identity loyalties, it suggests that 'negative' interactions may lead to maintenance or reinforcement of group identity: because of negative interactions with the host society, the possibility of integration and assimilation is compromised and the feeling of 'an outsider' may lead to preservation or even reification of identity

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSION OF FINDINGS

In an effort to establish the impact of socio-economic interactions between Hutu Burundian refugees living in Johannesburg and local populations on Burundians' ethnic and national identity, the current study reveals important insights into refugees' and their local hosts' experiences in urban settings in terms of refugee-host community interactions and their (non-) impact on their respective group identity loyalties. The findings presented hereinafter are checked against theoretical perspectives highlighted in the literature review as well as the hypothesis of the study that "*high levels of cooperative social and economic interactions between refugees and host populations will be positively correlated with increasing trust among groups (i.e. refugees and hosts) but not necessarily with the decline of refugees' loyalties to their national or ethnic identity."*

To start with interactions, the study finds that refugee respondents have a great deal of contact or interactions with local South Africans as well as other foreign nationals. However these interactions were reported to be mainly of an unfriendly and uncooperative nature (especially with South Africans) even where some kind of cooperative behaviour would be expected such as at work places with co-workers. Describing these interactions as mere 'close proximity' would not be an exaggeration. In addition, this kind of interactions heralds the expected in terms of integration and assimilation: the study documents that, for different reasons such as discrimination and

the highly diverse nature of urban settings, integration and assimilation had not taken place for most refugee respondents. This was manifested by the often different and unfriendly treatment they get from local authorities (e.g. police harassment and extortion) and their non-participation or involvement in local community activities and organisations. Similarly, most South Africans in the sample reported to have regular contact and interactions with migrants from different origins and nationalities, but contrary to their refugee counterparts, they describe these interactions as close and friendly. While it might be true that the few South Africans interviewed may have friendly relationships with migrants they interact with, three other tentative explanations are possible. Firstly the 'social desirability' factor may have played its role and South African respondents did not want to reveal their true feelings and attitudes towards migrants; or, secondly, South Africans in general might not realise that their attitudes towards foreign nationals are negative and xenophobic, or, thirdly, refugees and migrants in general prefer to report only the negative instances of their interactions with South African hosts because, for some reason, they have opted for 'self-marginalization'.

That a few individuals who entertained close, friendly and cooperative interactions with South Africans were the least likely to generalise about South Africans' untrustworthiness might be an indication that, as the study hypothesised, high levels of cooperative social interactions could be positively correlated with increased trust among individuals or groups involved. This also supports one aspect of the 'contact hypothesis' that increased cooperative contact reduces prejudice and results in improved relationships between individuals. The rarity of these cooperative interactions which the study was initially interested in, made it rather impossible to investigate the second part

of the hypothesis which was meant to establish the impact of these interactions on group identity loyalties.

In terms group identity loyalties, the study finds that the vast majority of respondents (refugees and South Africans alike) in the sample remain loyal to their respective ethnic and national identities despite the reported high frequency of interactions with other groups. An apparent salience of loyalty to national identity over ethnic identity was recorded among the three groups. Satisfactory levels of loyalty to ethnic and national identity were recorded using respondents' self-reports and actual distinctive group practices and behaviours: most respondents reported to be proud to identify with their ethnic and national groups; expressed strong attachment thereto and would readily put themselves at risk to defend the interests of their countries or national groups. They were also found to make a conscious effort to maintain their basic value system as well as their public common culture particularly through the use of national language and marriage preferences. Therefore, apart from changes in life style (which tends to be referred to as cosmopolitanism, hybrid or pragmatic identities) reported particularly by refugee respondents, no significant renegotiation or contestation of group identity in the cosmopolitan city was recorded as a result of refugee-host community interactions. However the study cannot claim that interactions with host populations did not have any impact on refugees' ethnic and national identity loyalties mainly because the negative nature of these interactions seems to compel most refugees to stay with or in close proximity with their respective national communities where they are likely to keep their group identities. The negative nature of interactions between refugees and local South Africans seems to be among the plausible explanations why refugee respondents maintained their respective national and ethnic identities although there is no evidence

that ‘positive’ or cooperative interactions would have led to a significantly different result i.e. declining importance or loss of refugees’ national and ethnic identities.

Nevertheless, if loyalty to one’s ethnic and national identity is anything to go by, the present study finds that refugees (Burundians and Rwandans alike) in the sample did not lose their identity and culture and did not consider the ability to lose one’s identity as a form of freedom and security as suggested by Malkki (1995) in her study with Burundian refugees in Tanzania. The current study also challenges the assumption that to become uprooted and removed from a national territory automatically causes people to lose one’s identity, traditions, and culture.

In search for other factors that may have effect on refugees’ ethnic and national identity loyalties, the study found that refugees’ high levels of integration (or aspirations thereof), better living conditions (compared to the ones back home), negative attitudes towards national political and socio-economic situation and individual desires or plans to resettle indefinitely outside the country of origin were positively correlated with lower levels of refugees’ national or ethnic identity loyalties. Although this finding still needs to be tested on a more representative sample, it suggests that mere contact with (or proximity to) host environment *per se* should not be expected to produce a major transformative effect on refugees’ identities, cultures and customs. Rather, other group internal and external factors such as different group experiences, attitudes and expectations as well as the wider social and political environment in both home and host countries should be given deserved consideration.

Further investigations are needed to establish the precise impact of cooperative interactions between refugees and host communities on refugees' identities and to establish whether this negative nature of interactions between South Africans and immigrants is a manifestation of Barth's (1996) predicted formation and strengthening of exclusive national identities and social boundaries as a result of migration and intergroup interactions.

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Interview guide

Interview No: ……..

Impact of socio-economic interactions on forced migrants' national and ethnic identity

Introduction

My name is ---------- from the Graduate School for the Humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I am conducting a study that seeks to understand the impact of socio-economic interactions between forced migrants and host populations on their respective national or ethnic identities. I do not work for the government or any aid organization; this study is mainly for academic purposes. Please note that, apart from my appreciation, I do not promise any form of compensation for your participating. It is your free choice to participate in this study and you are free not to answer questions you do not feel comfortable with or to stop the interview at any time. The information you will give me, and your identity will be kept in strict confidentiality. The interview will take about 45 minutes.

Would you like to continue? Yes □ No □ (Please tick (√) where applicable)

Questions 1- 6 to be filled by interviewer

1. Date of interview:……
2. Venue of interview: ……
3. Start time: ……
4. Finish time:……
5. Total minutes spent on interview: ……
6. Respondent's sex:……..

I. Profile of respondent *(Ask all respondents*)

100. In which country were you born?

101. What is your ethnic group/tribe?

102. How old are you (age group)?

103. In which area do you stay?

104. For how long have you been staying in this area?

105. Why did you choose this area?

II. Situation in country of origin (*Ask migrants*, *South Africans go to question* 410)

200. How old were you when you left your country of origin?

201. Where did you live in your home country? (Urban area; Rural area; Refugee camp; etc.)

202. What was your marital status?

203. Did you have children?

204. What main language did you speak in your family?

205. What was your highest level of education?

206. What was your occupation?

207. What was your religion?

208. How would you have described your attachment to your ethnic group?

209. How would you describe your overall living conditions back home?

210. How would you describe the ethnic group relationships back home?

211. How much did national symbols or memories such as the national anthem, flag, Independence Day, etc. mean to you?

212. If you had been asked to choose between national and ethnic identity, which identity would you have chosen to identity with? Please explain why.

III. Situation in South Africa

300. When did you come to South Africa?

301. What is your legal status?

302. Whom do you stay with? ?

303. Whom would you like to stay with, if different from 302? Please explain why.

304. What is your current marital status?

305. If married or living together, where does your spouse/partner come from?

306. Do you have children? If Yes, how many and how old?

307. What languages can you speak?

308. What main language do you speak in your family (at home)?

309. What main language do your children usually speak?

310. What language do you speak when interacting with people from your country?

311. What language do you speak when interacting with South Africans?

312. What is your current highest level of education?

313. What is your current occupation?

314. If employed or business, what kind of job/business?

315. If unemployed and no business, what do you survive on?

316. What is your current religion?

317. If different from your religion back home, why did you change?

318. How would you describe your living conditions in South Africa compared to those back home?

IV. Interactions and relations with host community and other migrants

400. How often do you interact with South Africans?

401. What category of South African people do you mostly interact with (socio-economic standards)?

402. In what contexts or under what circumstances do you have contacts and interactions with South Africans?

403. How do you characterize these contacts and interactions?

404. Do you depend on these interactions to meet your needs? If yes, what needs?

405. Do you have any close relationships with South Africans such as friends: people you trust, in whose presence you feel comfortable and you may exchange home visits with.
Please explain

406. Have these interactions with South Africans changed you in any way, in terms of culture, behavior and life style?

407. In general, how would you describe South Africans? Do you think you can trust them?

408. How often do you interact with other migrants?

409. Which immigrant communities (Nationalities) do you mostly interact with and why?

Ask South Africans; migrants go to question 419

410. How often do you interact with immigrants?

411. Which immigrant communities (Nationalities) do you mostly interact with and why?

412. What category of migrants do you mostly interact with (socio-economic standards)?

413. In what contexts or under what circumstances do you have contacts and interactions with immigrants?

414. How do you characterize these contacts and interactions?

415. Do you depend on these interactions to meet your needs? If yes, what needs?

416. Do you have any close relationships with immigrants such as friends: people you trust, in whose
presence you feel comfortable and you may exchange home visits with.

417. Have these interactions with immigrants changed you in any way, in terms of culture, behavior, life
style, and attitudes towards them?

418. In general, how would you describe immigrants? Do you think you can trust them?

Ask migrants; South Africans go to question 500

419. How often do you follow the political affairs in South Africa?

420. How often do you follow the political affairs in Country of origin?

421. If you do, what are the primary sources of information about political affairs in country of origin?

V. Group identity and loyalties *(Ask all respondents)*

500. What is your /ethnic group/tribe?

501. What are the specific characteristics of your ethnic group/tribe?

502. What are the requirements for membership to your ethnic group/tribe?

503. What does your ethnic group membership mean to you?

504. Do you ever spend time trying to find out more about your ethnic group such as its history, traditions, and customs? If yes or no, please explain.

505. Do you participate in cultural activities and practices of your ethnic/national group? If yes, what activities?

506. Are you proud to identify with your ethnic group? If yes or no please explain why.

507. How would you describe your attachment to your ethnic group?

508. Are you proud to identify as a citizen of country of origin? If yes or no please explain why.

509. How would you describe your attachment to your country of origin?

510. Are there times and circumstances where you hide or feel like hiding your ethnic or national identity? Please explain.

511. Do you ever talk about your ethnic identity (or issues there of) when interacting with people from your country/South Africans/Other migrants? If yes or no please explain why.

512. Does your ethnic group have a distinctive common culture? If yes, what do you think about it?

513. Is it important that you always remember your ethnic heritage? If yes or no please explain why.

514. Do you feel inferior to other ethnic groups or nationalities? If yes or no please explain why.

515. Are you proud to be an inhabitant of South Africa? If yes or no please explain why.

516. Would you put yourself at risk to defend the following? Please explain why.

1. South Africa
2. Country of origin
3. Your tribe/ethnic group
4. Your religion
5. Your family
6. Your South African friends
7. Your migrants friends

517. Would like your children to remember their ethnic identity and heritage? Why?

518. Would like your children to consider themselves as members of your ethnic group? If yes or no please explain why.

519. Would like your children to consider themselves as citizens of country of origin? If yes or no please explain why.

520. Would like your children to speak the language of country of origin? If yes or no please explain why.

521. What do you think is best: to marry among people of your ethnic group, people from your country, South Africans, other migrants? Please explain why.

522. Would you like your children to get married to people of your ethnic group, people from your country, South Africans, or other migrants? Please explain why.

523. Can you (and/or your children) sing the national anthem of your country of origin? Do you think it is important to know? Please explain why.

524. Do you know your country's national colors? Do you think it is important to know? Please explain why.

525. When does your country celebrate the Independence Day? What does it mean to you?

526. What do you think about the political and socio-economic situation in your country of origin?

527. Do you think it is better for immigrants to maintain their culture and customs? Please explain why.

Ask migrants

528. If a sport team from your country came to play with a South African team, which one would you support? Please explain why.

529. When do you think you will go back home, and why?

530. Do you feel as if you are part of the South African society? What are your levels of integration into the South African society?

531. Would you like to become a South African Citizen? If yes or no please explain why.

532. Would like to resettle in another country forever? If yes or no please explain why.

533. Would you like to be informed about the outcome of this research? If yes, please give us your mailing address

END

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

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